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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

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**ASSOCIATED BODYWORK & MASSAGE PROFESSIONALS
RESPONDS TO STATEMENTS MADE BY IMA OWNER
WILL GREEN ON CLOSURE OF IMA GROUP**

(July 22, Golden, Colo.) – Associated Bodywork & Massage Professionals (ABMP) today released a statement on an e-mail widely distributed last night to massage therapists by Will Green, owner of the now-defunct International Massage Association (IMA). His email appeared to be a response to an article in a massage therapy professional publication. ABMP’s response, distributed to the media and its members, follows.

Within the past 24 hours, *Massage Today* magazine published an article titled, “What Became of IMA?” and IMA’s owner, Will Green, sent to former International Massage Association (IMA) members a lengthy statement in response. As you may have heard, IMA Group, an insurance provider in the field, recently went out of business due to financial difficulties. In communicating the news to his former members, Mr. Green characterized some aspects of the insurance industry, and in particular Associated Bodywork & Massage Professionals (ABMP), in a way that was not entirely accurate.

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ABMP is a full-service professional membership association, which provides liability insurance as one primary benefit of that membership. Insurance is an important piece of a practitioner's portfolio—you want to make sure that you're protected in the event a claim is filed against you—but insurance is not the sole valuable support a massage professional should expect from an association.

In his comments, Mr. Green stated the following about liability insurance policies:

All the other associations have master policies. The members are added to the policy with their limits. Here is what I have learned ... these master policies have a limit. Most limits are \$10 million. Each member is told they have a \$1 million to \$3 million limit but that is not really true. If the entire policy reaches \$10 million in claims they have no (\$0) coverage at all ... ABMP is with the same company the IMA had. Does their policy have a limit? Good question if you have their coverage.

Mr. Green is partially correct. And he raises a good question. Many providers of liability insurance to massage professionals, including the other full-service association, the American Massage Therapy Association (AMTA), do have master policy limits. If combined payments to settle claims filed against all insured members in any policy year reach the \$10 million threshold, there is no coverage left for the next member filing a claim.

ABMP's insurance policy has no such master policy cap. Each insured member has coverage up to the full policy limits stated on their insurance certificate—\$2 million per incident and \$3 million aggregate for **each** of three types of liability—professional, general, and product. That coverage is not limited by the claims experience of other ABMP members. In fact, we have been talking about this liability insurance policy difference in our advertisements and promotional materials for more than a year.

Mr. Green and IMA ran into trouble, as he admits, by not focusing on the fundamental aspects of his business, including not keeping up with his obligation to pay his insurance carrier. By contrast, ABMP's current leadership team has been managing the organization for 14 years. In that time, ABMP became the largest professional association in the field, all while maintaining a stable membership fee and dramatically increasing the value of our membership.

Unlike IMA, which shuttled among multiple insurance companies, ABMP has enjoyed a solid, strong relationship with our A.M. Best “A” rated insurance underwriter for the past decade, and our insurance broker for the past 13 years. While others claim to offer unsurpassed coverage, ABMP’s member liability insurance policy truly is the most comprehensive policy available in the field—measured both by its policy limits and by its “occurrence form” nature, rather than the more limited “claims made” type of coverage offered by some others.

Mr. Green reached out to ABMP in March, when he knew his organization was in trouble. We paid attention because we did not want to see 15,000 massage therapists be left out in the cold. But, after investigation, we determined we were not prepared to potentially put at risk the health of our own organization and our 72,000 members, considering the problems surrounding the IMA Group.

What really matters to members of a professional association is having an organization and leadership they can rely upon, an association that backs up their words with actions. ABMP is such an association, a community—not solely an insurance provider. We have 43 staff members possessing diverse professional skills who come to work every day with the same focus: “What can we do to make our members’ careers more successful?” A few of them specialize in insurance matters, providing supportive help whenever a claim arises. Most of the staff focuses on a wide variety of other services—including magazines, websites, webinars, legislative support, and other assistance—to keep ABMP’s members abreast of developments in the profession and focused upon what it takes to build and sustain a successful practice.

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Associated Bodywork & Massage Professionals is a professional membership association serving the massage therapy profession by promoting ethical practice, fostering acceptance of the profession, and protecting the rights of legitimate massage and bodywork practitioners. Founded in 1987 and headquartered in Golden, Colo., ABMP is the largest massage membership association in the United States with more than 72,000 massage therapist members.

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