

HB0026 psych respecialization crossover.pdf

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Position: FAV

House Bill 26 Health Occupations – Psychologists – Licensure Qualifications

Senate Finance Committee

March 22, 2023

Position: SUPPORT

The Mental Health Association of Maryland is a nonprofit education and advocacy organization that brings together consumers, families, clinicians, advocates and concerned citizens for unified action in all aspects of mental health and substance use disorders (collectively referred to as behavioral health). We appreciate the opportunity to provide this testimony in support of House Bill 26.

HB 26 amends the Health Occupations Article to recognize, for purposes of licensure by the State Board of Psychologists, a practice-oriented postdoctoral respecialization certificate that meets certain accreditation requirements.

This section of the Health Occupations Article – which defines the necessary doctoral training educational requirements for licensure as a psychologist – is out of date. As of June 1st, 2019, the National Register, which is a division of the Association of State and Provincial Psychology Boards (ASPPB), neither maintains a list of joint designated programs nor provides equivalency assessments for degrees falling outside of that list. The announcement that ASPPB would no longer carry out this function was made in April 2014 to allow time for state licensing laws and statutes to be changed. Guidance and suggested wording for laws, statues, and regulations following these changes were approved and made available by ASPPB in October 2017.

Most states across the country have taken action to update their statutes, ensuring that a variety of paths to securing licensure as a psychologist – including respecialization – remain available. Maryland law, however, has not been updated to reflect these changes at the national level. The consequence is that Marylanders with Doctoral Degrees in Psychology that are not from “practice-oriented” programs have few viable pathways to receiving the licensure necessary to provide clinical services to Maryland residents. HB 26 would create such a pathway by allowing these individuals to meet the education requirements for licensure via a postdoctoral respecialization certificate in a practice-oriented program.

Maryland is contending with a mental health workforce crisis that is limiting access to care from Western Maryland to the Eastern Shore. The state is home to 63 federally designated mental health professional shortage areas, including 11 entire counties. As demand for mental health care continues to increase, we must ensure our law does not preclude those willing and able to deliver care from doing so. **For this reason, MHAMD supports HB 26 and urges a favorable report.**

For more information, please contact Dan Martin at (410) 978-8865

Senate_HB26_Bagnall_FAV.pdf

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Position: FAV

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Health and Government Operations
Committee
Subcommittees

Health Occupations and Long-Term Care

Public Health and
Minority Health Disparities

THE MARYLAND HOUSE OF DELEGATES
ANNAPOLIS, MARYLAND 21401

March 22, 2023

Testimony in Support of House Bill 26 - Health Occupations - Psychologists - Doctoral Degree

Good afternoon Madam Chair, Madam Vice Chair and members of the Finance Committee. Thank you for the opportunity to speak to you about House Bill 26.

House Bill 26 is a workforce development bill for the behavioral health workforce here in Maryland. This bill would allow for post-doctoral clinical re-specialization training, in appropriate programs, to enable psychologists to meet the educational requirements for licensure. By creating this additional avenue for psychologists to become clinically licensed, the behavioral health workforce in the state will safely and effectively increase by number of licensed clinical psychologists.

This pathway for meeting education requirements for clinical licensure for doctoral psychologists is already standard in Maryland's surrounding states as well as within the Federal government, within the VA, and the Military. Around 40 states have open criteria allowing requirements to be met without a full re-specialization.

An amendment was made to House Bill 26 in the House which clarifies an internship requirement for certain licensure candidates. The bill passed unanimously out of the House, and I respectfully request a favorable report on House Bill 26.

Testimony - Holly Martin - HB0026 -v2.pdf

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Position: FAV

Senate Finance Committee

Bill: House Bill 0026 - Health Occupations - Psychologists - Licensure Qualifications

Position: Support

Hearing Date: March 22, 2023

Dear Chair, Vice-chair, and members of the committee:

I am writing this letter to ask you to **SUPPORT House Bill 0026 - Health Occupations - Psychologists - Licensure Qualifications**. I am enrolled in a respecialization program that will meet the licensure requirements if this bill passes and becomes a statute. I completed a Ph.D. in Developmental Psychology at Howard University in 2001. I recently enrolled in a respecialization program and was unaware that it could no longer meet the requirements for licensure in Maryland until late last year. I know that respecialization programs meet licensure requirements in many other states, such as Virginia, and are accepted by the Veterans Administration, government employment, the military, and Defense Department.

I want to switch my field of practice to clinical psychology and practice in Maryland as a Licensed Psychologist because I want to provide psychodiagnostic assessment for children and therapeutic support to their families. I specifically would like to serve underserved populations in my state, Maryland.

For these reasons, I ask the committee to **favorably report on House Bill 0026 - Health Occupations - Psychologists - Licensure Qualifications**.

Sincerely,

Holly Spurlock Martin, Ph.D.
301 467-2279
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House Bill 0026 - Health Occupations - Psychologis

Uploaded by: Mark Trullinger

Position: FAV

Finance Committee

Bill: House Bill 0026 - Health Occupations - Psychologists - Licensure Qualifications

Position: Support

Hearing Date: March 22th, 2023

Dear Members of the Committee:

I am writing this letter on behalf of myself and number other residents of Maryland with Doctoral Degrees in Psychology that are not from “practice-oriented” programs, meaning clinical, counseling, or school psychology. We have been unable to meet licensure requirements in Maryland since we graduated after 2018 due to the discontinuation of the nationwide National Register Joint Designation program and equivalency assessments. Given the need to increase the mental health workforce, we strongly encourage you to **SUPPORT House Bill 0026 - Health Occupations - Psychologists - Licensure Qualifications**. It will allow those of us who desire to provide clinical services to the residents of Maryland, as licensed psychologists, to meet the educational requirements by adding another specialty on top of our current doctoral degree.

The CDC states that from 2020-2030 the need for clinical psychologists is approximately 13,400 clinical psychologists a year are needed. According to the American Psychological Association (APA), their accredited doctoral degree programs and internships will produce approximately 4,650 a year by 2023. This will only meet about 35% of yearly need. With the addition of doctoral respecialization programs, this number will be able to increase more rapidly to meet the need, because about half the doctoral degree graduates in psychology per year are not from “practice-oriented” programs. This would allow those individuals, like us, to pursue post-doctoral respecializations in “practice oriented” psychology. Moreover, the respecialization programs, as specified in this legislation, are already able to meet educational requirements for licensure in 40 other states and are accepted by the VA, Military, Defense Department, and other federal agencies as meeting educational requirements for clinical psychologist positions.

The post-doctoral respecialization programs that this bill would allow to meet the education requirements for licensure as a psychologist in Maryland are a significant undertaking, involving the completion of an additional 3-5 years of education and training. And, the only post-doctoral respecialization certificates that would meet this bill’s criteria are offered by the same departments who have a doctoral degree program that is “practice oriented” and holds accreditation by the American Psychological Association or Canadian Psychological Association. This requirement ensures that those who seek a respecialization meet the same standards as those who graduated from doctoral degree programs that were accredited by the American Psychological Association or Canadian Psychological Association. Moreover, as of 2019, American Psychological Association’s policy is to encourage respecialization programs that meet the criteria outlined in this legislation.

For these reasons, we ask the committee to **favorably report on House Bill 0026 - Health Occupations - Psychologists - Licensure Qualifications**.

Sincerely,

Mark Trullinger, PhD, BCN, QEEG-D, Registered Psychology Associate

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MPA Senate Testimony 2023 - Support - House Bill 2

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Position: FAV



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March 22, 2023

Senator Melony Griffith, Chair

Senator Kathy Klausmeier, Vice Chair

Senate Finance Committee

Miller Senate Office Building

Annapolis, MD 21401

RE: House Bill 26 Health Occupations – Psychologists – Licensure Qualifications

Position: **Support**

Dear Chair, Vice-Chair and Members of the Committee:

The Maryland Psychological Association, (MPA), which represents over 1,000 doctoral level psychologists throughout the state, asks the House Health and Government Operations Committee to **FAVORABLY report on House Bill 26**. House Bill 26 allows an efficient and effective mechanism for individuals who obtained a doctoral degree in psychology but did not specialize in the provision of clinical care to clients, to obtain the education, training, and experience necessary to deliver clinical services and meet the criteria set for licensure by Maryland law.

This bill is a small step towards providing **increased access to mental health care** for Marylanders. As a result of the recent and ongoing effects of the pandemic, it has become clear that the need for mental health services has outstripped the ability of currently licensed providers to provide mental health care to those in need. Not only must we increase access to care, but we must be careful to maintain the quality of mental health care that is delivered to our citizens. This bill ensures that those who seek a re-specialization certificate meet the same standards as those who graduated from degree programs that are accredited by both the American Psychological Association and the Canadian Psychological Association to provide psychological care to people. In previous decades, a path to licensure in Maryland was available for individuals with a psychology doctorate that was not in clinical, but administrative changes at both the state and national levels have eliminated that route, which we believe should be restored to increase access.

Finally, we believe this bill minimizes the administrative impact on the Maryland Board of Examiners of Psychologists while providing an avenue for increased access to quality mental health care.

Thank you for considering our comments on House Bill 26. If we can be of any further assistance as the House – Health and Government Operations Committee considers this bill, please do not hesitate to contact MPA's Legislative Chair, Dr. Pat Savage at mpalegislativcommittee@gmail.com.

Respectfully submitted,

Rebecca Resnick, Psy.D.

Rebecca Resnick, Psy.D.

President

R. Patrick Savage, Jr., Ph.D.

R. Patrick Savage, Jr., Ph.D.

Chair, MPA Legislative Committee

cc: Richard Bloch, Esq., Counsel for Maryland Psychological Association
Barbara Brocato & Dan Shattuck, MPA Government Affairs

Pat Savage PhD - Personal Testimony - Support - Ho

Uploaded by: Pat Savage

Position: FAV



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February 5, 2023

Senator Melony Griffith, Chair
Senator Katherine Klausmeier, Vice Chair
Finance Committee
Miller Senate Office Building, 3 East
Annapolis, MD 21401

RE: HB 26 Health Occupations – Psychologists – Licensure Qualifications

Position: **Support**

Dear Chair Griffith, Vice-Chair Klausmeier, and Members of the Committee:

I appreciate the opportunity to provide testimony to you on HB 26. I wanted to take the opportunity to **strongly urge you to provide a FAVORABLE REPORT on HB 26.**

I am a licensed psychologist in Maryland who lives and works in Maryland. I have been in practice for about 30 years and have never experienced the demand for mental health services that I have witnessed over the last year or two. On average I turn away 30-40 people a month who are seeking mental health care. I am a solo practitioner. I share this with you to give you some sense of the size of the need for mental health services today as those in group practices I know are also being overwhelmed by the demand for mental health services. I believe that demand has spiked, as a result, of the stressors encountered while living through the COVID-19 Pandemic and the continuing progress that has been made to destigmatize mental health care in Maryland.

HB 26, at its heart, is designed to increase access to care while maintaining the quality of mental health care in Maryland at a time of unprecedented demand for mental health services. Some have called this the second pandemic that will be with us as COVID-19 becomes endemic.

HB 26 amends Article - Health Occupations Section 18-101(c) and 18-302(f) Annotated Code of Maryland, **formally** creating a third path to licensure as a psychologist. This path is only provided to those individuals who already possess a doctoral degree in psychology that does not specifically train an individual to provide mental health services directly to individuals in the public. HB 26 does this by allowing those individuals, who already possess a doctoral degree in psychology, to return to a psychology department that is American Psychological Association (APA) or Canadian Psychological Association (CPA) accredited to offer one of the three degrees that allow one to provide mental health services to the public, in order for those individuals to obtain the additional education and training required to re-specialize as a mental health service provider. This training and education are designed, by the psychology department, to be equivalent to that obtained by one who obtains a doctoral degree directly from a program accredited to grant degrees to mental health specialists. This path eliminates the need for individuals already possessing a doctoral degree in psychology to obtain a second doctoral degree, saving one year of time and thousands of dollars to provide desperately needed mental health services to the public, **hence lowering an unnecessary barrier to practice.**

HB 26 will lessen the burden for all who travel this path to obtain a license, but it will most certainly lessen the burden on those in lower income groups who would be unable to find the funds to acquire a

second degree. Hence, HB 26 offers the hope of adding additional diversity to the mental health workforce as well as adding more providers.

Please note HB 26 specifically addresses the training requirements to insure that those graduating from re-specialization programs have equivalent training to those graduating from programs providing the three degrees currently accredited by APA and/or CPA.


It is also important to note that these re-specialization programs are accepted as adequate proof of training and education to practice psychology by many other states, the VA and the Federal Government. It is my understanding, that there are already psychologists who graduated from a re-specialization program granted licenses and practicing in Maryland.

I want to emphasize that this bill creates a pathway to licensure while preserving the level of education and training of providers entering the practice of psychology in Maryland, and placing no real additional burden on the Board of Examiners who oversees the profession of psychology in Maryland. Our hope is that this bill takes one small step towards expanding the mental health workforce in the state of Maryland.

I ask that you provide a **FAVORABLE report on HB26**. It is one small step of many that will result in increased access to quality mental health care in Maryland.

I thank you for this opportunity to address you. I would be glad to answer any questions that might arise or clarify any concerns you might have. I can be reached at my email at doctorpat@olneynorthbethesdapscychology.com or by phone at 301-587-2818.

Sincerely



R. Patrick Savage, Jr., Ph.D. ABMP
Licensed Psychologist, MD 2219

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Position: FAV



Board of Examiners of Psychologists

Wes Moore, Governor · Aruna Miller, Lt. Governor · Laura Herrera Scott, M.D., M.P.H., Secretary

Samantha Rukert, Chair – Lorraine Smith, Executive Director
4201 Patterson Avenue, Baltimore MD 21215 Phone: 410-764-4786

2023 SESSION POSITION PAPER

BILL NO: HB 26
COMMITTEE: Finance
POSITION: Support

TITLE: Health Occupations – Psychologists – Licensure Qualifications

BILL ANALYSIS:

This Bill expands the eligibility qualifications to become licensed as a psychologist by the State Board of Examiners of Psychologists (the Board). Specifically, the bill allows individuals with degrees that are regionally accredited to qualify for licensure if they complete a certain respecialization program and additional supervised training and experience.

POSITION AND RATIONALE:

The Board supports HB 26. The Bill as written expands the eligibility requirements for licensure as a psychologist to certain individuals who do not currently qualify for licensure as a psychologist. The Board appreciates that individuals may choose to change career paths and recognizes that respecialization programs allow non-clinically trained individuals to access a career in clinical psychology. However, the Board's primary mission is to protect the public, and as such it wants to ensure that the highest standards for safe and ethical practice are maintained. As a result, the Board believes any respecialization program should specifically include a supervised internship akin to that required for psychologists with degrees from nationally-accredited programs.

Thank you for your consideration. The Board of Examiners of Psychologists respectfully asks for a favorable vote for HB 26 with the proposed amendment. For more information, please contact Lorraine Smith, Executive Director, at lorraine.smith@maryland.gov or at 410-764-4786.

The opinion of the Board expressed in this document does not necessarily reflect that of the Department of Health or the Administration.

HB 26 - Psychology Bd - Support - Finance.pdf

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Position: FAV



Wes Moore, Governor · Aruna Miller, Lt. Governor · Laura Herrera Scott, M.D., M.P.H., Secretary

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**2023 SESSION
POSITION PAPER**

BILL NO: HB 26
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POSITION: Support

TITLE: Health Occupations – Psychologists – Licensure Qualifications

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Thank you for your consideration. The Board of Examiners of Psychologists respectfully asks for a favorable vote for HB 26 with the proposed amendment. For more information, please contact Lorraine Smith, Executive Director, at lorraine.smith@maryland.gov or at 410-764-4786.

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