

ARTHUR ELLIS, CPA
Legislative District 28
Charles County

DEPUTY MAJORITY LEADER

Finance Committee

Vice Chair, Rules Committee

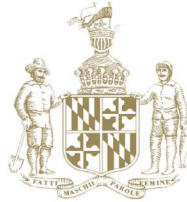
Senate Chair

Joint Committee on the
Management of Public Funds

Senate Chair

Joint Committee on
Workers' Compensation Benefit and
Insurance Oversight

Senate Chair, Charles County Delegation



THE SENATE OF MARYLAND
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Sponsor Written Testimony: Favorable

SB0568: Health Occupations – Licensed Psychologists – Prescriptive Authority

March 3, 2026

Dear Chair Beidle, Vice Chair Hayes, and colleagues on the Senate Finance Committee:

I respectfully submit this testimony in support of Senate Bill 0568. This legislation provides a thoughtful and structured pathway for licensed psychologists in Maryland to obtain prescriptive authority after completing advanced education, supervised clinical training, and meeting clearly defined regulatory standards.

Maryland, like many states, continues to experience provider shortages—particularly in rural counties, on the Eastern Shore, and in parts of Southern Maryland and Western Maryland. Patients frequently wait months for appointments with psychiatrists or other prescribing providers. In many communities, psychologists are the most accessible doctoral-level behavioral health professionals, yet they must refer patients elsewhere for medication management, even when they have developed a long-standing therapeutic relationship. This can delay care, fragment treatment, and increase costs. Senate Bill 0568 addresses this gap in a measured way. The bill does not grant automatic prescribing authority. Instead, it requires psychologists to complete postdoctoral education in clinical psychopharmacology, pass a national examination, complete supervised prescribing experience, and comply with collaboration and consultation standards. The Maryland Board of Examiners of Psychologists would maintain regulatory oversight, ensuring accountability and patient safety remain paramount.

Additionally, several states—including New Mexico, Louisiana, Illinois, Idaho, Utah, Colorado, Guam, already authorize professionally trained psychologists to prescribe. These jurisdictions have demonstrated that prescribing psychologists can safely expand access while maintaining high standards of care. For Maryland residents, particularly those in underserved communities, this bill represents improved access, greater continuity of care, and a more modern scope-of-practice framework that reflects today's training and healthcare realities.

For these reasons, I respectfully urge the Committee to issue a favorable report on Senate Bill 0568.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Arthur Ellis".

Arthur Ellis, CPA