



WRITTEN TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF HB 340

School Psychologist Interstate Licensure Compact

Submitted to: House Ways & Means Committee

Position: Support

Submitted by:

Rene Averitt-Sanzone, Executive Director

The Parents' Place of Maryland (PPMD)

Chair, Vice Chair, and Members of the Committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony **in strong support of HB 340**, which would bring Maryland into the **School Psychologist Interstate Licensure Compact**. This legislation is urgently needed to expand access to qualified school psychologists for Maryland's children—especially those with disabilities, behavioral health needs, or complex learning profiles.

As the Executive Director of **The Parents' Place of Maryland (PPMD)**, our statewide family-led organization works with thousands of families each year who depend on timely, skilled, and culturally responsive school psychological services. Families frequently share concerns about long evaluation timelines, limited availability of school psychologists, and the impact these shortages have on special education eligibility, behavioral health supports, and crisis intervention.

HB 340 directly addresses these challenges by allowing Maryland to:

- **Join a national framework** that permits licensed school psychologists to obtain an equivalent multistate license.
- **Reduce hiring barriers** for school districts that struggle to fill vacant positions.
- **Expand access** to school psychological services for students, including those in rural, under-resourced, or high-need areas.
- **Support military families**, who often relocate under permanent change-of-station orders, by ensuring continuity of services.
- **Ensure safety and quality** through rigorous standards for education, supervised practice, background checks, and adherence to each state's scope-of-practice laws.

School psychologists play a vital role in the lives of children—conducting assessments, supporting behavioral health needs, developing interventions, addressing school crises, and collaborating with families. When shortages exist, the consequences fall most heavily on those with the greatest needs.

By adopting this Compact, Maryland would:

- Create a **streamlined, efficient pathway** for qualified professionals to practice in our state.



- Strengthen the workforce that supports special education, mental health, and student well-being.
- Uphold Maryland's commitment to providing timely, equitable access to critical school-based services.

The bill maintains strong guardrails, including:

- Required background checks
- National exam standards
- Minimum educational and internship requirements
- Clear enforcement and disciplinary coordination among member states
- Respect for Maryland's existing scope-of-practice rules

These provisions ensure that only **qualified, vetted, and appropriately licensed** school psychologists may practice in Maryland through the Compact.

Families need timely evaluations, meaningful interventions, and robust mental health support. HB 340 offers a practical, responsible solution to a well-documented workforce challenge—and it does so without compromising quality or safety.

For these reasons, **The Parents' Place of Maryland respectfully urges a Favorable Report on HB 340.**

Thank you for your consideration and for your dedication to Maryland's children and families.

Sincerely,

Rene Averitt-Sanzone
Executive Director
The Parents' Place of Maryland (PPMD)