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**STATE OF HAWAII
OFFICE OF THE DIRECTOR
DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE AND CONSUMER AFFAIRS**

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Testimony of the Department of Commerce and Consumer Affairs

**Before the
House Committee on Intrastate Commerce
Thursday, March 12, 2020
9:30 a.m.
State Capitol, Conference Room 430**

**On the following measure:
S.B. 2877, S.D. 1, RELATING TO MENTAL HEALTH COUNSELORS**

Chair Ohno and Members of the Committee:

My name is Charlene Tamanaha, and I am the Licensing Administrator of the Department of Commerce and Consumer Affairs' (Department) Professional and Vocational Licensing Division. The Department supports this administration bill.

The purposes of this bill are to: (1) clarify that the practicum internship experience requirement shall be included with the course work in counseling requirement for mental health counselors; (2) clarify the supervision requirements of licensure for mental health counselors by permitting applicants to fulfill all or part of their face-to-face clinical supervision requirement by videoconference; and (3) clarify that the supervised mental health practicum intern experience requirement is a total of 300 hours of supervised client contact across two academic terms.

The Department's Mental Health Counselor Licensing Program (Program) is the only jurisdiction that includes the practicum internship requirement as a separate, standalone requirement rather than include it with the course work in counseling

requirement. As such, all applicants for a Hawaii mental health counselor license must provide 54 semester hours or 82 quarter hours of course work training, versus the national licensing standard of 48 semester hours or 72 quarter hours in course work in counseling.

This bill makes the practicum internship requirement a part of the course work in counseling requirement, thereby aligning the Program's licensing requirements with the national licensing standards of 48 semester hours or 72 quarter hours in course work in counseling.

This bill also streamlines post-graduate experience requirements by allowing the supervision requirement to be fulfilled, in part or whole, through videoconference. Currently, HRS section 453D-7(a)(3) requires post-graduate experience of 3,000 hours, including 100 hours of face-to-face supervision. Due to the prevalence of online courses through accredited universities and colleges, allowing the face-to-face supervision requirement to be completed through videoconference allows applicants some flexibility in completing their post-graduate work experience with both the supervisor and clinic or facility of their choice. This also eases the applicants' burden of always needing a face-to-face, in-person meeting with the supervisor, particularly in the case of neighbor island candidates who work in clinics on the neighbor islands and who need to communicate with supervisors on Oahu.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify, and we respectfully ask the Committee to pass this administration bill.



UNIVERSITY OF HAWAII SYSTEM

Legislative Testimony

LATE

Testimony Presented Before the
House Committee on Intrastate Commerce
Thursday, March 12, 2020 at 9:30 a.m., Rm 430

By
Bonnie Irwin
Chancellor
University of Hawai'i at Hilo

SB 2877 SD1 – RELATING TO MENTAL HEALTH COUNSELORS

Chair Ohno, Vice Chair Kobayashi, and members of the committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony on SB 2877 SD1. The University of Hawai'i at Hilo (UH Hilo) writes in strong support of SB 2877 SD1. The proposed change in the mental health counselor licensure law is directly relevant to our graduates in the Masters of Arts Program in Counseling Psychology (Specialization: Clinical Mental Health Counseling), as they are trained to be eligible for this license. The current version of the law unintentionally placed the 6-credit fieldwork requirement ("Practicum Intern Experience" with a total of 300 direct client hours) as a separate requirement from the 48-credit curriculum requirement, thereby changing the overall requirement to 54 credits. As the intent of the law was to require a 48-credit training, which is consistent with the licensing laws of other states, SB 2877 SD1 will fix this important flaw.

In addition, we strongly support the proposed language change in HRS §453D-7(a)(1)(F), on page 4, line 3, which references the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual (DSM), from "DSM-IV" to "DSM." The "IV" refers to the edition of the DSM to be used by mental health providers, and is updated once every several years, including the edition designation. By changing the designation from DSM-IV to DSM, the bill keeps the law current without requiring the statute to be changed on a periodic basis.

Furthermore, we request that the law be amended in Section (J), to read "At least two academic terms of supervised mental health practicum intern experience for graduate credit of at least six semester hours or ten quarter hours in a mental health counseling setting, with **a total of** three hundred hours of supervised client contact." The law needs to be clear that the 300 hours are the total accrued hours across two semesters.

We appreciate the opportunity to submit testimony and fully support this bill.



SB2877 SD1 (H) Mental Health Intern Counselors Can Be Supervised Electronically

COMMITTEE ON INTRASTATE COMMERCE:

- Rep. Takashi Ohno, Chair; Rep. Dale Kobayashi, Vice Chair
- Thursday, Mar. 12, 2020: 9:30 am
- Conference Room 430

Hawaii Substance Abuse Coalition Supports SB2877 SD1:

ALOHA CHAIR, VICE CHAIR AND DISTINGUISHED COMMITTEE MEMBERS. My name is Alan Johnson. I am the current chair of the Hawaii Substance Abuse Coalition (HSAC), a statewide organization of over 30 non-profit alcohol and drug treatment and prevention agencies.

Noting that HSAC also includes co-occurring disorders (both mental health and substance use disorders), we support:

1. *An experience requirement is absolutely essential* as a means to ensure quality care because care is becoming ever more complex with multiple chronic health conditions. We want to be better prepared to evolve with the increasing complex needs of our community.
2. *Having supervision include the use of videoconferencing is important because it is more than the “way of the future”, it is the “way of today.”* On the other hand when considering the importance of empathy, face-to-face clinical supervision would always be more than an option, it would be a preference for those interns wanting the most qualitative experience.

We appreciate the legislators support throughout the years in support of prevention and treatment to our shared community and are available for questions.



Thursday, March 12, 2020

Senate Bill 2877 SD1
Testifying in Support

Aloha Chair Ohno, Vice Chair Kobayashi, and Members of the Committee Intrastate Commerce,

The Democratic Part of Hawai'i (The Party) **stands in support of SB2877 SD1** Relating to Mental Health Counselors, which clarifies that the practicum internship experience requirement shall be included with the course work in counseling requirement for mental health counselors. Clarifies the supervision requirements of licensure for mental health counselors by permitting applicants to fulfill all or part of their face-to-face clinical supervision requirement by a videoconference service. (SD1)

Given the geography of the state of Hawai'i and the low number of qualified mental health professionals available in some of the more rural areas, this clarification to the licensure requirement, (allowing clinical supervision to take place via HIPAA compliant modes of technology), will in fact increase the amount of professional who can obtain licensure, thereby increasing access to behavioral health services to the residents of the state of Hawai'i.

There have been many studies conducted on the effectiveness of Tele-supervision, and it began being implemented in states with rural geography in 2016.

“Clinical supervision is integral to continuing professional development of health professionals. With advances in technology, clinical supervision too can be undertaken using mediums such as videoconference, email and teleconference. This mode of clinical supervision is termed as telesupervision. While telesupervision could be useful in any context, its value is amplified for health professionals working in rural and remote areas where access to supervisors within the local work environment is often diminished.”

Hawai'i already struggles with attracting and keeping mental health professionals for a myriad of reasons. Let's focus on removing the barriers, not creating them.

It is for these reasons that we encourage a favorable vote on this bill.

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify,

Josh Frost
Co-Chair, Legislation Committee
Democratic Party of Hawai'i

Zahava Zaidoff
Co-Chair, Legislation Committee
Democratic Party of Hawai'i

<https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S2214782917300131>

SB-2877-SD-1

Submitted on: 3/10/2020 12:57:17 PM

Testimony for IAC on 3/12/2020 9:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Bryan Kim, Ph.D.	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Dear Chair Takashi Ohno and members of the House Committee Intrastate Commerce:

My name is Bryan Kim, PhD, and I am a Professor of Psychology and Director of the MA Program in Counseling Psychology (Specialization: Clinical Mental Health Counselor) at the University of Hawaii at Hilo. I am writing in strong support of SB2877 SD1. The proposed change in the mental health counselor licensure law is directly relevant to the graduates of our MA Program at the University of Hawaii at Hilo, as these graduates are trained to be eligible for this license. The current version of the law accidentally placed the 6-credit fieldwork requirement ("Practicum Intern Experience" with a total of 300 direct client hours) as a separate requirement from the 48-credit curriculum requirement, thereby changing the overall requirement to 54 credits. As the intent of the law was to require a 48-credit training, which is consistent with the licensing laws of other states, SB2877 SD1 will fix this important flaw.

Also, the bill will change the wording of the diagnostic manual from "DSM-IV" to "DSM." DSM-IV is an older version and the new edition is DSM-5. The editions will change in the future and hence the law should refer to the generic DSM and not a specific edition.

Furthermore, I request that the law be amended in Section (J), to read "At least two academic terms of supervised mental health practicum intern experience for graduate credit of at least six semester hours or ten quarter hours in a mental health counseling setting, with **a total of** three hundred hours of supervised client contact." The law needs to be clear that the 300 hours are the total accrued hours across two semesters.

Sincerely,

Bryan Kim, Ph.D.

SB-2877-SD-1

Submitted on: 3/10/2020 2:17:53 PM

Testimony for IAC on 3/12/2020 9:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Marcy Martinez	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Dear Chair Takashi Ohno and members of the House Committee Intrastate Commerce:

My name is Marcy Martinez. I am writing in strong support of SB2877 SD1. The proposed change in the mental health counselor licensure law is directly relevant to the graduates of the MA Program in Counseling Psychology (Specialization: Clinical Mental Health Counseling) at the University of Hawaii at Hilo, as these graduates are trained to be eligible for this license. The current version of the law accidentally placed the 6-credit fieldwork requirement ("Practicum Intern Experience" with a total of 300 direct client hours) as a separate requirement from the 48-credit curriculum requirement, thereby changing the overall requirement to 54 credits. As the intent of the law was to require a 48-credit training, which is consistent with the licensing laws of other states, SB2877 SD1 will fix this important flaw.

Also, we strongly recommend that the bill should change the wording on page 4, line 3, which references the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual (DSM), from "DSM-IV" to "DSM." The IV refers to the edition of the DSM to be used by mental health providers, and is updated once every several years, including the edition designation. By changing the designation from DSM-IV to DSM, the bill keeps the law current without requiring the statute to be changed on a periodic basis.

Furthermore, I request that the law be amended in Section (J), to read "At least two academic terms of supervised mental health practicum intern experience for graduate credit of at least six semester hours or ten quarter hours in a mental health counseling setting, with **a total of** three hundred hours of supervised client contact." The law needs to be clear that the 300 hours are the total accrued hours across two semesters.

Mahalo for your consideration

Marcy Martinez

SB-2877-SD-1

Submitted on: 3/10/2020 2:33:54 PM

Testimony for IAC on 3/12/2020 9:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Rex Like	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Dear Chair Takashi Ohno and members of the House Committee Intrastate Commerce:

My name is Rex Like and I graduated from UH Hilo's Masters in Counseling program in 2008. I've been working in the mental health field for 13 years. I am writing in strong support of SB2877 SD1. The proposed change in the mental health counselor licensure law is directly relevant to the graduates of the MA Program in Counseling Psychology (Specialization: Clinical Mental Health Counseling) at the University of Hawaii at Hilo, as these graduates are trained to be eligible for this license. The current version of the law accidentally placed the 6-credit fieldwork requirement ("Practicum Intern Experience" with a total of 300 direct client hours) as a separate requirement from the 48-credit curriculum requirement, thereby changing the overall requirement to 54 credits. As the intent of the law was to require a 48-credit training, which is consistent with the licensing laws of other states, SB2877 SD1 will fix this important flaw.

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Furthermore, I request that the law be amended in Section (J), to read "At least two academic terms of supervised mental health practicum intern experience for graduate credit of at least six semester hours or ten quarter hours in a mental health counseling setting, with **a total of** three hundred hours of supervised client contact." The law needs to be clear that the 300 hours are the total accrued hours across two semesters. If you need to contact me, I can be reached at by email at rexlike@gmail.com or by phone at 808-640-9988.

Thank you,

Rex Like

SB-2877-SD-1

Submitted on: 3/10/2020 3:28:21 PM

Testimony for IAC on 3/12/2020 9:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Morgan T. Dominguez	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Dear Chair Takashi Ohno and members of the House Committee Intrastate Commerce:

I, Morgan T. Dominguez, am writing in strong support of SB2877 SD1. The proposed change in the mental health counselor licensure law is directly relevant to the graduates of the MA Program in Counseling Psychology (Specialization: Clinical Mental Health Counseling) at the University of Hawaii at Hilo, as these graduates are trained to be eligible for this license. The current version of the law accidentally placed the 6-credit fieldwork requirement ("Practicum Intern Experience" with a total of 300 direct client hours) as a separate requirement from the 48-credit curriculum requirement, thereby changing the overall requirement to 54 credits. As the intent of the law was to require a 48-credit training, which is consistent with the licensing laws of other states, SB2877 SD1 will fix this important flaw.

Also, we strongly recommend that the bill should change the wording on page 4, line 3, which references the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual (DSM), from "DSM-IV" to "DSM." The IV refers to the edition of the DSM to be used by mental health providers, and is updated once every several years, including the edition designation. By changing the designation from DSM-IV to DSM, the bill keeps the law current without requiring the statute to be changed on a periodic basis.

Furthermore, I request that the law be amended in Section (J), to read "At least two academic terms of supervised mental health practicum intern experience for graduate credit of at least six semester hours or ten quarter hours in a mental health counseling setting, with **a total of** three hundred hours of supervised client contact." The law needs to be clear that the 300 hours are the total accrued hours across two semesters.

Best,

Morgan T. Dominguez

LATE

SB-2877-SD-1

Submitted on: 3/11/2020 3:47:33 PM
Testimony for IAC on 3/12/2020 9:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Amanda Webster	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Dear Chair Takashi Ohno and members of the House Committee Intrastate Commerce:

I will be completing a master's degree in counseling psychology at UH Hilo in May 2020. The approval of this bill is really important to people who have or will be pursuing LMHC licensure. Accordingly, I am writing in strong support of SB2877 SD1. The proposed change in the mental health counselor licensure law is directly relevant to the graduates of the MA Program in Counseling Psychology (Specialization: Clinical Mental Health Counseling) at the University of Hawaii at Hilo, as these graduates are trained to be eligible for this license. The current version of the law accidentally placed the 6-credit fieldwork requirement ("Practicum Intern Experience" with a total of 300 direct client hours) as a separate requirement from the 48-credit curriculum requirement, thereby changing the overall requirement to 54 credits. As the intent of the law was to require a 48-credit training, which is consistent with the licensing laws of other states, SB2877 SD1 will fix this important flaw.

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Furthermore, I request that the law be amended in Section (J), to read "At least two academic terms of supervised mental health practicum intern experience for graduate credit of at least six semester hours or ten quarter hours in a mental health counseling setting, with a **total of three hundred hours of supervised client contact.**" **The law needs to be clear that the 300 hours are the total accrued hours across two semesters.**

Thanks for your consideration,

Amanda Webster

LATE

SB-2877-SD-1

Submitted on: 3/11/2020 4:35:27 PM

Testimony for IAC on 3/12/2020 9:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Jud Cunningham	Aloha House, Inc.	Support	No

Comments: