

March 14, 2016

COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION AND
COMMITTEE ON COMMERCE, CONSUMER PROTECTION AND HEALTH
Conference Room 229 Hawaii State Capitol
415 South Beretania Street

SCR44

Aloha Chairs Baker & Kidani:

Hawaii Association of School Psychologists (HASP) believes that licensure is important for all professionals that are entrusted to care for students, especially those with special needs. HR 465 protects the professional integrity of the term “psychology” by ensuring that nonlicensed individuals cannot practice psychology. This public protection ensures that specialized training and expertise is required to practice psychology. Currently, School Psychologists are ‘exempt’ from having to have licensure to practice in the educational setting (HR465) and have had no credentialing in the state of Hawaii. Hawaii is the **only** state in the nation that allows this. This exemption has allowed individuals who do not have graduate training in school psychology and who do not meet the nationally accepted certification standard to practice “psychology” within the educational setting. We are asking for the legislators support to establish licensing in Hawaii, in that it nullifies that exemption and ensures that students receive services from highly qualified and licensed professionals. Only certificated or licensed professionals are billable under Medicaid, so the current exemption does not allow for the Department of Education to bill for any services or evaluations conducted by school psychologists at this time. Licensing of school psychologists would be another avenue for the DOE to generate funds under Medicaid.

Graduate training in school psychology and a supervised internship aligns with the Practice Model set forth by the National Association of School Psychologists (NASP). The Practice Model outlines the professional expectations of respecting the dignity and rights of all persons and maintaining professional competency and integrity in professional relationships to foster and maintain the public trust. Our practice model outlines the training of school psychologists that requires them to be forthright about their qualifications, competencies, and roles. We work in full cooperation with other professional disciplines to meet the needs of students and families and avoid multiple relationships that diminish their professional effectiveness. We maintain the public trust by respecting law and encouraging ethical conduct. When untrained and unqualified persons are employed as a ‘school psychologist’ under this current exemption in HR 465, but do not meet the graduate level training requirements, the integrity of the profession is compromised and the public is not protected. The training of school psychologist is unique in that we have extensive training in cognitive, academic, emotional and adaptive assessment practices and training to ensure these measures are fair, reliable and valid. When these assessments are not administered as they were designed, the students are not being fairly assessed, which can result in inaccurate results. The research is clear that students who are identified with special learning needs are at a higher risk for a number of negative outcomes, such as dropping out of school, qualifying for lower-level jobs, or becoming involved in criminal activity.

Hawaii Association of School Psychologist asks that you support licensing of school psychologists to ensure that all children in Hawaii are afforded the same protection of a licensed and credentialed professional working in their scope of practice.

Respectfully Submitted:

Leslie A. Baunach, MA/CAS, NCSP
HASP President

From: mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov
To: [WAM Testimony](#)
Cc: tbrahim08@gmail.com
Subject: *Submitted testimony for SCR44 on Apr 5, 2016 13:00PM*
Date: Monday, April 04, 2016 8:21:50 PM

SCR44

Submitted on: 4/4/2016

Testimony for WAM on Apr 5, 2016 13:00PM in Conference Room 211

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Troy Abraham	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Please note that testimony submitted less than 24 hours prior to the hearing, improperly identified, or directed to the incorrect office, may not be posted online or distributed to the committee prior to the convening of the public hearing.

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