

February 8, 2021

Chairman Huffman, Vice Chair Antani, Ranking Member Antonio, and members of the Ohio Senate Health Committee, thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony in support of Senate Bill 2.

UC Health is an integrated academic health system serving the Greater Cincinnati region. In partnership with the University of Cincinnati, UC Health combines clinical expertise and compassion with research and teaching. The University of Cincinnati medical Center is also the region's Trauma I center and Comprehensive Stroke Center, providing vital care for the most complex situations.

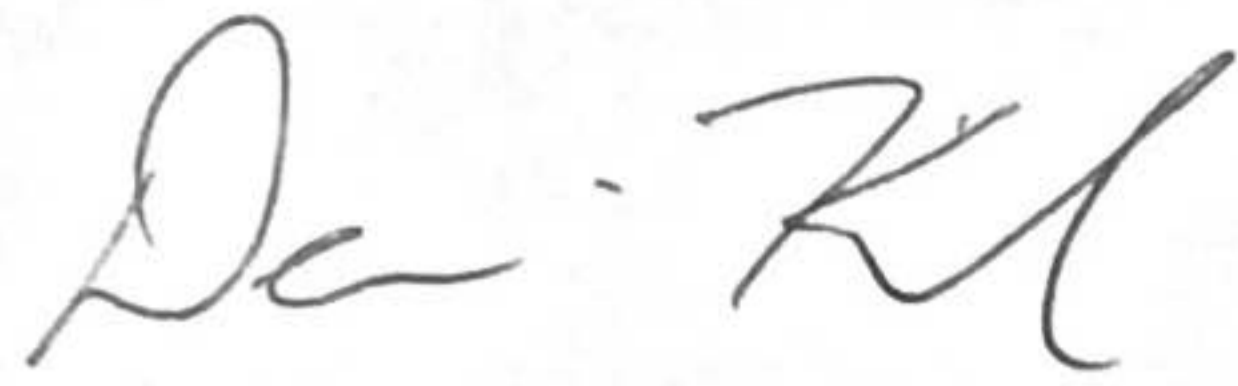
The Psychology Interjurisdictional Compact (PSYPACT) included in SB 2 would allow for psychologists to provide telehealth services to patients residing in other compact states. PSYPACT also allows for psychologists to serve patients in a face-to-face setting in the patient's state for thirty days a year. If Ohio were to join the compact, UC Health psychologists would be able to offer vital psychology services to our patients across state lines. SB 2 accomplishes this task by eliminating many administrative barriers that prevent patients from receiving the needed care from highly qualified psychologists. As witnessed during the COVID-19 pandemic, Ohioans in need of behavioral health services were able to access care through telehealth. PSYPACT will ensure that these services will be extended to patients outside of Ohio and will further this mode of practice, increasing access and quality of care for UC Health patients.

PSYPACT includes many safeguards and additional investigative authority to the state psychology board. As stated in previous testimony in support of SB 2, the Ohio Board of Psychology is confident that PSYPACT consists of the strong safeguards needed to protect Ohioans from, "incompetent and dangerous practices by psychologists licensed in other states." For example, if a member state psychology board files a complaint against a psychologist, the home psychology board must investigate the matter. If a psychologist is serving a patient in a member state through a face-to-face visit and a complaint is filed, the state in which the patient resides has full authority to investigate the complaint. PSYPACT also forms the Coordinated Licensure Information System that serves as a central data warehouse for all psychologists who practice in other compact states. This system records all licensures and disciplinary action taken against a psychologist who practices under PSYPACT, allowing for transparency and access to important data necessary to protect patients. Further, all states must inform the other compact state members of any negative actions taken against a psychologist under PSYPACT, and Ohio's psychology board has full authority to prohibit a psychologist from serving Ohio patients.

UC Health greatly appreciates Senator Gavarone's leadership on this issue, and we strongly support PSYPACT included in Senate Bill 2.

Thank you again for the opportunity to testify in support of SB 2. Please contact me at any time if I can provide any further information.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "David Karol". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "David" and the last name "Karol" clearly distinguishable.

David Karol, MD, MA

Vice Chair of Clinical Services

Department of Psychiatry and Behavioral Neuroscience

University of Cincinnati College of Medicine

O: (513) 584-7107