

Senate Workforce & Higher Education Committee
Nov. 30, 2022
Opponent Testimony on HB 509

ERIN HULL presenting on behalf of Jessica Bradham

Chairman Johnson and members of the Senate Workforce and Higher Education Committee, thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony on HB 509. My name is Jessica Bradham. I have served as an onsite (in-person) Ohio school psychologist in Cleveland and Cincinnati prior to my family relocating to North Carolina. I currently hold dual Ohio School Psychology licensure through the Ohio Department of Education and the Ohio Board of Psychology (in addition to being licensed as a School Psychologist by the North Carolina Psychology Board).

Currently for 2022-23 school year, as mother to an infant and toddler in North Carolina, I have continued to serve Ohio schools in a remote School Psychologist position by assisting an Ohio onsite school psychologist with scoring and interpreting assessments, report writing, and writing Ohio Department of Education (ODE) paperwork. Ohio schools have been unable to find local School Psychologist help, and I am happy this solution has afforded me to continue to serve Ohio school children as a school psychologist remotely. If the Committee votes in favor to do away with the Ohio Board of Psychology School Psychology licensure, I may no longer be able to serve Ohio Schools remotely as a school psychologist due to the additional barriers of not having access to work through a Local Professional Development Committee (LPDC) and/or current cumbersome alternatives to an LPDC as described by ODE. This problem would not be unique to me but would affect numerous contractor school psychologists like myself throughout the entire state of Ohio, especially those not contracted to serve children in traditional district schools or school psychologists that serve on an as-needed basis. As a trained school psychologist (not psychologist) for Ohio I must have a five-year professional Ohio Department of Education (ODE) Pupil Services (School Psychologist) license. Presently, I can keep up my required ODE School Psychology licensure by staying current of my advanced professional development and in turn my school psychology license through the Ohio Board of Psychology. Meaning, to renew my five-year professional Ohio Department of Education (ODE) license, I maintain my Ohio Psychology Board license. By doing so, I meet all ODE renewal requirements and therefore, do not need to work through an ODE Local Professional Development Committee (LPDC) to obtain my professional development hours.

I do not have access to a LPDC as described by ODE even if I were physically back in Ohio. If you eliminate the separate Ohio Board of Psychology license for school psychologists, then contractor school psychologists serving children in schools all over the state of Ohio will have very limited means to renew their required ODE licensure. I would likely have to complete an expensive University semester long course and/or try to seek out an Educational Service Center in Ohio willing to sponsor me through their LPDC even though I would not be performing work for their school districts.

I urge you not to add to the already existing barriers and hardships in education in our Ohio schools by voting against the current proposed language in HB 509. Please do not eliminate the ability for Ohio school psychologists to also be licensed through the Ohio Board of Psychology. Thank you for your time.