

Opponent Testimony Senate Bill 1

Workforce and Higher Education Committee

March 11, 2025

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Clinical Psychologist

Chair Young, Vice Chair Ritter, Ranking Member Piccolantonio, and members of the House Workforce and Higher Education Committee,

Thank you for allowing me to submit written testimony on this important issue. My name is Michelle Schultz. I have been a licensed Clinical Psychologist and involved in Doctoral Psychology education and training in Ohio for the last 15-years. I am writing as an individual to express my strong opposition to Senate Bill 1 (SB1), and particular concern regarding section 3345.0217.

I am proud to have received my Bachelor's degree from Miami University and my Doctoral degree from Wright State University. In reflecting on my own educational journey, I recognize that the most impactful experiences were ones in which I was exposed to diverse individuals, situations, and ideas. Deep, meaningful learning came from being challenged to acknowledge and understand my own and other's experiences and beliefs related to bias, privilege, and oppression through free, open dialogue in safe, inclusive spaces of learning. As a white, able-bodied, heterosexual woman, I, personally and professionally, benefited from the diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) focused curriculum and training at Wright State University's School of Professional Psychology. Their DEI curriculum and training prepared me to provide effective, evidence-based and ethical mental health services to children, adolescents, and adults in Ohio.

I am deeply concerned for the future of health services psychology (i.e., Clinical, Counseling, and School Psychology) education and training, and mental health services in Ohio if Senate Bill 1 were to pass. The American Psychological Association's Commission on Accreditation (CoA) requires accredited health services psychology programs to provide opportunities for all of their students to achieve and demonstrate competence in nine profession-wide competencies, which include "Individual and Cultural Diversity", as outlined in the Standards of Accreditation. Per the Commission on Accreditation Implementing Regulations (pg.16):

"Effectiveness in health service psychology requires that students develop the ability to conduct all professional activities with sensitivity to human diversity, including the ability to deliver high quality services to an increasingly diverse population. Therefore, trainees must demonstrate knowledge, awareness, sensitivity, and skills when working with diverse individuals and communities who embody a variety of cultural and personal background and characteristics. The Commission on Accreditation defines cultural and individual differences and diversity as including, but not limited to, age, disability,

ethnicity, gender, gender identity, language, national origin, race, religion, culture, sexual orientation, and socioeconomic status. The CoA recognizes that development of competence in working with individuals of every variation of cultural or individual difference is not reasonable or feasible. Doctoral students are expected to at a minimum to:

- demonstrate an understanding of how their own personal/cultural history, attitudes, and biases may affect how they understand and interact with people different from themselves;
- demonstrate knowledge of the current theoretical and empirical knowledge base as it relates to addressing diversity in all professional activities including research, training, supervision/consultation, and service; and
- demonstrate the ability to integrate awareness and knowledge of individual and cultural differences, including intersectionality, in articulating an approach to working effectively with diverse individuals and groups.
- demonstrate the ability to work effectively with individuals whose group membership, demographic characteristics, or worldviews differ with their own.”

To meet this CoA requirement, accredited health service psychology programs infuse diversity, equity, and inclusion didactic and experiential training throughout their curriculum. Requiring accredited psychology programs to alter their APA-accredited approved curriculum to meet the requirements in SB1 could potentially jeopardize their accreditation status which would threaten their ability to recruit qualified, competent faculty, staff, and students and their existence. Additionally, CoA requires APA-accredited programs to recruit and retain diverse students and faculty through program-level, systemic activities. Unfortunately, I am already aware of incidents in which qualified faculty candidates and perspective students have chosen offers from psychology programs in other states due to the anticipated negative impact on academic freedoms and quality doctoral psychology education of this pending legislation.

Thank you again for this opportunity to submit written testimony. I ask you to consider my testimony, and the negative impact this Bill would have on Ohio students and citizens, APA-accredited doctoral psychology programs, and Ohioans’ future access to competent mental health providers. I urge you to vote NO on Senate Bill 1.

Respectfully,



Michelle Schultz, Psy. D.
Ohio Citizen, Clinical Psychologist, Doctoral Psychology Educator