



**Testimony on the FY26-27 Biennial Operating Budget
Senate Health Committee
Senator Stephen Huffman, Chair**

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Executive Director
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Chairman Huffman, Vice Chair Johnson, Ranking Member Liston, and members of the Senate Health Committee:

I am Karine Hray, Executive Director of the State Board of Psychology. Thank you on behalf of the board for the opportunity to provide testimony and answer questions you might have.

The State Board of Psychology's Role in Ohio

The State Board of Psychology ensures Ohioans' access to safe, competent psychological services through examination, licensing, education, and enforcement. Since 1972, it has safeguarded the public by overseeing the qualifications of Psychologists, Independent School Psychologists, and Certified Ohio Behavior Analysts through licensing, continuing education, and investigations of complaints.

This important work is carried out by a 10-member board consisting of licensed psychologists, patient advocates and certified behavior analysts, supported by a 5-member staff. The staff plays a critical role in fulfilling the Board's mission by conducting and processing applications, renewing and verifying credentials, investigating complaints, ensuring licensees follow state laws and ethical guidelines, and responding to inquiries from the public and licensed professionals.

Budget Request

The Board's proposed budget is based on a thorough review of historical spending, anticipated commitments, and the addition of licensed school psychologists mandated by House Bill 509. The total requested funding is \$975,010 for FY26 and \$1,011,722 for FY27. This funding represents the minimum required to maintain current operations, meet obligations to enforce Ohio Revised Codes 4732 and 4783, manage the increase in licensees, and meet payroll projections.

Operational Costs & Expansion of Licensees

The Board continues to see a steady increase in licenses. And with the passage of House Bill 509, our responsibilities expanded to regulate Licensed School Psychologists as of January 1, 2025,

which increased our base of licensees from approximately 5,000 to 8,100. This expansion will nearly double our investigative caseload over the next two fiscal years.

To manage this substantial increase and maintain the quality of service Ohioans expect, we are requesting funding to hire a new hybrid position. This new role will assist with licensing operations and manage investigative cases, ensuring we can process licenses efficiently and initiate investigations promptly. The addition of this position is essential to uphold our commitment to public safety and accountability as we navigate this expanded scope of responsibility.

While requesting additional funding for staff, we must also address rising operational costs. Most of the proposed budget will go toward essential operational expenses, including personal services, supplies, maintenance, and payroll.

Increased Revenue and Contribution to the 4K90 Fund

Like most occupational regulatory boards, the Board of Psychology is self-supporting through fees and does not receive General Revenue Funds. Earnings from license fees and other sources are deposited into the Occupational Licensing Fund. Going forward, the Board will generate new revenue to support state resources in that fund. With the inclusion of Licensed School Psychologists under our mandate, we anticipate generating approximately \$1,000,000 in revenue in FY26 from the newly regulated school licensees. This will be followed by \$90,000 in FY27. Along with existing revenue from license renewals, we project contributing approximately \$1,160,000 to the Occupational Licensing Fund in FY26 and \$1,690,000 in FY27.

These contributions will far exceed our budget request, demonstrating our commitment to supporting state resources beyond our operational needs.

Conclusion

The Board believes this biennial funding recommendation is essential to managing the increase in licensees, maintaining high standards of public protection, and covering necessary operational costs. Our proposed budget will allow us to:

- Effectively manage the influx of new licensees and maintain operational standards.
- Cover critical expenses, including credit card processing fees, complex investigations, and administrative hearings.
- Ensure the stability of our operations by retaining and hiring necessary staff to meet growing demands.

Thank you for your time and consideration of our request. I am happy to answer any questions.