



Ohio Board of Psychology

Testimony in support of SB258
Psychology Interjurisdictional Compact (PSYPACT)
Senate Finance Subcommittee on Health and Medicaid

Sen. Stephen A. Huffman, Chair
Sen. Bob D. Hackett, Vice Chair
Sen. Cecil Thomas, Ranking Member

Chairman Huffman, Vice Chair Hackett, Ranking Member Thomas, and Committee Members:

I am Dr. Ron Ross, Executive Director of the Ohio Board of Psychology, and I'm here on behalf of the Psychology Board to request your support of SB258, which would result in Ohio entering the interstate compact for the practice of psychology by distance communications. Telepsychology has evolved into a mental health practice specialty that fosters increased access to care and new practice opportunities for Ohio's psychologists. The Psychology Board voted to endorse the compact in 2016 after determining that it preserves the Board's ability to exercise its legitimate state interest in protecting public health and safety.

The purpose of PSYPACT is to facilitate the interstate practice of telepsychology and the temporary in-person, face-to-face practice of psychology with the goal of improving access to mental health services in a manner that preserves the regulatory authority of each member state to protect public health and safety. PSYPACT was created to provide a clear, agreed-upon regulatory structure for the practice of telepsychology and temporary in-person, face-to-face practice. Advantages to consumers include increased access to general care and specialty care and avenues for complaints and accountability. PSYPACT requires that a psychologist be licensed in their home state and authorizes qualified psychologists to practice telepsychology in a receiving state or conduct temporary in-person, face-to-face practice in a distant state. This allows the home state to continue to regulate the license while allowing receiving states to know who is practicing in their state without requiring psychologists to obtain and maintain a license in every PSYPACT state.

My primary intent today is to assure the committee that we know what we're getting into, and we are prepared to implement the compact in Ohio. As a compact governed by a commission comprised of representatives of compact member boards, this is a relatively easy lift for our board. There is no need for additional staffing or financial resources to fully participate as a compact state. The costs to any participating board are capped at \$6,000 annually, a level of participation that we can absorb without attaching an appropriation to this bill. Ohio psychologists are already authorized to provide telepsychology services to Ohioans under our current law and rules, and SB258 would reduce access-to-care barriers while retaining the Psychology Board's authority to limit or stop incompetent and dangerous practices by psychologists licensed in other states.

Thank you for the opportunity to briefly address you today, and I would be pleased to answer any questions.

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