

HB 2117 STAFF MEASURE SUMMARY**Carrier:** Sen. Gelser**Senate Committee On Human Services, Mental Health and Recovery**

Action Date: 05/18/21
Action: Do pass.
Vote: 3-1-1-0
Yeas: 3 - Gelser, Lieber, Taylor
Nays: 1 - Anderson
Exc: 1 - Robinson
Fiscal: Has minimal fiscal impact
Revenue: No revenue impact
Prepared By: C. Ross, Counsel
Meeting Dates: 5/4, 5/18

WHAT THE MEASURE DOES:

Repeals Oregon Board of Psychology's (BOP's) regulatory authority over new psychologist associates. Directs BOP to continue regulating previous licensees. Retains examples of duties that licensed psychologist associates may perform under periodic direct supervision of licensed psychologists and retains authority to approve associates' petitions to perform such duties independently. Operative January 1, 2022. Effective 91st day after *sine die* adjournment.

ISSUES DISCUSSED:

- Maintaining previously issued licenses
- Difficulty obtaining recognition/reimbursement from insurance companies absent licensure
- Potential financial impact on providers aspiring for licensure; potential impact on recruitment of licensed providers from other states; how/whether to recognize equivalent out-of-state endorsement or certification
- Distinguishing failure of insurance companies from question of government efficiency: whether regulating a license that is no longer in demand is a good use of time/efforts of small regulatory body
- Provider shortage generally; failure to promote availability of master's level psychologist associates
- Breadth of BOP responsibilities and need to prioritize
- Lack of demand for psychologist associates license; increased demand for other licenses

EFFECT OF AMENDMENT:

No amendment.

BACKGROUND:

The Oregon Board of Psychology (BOP) regulates the practice of psychology and is located within the Mental Health Regulatory Agency. It is responsible for adopting rules and a code of ethics; establishing standards of service, education and training, and qualifications to practice; investigating alleged violations; and imposing appropriate sanctions.

Licensed psychologist associates are individuals under the direct supervision of a licensed psychologist; they may administer tests and assessments, or engage in vocational or educational planning, among other duties, but they are not required to have a doctoral degree. Currently, psychologist associates must apply to the BOP and pay a fee; possess a master's degree in psychology from an approved program; pass any required examinations; be deemed of good moral character; complete an approved internship or one year of other training; complete an additional three years of full-time work experience under the supervision of a licensed psychologist; and petition for BOP approval to perform duties independently. The Mental Health Regulatory Agency reports there is no longer sufficient demand for psychologist associate licenses.

HB 2117 STAFF MEASURE SUMMARY

House Bill 2117 repeals the BOP's regulatory authority over psychologist associates going forward, retaining examples of duties existing license holders may perform under supervision and the authority to approve associates' petitions to perform duties independently.