

Edward Fisher, PhD, RPh.
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Keaau, Hawaii 96749
Cell: 623-521-0658

**LATE
TESTIMONY**

Testimony in Support of SB 597, Relating to Psychologists

February 15, 2011:

Honorable Senator Josh Green, M.D., Chair, Senator Clarence K. Nishihara, Vice Chair and members of the Committee, my name is Edward Fisher, PhD, RPh. I would like to provide testimony in strong support of SB 597 that would allow prescriptive authority for appropriately trained psychologists practicing at federally qualified health centers (FQHCs). I am currently Professor and Associate Dean for Academic Affairs at the University of Hawaii at Hilo College of Pharmacy. I am also a pharmacist licensed to practice in Pennsylvania and Arizona. (My opinions presented here are mine as an individual and do not necessarily represent the opinions of the University of Hawaii at Hilo).

If passed this current proposed bill will allow qualified clinical psychologists help ease the mental suffering and anguish of patients in community health centers in Hawaii. By expanding the number of qualified individuals with prescriptive authority there is not only benefit to patients suffering from mental disorders, but also to their family members who see their loved ones going untreated.

As part of my duties at College of Pharmacy in Hilo I am responsible for the creation of the Master of Science degree in Clinical Psychopharmacology (MSCP). Briefly, the objective of the MSCP program is to provide a rigorous, advanced education in clinical psychopharmacology to licensed, doctoral-level, practicing psychologists to enable them to safely and effectively prescribe medications for their patients in accordance with all relevant state and federal laws. Additionally, in states that do not allow such prescriptive authority, this program will enhance the ability of clinical psychologist's to consult with primary care physicians and psychiatrists about the appropriate drug therapy for their patients. The curriculum is designed to provide an in-depth coverage of the pharmacotherapy associated with the treatment of mental disorders. I want to assure the Committee that this program is of sufficient rigor and scope to provide Clinical Psychologists all of the skills in pharmacotherapy necessary to prescribe appropriate and safe drug therapy for patients suffering from mental disorders. In addition to the successful completion of the MSCP, the proposed bill requires a year-long clinical practicum and the Psychopharmacology Examination for Psychologists.

I respectfully ask that the committee to adopt this bill allowing appropriately trained psychologists to provide safe drug therapy to patients, who are currently underserved, and suffering from mental disorders.

Respectfully submitted,

Edward Fisher, PhD, RPh.

green1 - Karen

From: mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov
Sent: Wednesday, February 16, 2011 8:50 AM
To: HTHTestimony
Cc: amber_rohner@hotmail.com
Subject: Testimony for SB597 on 2/16/2011 2:45:00 PM

Testimony for HTH 2/16/2011 2:45:00 PM SB597

Conference room: 229
Testifier position: oppose
Testifier will be present: No
Submitted by: Amber Rohner Sakuda
Organization: Individual
Address:
Phone:
E-mail: amber_rohner@hotmail.com
Submitted on: 2/16/2011

**LATE
TESTIMONY**

Comments:
RE: OPPOSITION TO SB 597

Aloha Committee Members,

I am writing in strong opposition to SB 597. I am a psychiatrist, an MD, & I work closely with psychologists to care for my patients. They are valuable allies, but they do not have the medical background to safely prescribe medications. After 4 years of undergraduate training heavy in the sciences, 4 years of medical school with emphasis in the biomedical sciences, and over 4 years of residency training, I still am very cautious & wary when prescribing medications. I don't see how a short crash course could safely replace the extensive training I have undertaken. I would not feel competent prescribing with such little training as what is proposed.

Additionally, we had several cases at Queen's hospital where the patient reported that their psychologist was prescribing psychotropic medications to them & they had an adverse medical outcome. It concerns me greatly that people in the community are letting this happen & our patients are suffering because of it. Patient safety is my main concern & I feel strongly that passing this bill would endanger our patients & our community. Please consider opposing this bill & supporting patient safety. MAHALO NUI LOA!

Sincerely,
Amber Rohner Sakuda, MD

green1 - Karen

From: gerald mckenna [gmckenna001@hawaii.rr.com]
Sent: Wednesday, February 16, 2011 6:42 AM
To: All Senators; HTHTestimony
Subject: SB597

LATE TESTIMONY

To: Committee on Health
Senator Josh Green, Chair
Senator Clarence Nishihara, Cochair
February 16, 2011

From: Gerald J. McKenna M.D.
Psychiatrist, Island of Kauai

Re: Senate Bill 597

Dear Senators,

I am writing to express my opposition to Senate Bill 597, regarding prescribing privileges for psychologists. I am certified by the American Board of Psychiatry and Neurology as well as being certified by the American Board Of Addiction Medicine. These boards have been established to ensure that any physician so certified has the proper training, necessary college and post graduate degrees and experience to practice medicine in these fields.

The boards of psychology have no such track record in ensuring that their members receive proper training in any scientific field. It is possible to get a bachelor's degree in psychology without ever taking a science course throughout one's college career. It is possible to get a Ph.D. in psychology without taking coursework in any scientific field, even in psychology.

There are many universities throughout the country that have excellent Ph.D. programs in psychology. They train psychologists who are grounded in the professional field of psychology and who are competent to practice in psychology. These are not the schools that are pushing for prescriptive privileges for psychologists.

There are other schools in essentially fly-by-night universities which allow the granting of Ph.D.'s in psychology with little or no formal training. The public has no way of knowing which school is truly professional and which schools are willing to grant degrees to anyone with enough money to pay for the degree.

There is no precedent in the professional world or in the world of trade unions that would allow somebody to practice the trade or profession after receiving a crash course in the respective profession or trade. This is not the time or place to allow this to happen to the practice of psychopharmacology in Hawaii.

Primary care physicians throughout our state work closely with psychiatrists to provide medications for their patients in need of psychiatric medications to treat the major neuro-psychiatric disorders such as depression, bipolar disorder, schizophrenia, the anxiety disorders and other conditions that we now know to be primarily neurological in nature. The Hawaii psychiatric Medical Association provides training programs for primary care physicians to update them on advances in the complex field of psychopharmacology. We have provided training on the island of Kauai and on the big island in Hilo. Additional training programs are planned for Oahu and Maui. This is the most efficient, effective and safe method to ensure that all of the residents of our state have access to physicians who are knowledgeable and competent to prescribed psychiatric medications.

You have an important job to do in your role on the health committee. We support you in your endeavors to see that health care in Hawaii remains at the highest possible level of competence and in your role to protect the people of Hawaii from and competent medical care. We wish you well in these dual endeavors.

Sincerely, Gerald J. McKenna M.D.
Past President, Hawaii Medical Association
Past President, Hawaii Psychiatric Medical Association
Past President, Hawaii Society of Addiction Medicine

**LATE
TESTIMONY**

SB597

**PRESENTATION OF THE
BOARD OF PSYCHOLOGY**

TO THE SENATE COMMITTEE ON HEALTH
TWENTY-SIXTH STATE LEGISLATURE
Regular Session of 2011

**LATE
TESTIMONY**

Wednesday, February 16, 2011
2:45 p.m.

WRITTEN TESTIMONY ONLY

TESTIMONY ON SENATE BILL NO. 597, RELATING TO PSYCHOLOGISTS.

TO THE HONORABLE JOSH GREEN, M.D., CHAIR,
AND MEMBERS OF THE COMMITTEE:

My name is Ahlani Quiogue and I am the Executive Officer for the Hawaii Board of Psychology ("Board"). The Board has not had an opportunity to review this bill, but will be discussing it at the Board's next meeting on February 25, 2011. Therefore, it is not able to take a position at this time.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide written testimony on Senate Bill No. 597.

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**LATE
TESTIMONY**

597

February 14, 2010

House Human Services and Health Committees

RE: STRONG OPPOSITION OF HOUSE BILL 328, 695 (and SB 597)

Dear House Human Services and Health Committee Members,

We are writing on behalf of the primary care physicians and Nurse Practitioners of the Hamakua Health Center, Inc., a federally qualified center providing integrated behavioral mental health and primary health care services to medically underserved populations on the Big Island including the Hamakua coast and North Hawaii.

While we recognize the pressing need for additional psychiatric services in rural areas, we are certain HB328 and HB695 will not provide for these services. In fact, **passage of these bills will create a greater shortage in needed services** as primary care physicians will have to devote additional time to address the additional problems created by psychologists prescribing psychiatric medications.

This legislation does not address the critical medical issues raised by permitting psychologists to prescribe psychiatric medications. Extensive medical training is required to recognize medical illnesses that present with psychiatric symptoms. Coursework and/or supplementary training in psychopharmacology will not serve as a substitute for 8 years of medical school and residency or qualified medical training for several reasons:

- Psychiatric medications have very serious medical side effects that only a formally trained physician or nurse practitioner can recognize and treat effectively.
- Medical training is required to interpret the laboratory tests associated with psychiatric medications.
- Specialized training coupled with a medical background is required to address the interactions between psychiatric medications and medications used to treat medical illnesses.

Alternative?

We support *psychiatrists* working in our clinic to provide consultation and liaison services to medical providers. We have experience with this model of care and it has proven to be very beneficial for our staff and patients.

LATE TESTIMONY

Dear Chairman Josh Green, Vice Chairman Clarence Nishihara, and members of the Senate Committee on Health:

Re: SB 597
February 16, 2011
2:45 PM
Room 229
On Prescriptive Authority for Psychologists
In Opposition

I strongly urge a no vote on the proposed legislation. Patients with mental illness deserve access to fully trained medical personnel.

Access issues are real, and increasing primary care collaboration, increasing APRN and PA recruitment and retention is the way to improve the health of all of our citizens.

Please vote no on SB 597.

Regards and Aloha

Gregory Prier, DO

Child and Adolescent Psychiatrist, Kahi Mohala

Psychiatrist, Care Hawaii

green1 - Karen

LATE

TESTIMONY

From: mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov
Sent: Wednesday, February 16, 2011 11:01 AM
To: HTHTestimony
Cc: edward01larry@yahoo.com
Subject: Testimony for SB597 on 2/16/2011 2:45:00 PM

Testimony for HTH 2/16/2011 2:45:00 PM SB597

Conference room: 229
Testifier position: oppose
Testifier will be present: No
Submitted by: Edward Larry
Organization: Individual
Address:
Phone:
E-mail: edward01larry@yahoo.com
Submitted on: 2/16/2011

Comments:
Psychologist qualifications do not meet a qualified Psychiatrist, And also I do have a Psychiatrist that prescribes medications.

green1 - Karen

**LATE
TESTIMONY**

From: mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov
Sent: Tuesday, February 15, 2011 8:48 PM
To: HTHTestimony
Cc: turbochang@hotmail.com
Subject: Testimony for SB597 on 2/16/2011 2:45:00 PM

Testimony for HTH 2/16/2011 2:45:00 PM SB597

Conference room: 229
Testifier position: oppose
Testifier will be present: No
Submitted by: miriam chang
Organization: Individual
Address:
Phone:
E-mail: turbochang@hotmail.com
Submitted on: 2/15/2011

Comments:

This bill is not safe for our patients, family, friends.

1. The current requirements for psychology prescriptive authority is insufficient to ensure adequate training for safe practice. Compare the amount of training nurse practitioners receive before they can be licensed to prescribed.
2. I personally know of one death and one near death directly related to actions of a psychologist who was "trained to prescribe". These incidents underscore the inadequacy of psychologist training in "the practice of medicine".
3. Note that this bill doesn't provide for "monitoring" or "quality improvement" or "patient safety" for a population who are already at risk, who frequently are incapable of advocating for themselves.
4. Many other safer options are available for our rural areas for mental health care: Telemedicine; Nurse Practitioners and Family Physicians.