

**PRESENTATION OF THE
BOARD OF PSYCHOLOGY**

TO THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON
CONSUMER PROTECTION & COMMERCE

TWENTY-EIGHTH LEGISLATURE
Regular Session of 2015

Monday, February 2, 2015
2:00 p.m.

TESTIMONY ON HOUSE BILL NO. 453, RELATING TO PSYCHOLOGISTS.

TO THE HONORABLE ANGUS L.K. MCKELVEY, CHAIR,
AND MEMBERS OF THE COMMITTEE:

My name is May Ferrer, Executive Officer of the Hawaii Board of Psychology (“Board”). Thank you for the opportunity to testify on House Bill No. 453, Relating to Psychologists. The Board has not yet had an opportunity to review this bill, but will do so at its next meeting on Friday, February 20, 2015.

The purpose of this bill is to include ethics training and domestic violence training as part of the continuing education requirement for psychologists.

As the members of the Committee are aware, pursuant to Act 187, SLH 2014, beginning July 1, 2016, licensed psychologists are required to complete a minimum of eighteen credit hours of continuing education courses for each licensing renewal biennium.

While the Board supports the continuing education requirement, it has expressed its concern regarding mandating specific course topics. This concern of mandating course topics was expressed at the time the Board drafted the language which subsequently became Act 187, SLH 2014. The Board expressed its concerns when working very closely with the Hawaii Psychological Association (“HPA”) that it does not want to mandate specific course requirements. The Board believes that continuing

education, and the selection of each course and the course topic, should be left to the discretion of the licensee as long as it is approved by the American Psychological Association, HPA, or other state or provincial psychological associations as defined in Section 465-1, Hawaii Revised Statutes.

As such, it is proposed that Section 465-11, Hawaii Revised Statutes, remain unchanged, and not incorporate the new statutory material as proposed in House Bill No. 453 which would require a minimum of three credit hours be in ethics training and a minimum of two credit hours in domestic violence training.

Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony on House Bill No. 453, which the Board will formally review at its next Board meeting.

HB453: Psychologist Continuing Education; Ethics; Domestic Violence

Honorable Chair McKelvey, Vice Chair Woodson and Consumer Protection and
Commerce Committee Members,

I support this bill. There is an ethical obligation for psychologists to pursue ongoing training and be up to date on current issues. In Hawai'i, Domestic Violence remains a prominent issue statewide. Continuing Education ensures that there are ongoing processes to build on basic training and maintain a heightened awareness of community issues and technologies to ensure ethical treatment and patient safety. Thank you for the opportunity to provide this for your consideration.

Dr. Cindi Dang



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LATE

Representative Angus L.K. McKelvey, Chair
Representative Justin H. Woodson, Vice Chair
Committee on Consumer Protection & Commerce

January 31, 2015

Monday, February 2, 2015, 2:00 p.m., Room 325

TESTIMONY IN OPPOSITION OF HB 453

Honorable Chair Angus L.K. McKelvey, Vice Chair Justin H. Woodson and members of the committee, the Hawaii Psychological Association (HPA) presents this testimony in opposition to HB 453.

The Hawaii Psychological Association (HPA) presents this testimony in opposition to HB 453. HPA recently supported the enactment of mandatory continuing education for licensed psychologists.

Serious consideration was given to the various models in place in other States including those that specify certain topics and credit hours for continuing education. The goals of mandating continuing education are to provide consumers with an assurance that licensed psychologists are diligent in keeping up with developments in their specialty areas, and to provide a guideline for psychologists with reference to the appropriate amount of continuing education per two-year license cycle.

During this process, HPA also consulted the membership about the type of provisions that would allow for effective mandated continuing education without imposing an onerous financial or practical burden on psychologists, especially those living and practicing on Neighbor Islands or in rural areas.

HPA provides psychologists and other mental health providers educational opportunities each year at its annual convention and at several other workshops throughout the year. Ethics is always a featured topic and is always well-attended. Ethics concerns every psychologist. All continuing education programs offered by HPA as a sponsor of APA approved continuing education must demonstrate attention to ethical issues.

Thus, in the case of ethics, HPA considers the specification of mandatory hours to be unnecessary.

With regard to mandating continuing education on domestic violence, HPA fully supports the intent of the bill to bring domestic violence into the central awareness of practicing psychologists. However, HPA again considers that mandating training in domestic violence would not be necessary and in some cases not relevant to the practice of individual psychologists (e.g. those who specialize in testing children with learning disabilities, or neuropsychologists.)

HPA recognizes the importance of psychologists being educated in the dynamics of domestic violence, and its impact on individuals, families, and communities. The same is true of child or elder abuse, or sexual assault, suicide and suicide prevention, among other highly significant topics. Most graduate programs do not include courses on domestic violence or these other critical issues. Psychologists have to seek out post-doctoral training in this and many other areas. It is the ethical responsibility of psychologists to work within their areas of competence. When they encounter a situation where they lack a specific competency, they may have to refer to someone who does possess that expertise, or where that option is not available, they are required to pursue education, training and supervision to develop competency. Here in Hawaii, we are fortunate to have an annual conference, the Institute on Violence, Abuse and Trauma (IVAT), scheduled this year for March 30-31. HPA is represented on the planning committee for IVAT, and psychologists are encouraged to attend the programs offered by world-renowned experts in the field.

Rather than attempting to mandate specific training content, HPA would prefer to continue to encourage and provide programming for psychologists to further their understanding and awareness of this crucial issue.

We thank you in advance for considering our testimony in opposition of HB 453.

Respectfully submitted,

Marie Terry-Bivens, Psy.D.
President

Alexander C. Santiago
Executive Director

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HB 453

I would like to offer this testimony in opposition to HB 453.

I would like to emphasize that I fully support the spirit of HB 453 with its goal of insuring that psychologists obtain continuing education in important areas that affect the welfare of individuals, families, and entire communities. I am, however, presenting testimony in opposition to this bill because I feel that legislating content areas is not the most effective mechanism.

Introduction:

My name is Rosemary Adam-Terem. I am a psychologist in full-time private practice and an adjunct affiliate of the University of Hawaii, Department of Psychology Clinical Studies Program, where I teach classes in the graduate program. I am active in the profession at the State level, a member of the Board of Psychology, and currently the Chair of two committees in the Hawaii Psychological Association (HPA): Ethics, and Continuing Education and Convention. I am also involved at the national level having served on the American Psychological Association's (APA) Continuing Education Committee (2012-14) and on the board of APA Division 29, the Society for the Advancement of Psychotherapy where I am the current Social Justice and Public Policy representative.

Ethics and Continuing Education:

In my capacity as Ethics Chair for HPA, I work hard to educate and inform psychologists in various ways, sometimes in one-on-one ethics consultations with members, sometimes through presenting Ethics workshops at our Annual Convention. As Continuing Education and Convention Committee Chair, I work to provide a broad array of training and educational opportunities for psychologists. Ethics is a central topic to all continuing education. We are fortunate that APA Office of Ethics Director, Dr. Steven H. Behnke, is a frequent presenter at our workshops, which we have also organized on Maui, Kauai, and east and west venues on the Big Island. In addition, we try to cover important topics such as domestic violence, human trafficking, child abuse, and other crucial areas in our programming at convention and in other workshops throughout the year. We try to be responsive to the needs of psychologists by polling annually on needs and interests to guide the planning of continuing education programming. There are, of course, many other training opportunities available to psychologists here in Hawaii, both in live and on-line format. One major annual event is the IVAT conference on violence, abuse and trauma which brings experts in the field to Hawaii every spring.

Domestic violence:

With regard to domestic violence, as a practitioner, I have worked extensively with victims and families. I have struggled with what seems to me to be the lack of awareness and understanding of the dynamics of domestic violence, and its impact on individuals, families, and communities not only in my profession but also for instance in the legal arena of divorce and child custody. I have taught seminars on domestic violence. I consider it a hugely important area. However, the same is true of child or elder abuse, sexual assault, trafficking, suicide and suicide prevention, among other highly significant topics. I had to seek out post-doctoral training in these and many other areas.

Mandating specific content:

I was very pleased to see the enactment of mandatory continuing education for licensed psychologists. I was also pleased that while the minimum number of hours of required training was specified, definitive content areas were not. I have learned from colleagues in other States where there are provisions for specific content areas that this is onerous and sometimes not even relevant to the practice of individual psychologists. Far from fostering interest, it seemed to create resentment and resistance to learning. This runs counter to the intent of this bill.

Thank you for considering my testimony.