

**STONEWALL
CAUCUS**
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THE FIRST CAUCUS OF THE
**DEMOCRATIC PARTY
OF HAWAII**

February 11, 2022

House's Committee on Health, Human Services and Homelessness
Hawai'i State Capitol
415 South Beretania Street
Honolulu, HI 96813

Hearing: Tuesday, February 15, 2022 – 9:00 a.m.

RE: Support for House Bill 2318 with Requested Amendments

Aloha Chair Yamane, Vice Chair Tam, and fellow committee members,

I am writing in SUPPORT to House Bill 2318 on behalf of the Stonewall Caucus of the Democratic Party of Hawai'i (formerly the LGBT Caucus) with requested amendments. HB 2318 would require psychologists licensed in the State to complete at least 3 hours of continuing education per licensing biennium on topics relating to cultural diversity, cultural competence, or health equity.

The Stonewall Caucus agrees and fully recognizes that members of minority communities suffer from high rates of depression, trauma, and mental illness, as we see it in the LGBTQIA+ community. For LGBTQIA+ people of color it is far worse than their straight and cis-gender peers.

This stems from the fact that homophobia and transphobia are still the most socially accepted forms of discrimination. We see this in the facts that 40% of the homeless unaccompanied minors identify as a member of the LGBTQIA+ community to LGBTQIA+ members over representation in our judicial system. The suicide rates for members of the LGBTQIA+ community are 3 – 4 times than that of our straight or cis-gender peers. When you add that to the fact that conversion therapy is still legal in too many states, thank you for banning it here in Hawai'i, and practiced by too many churches under the guise of "pray the gay away", access to competent mental healthcare for members of the LGBTQIA+ community is a necessity.

Given these facts the Stonewall Caucus is requesting that House Bill 2318 be amended as follows to help ensure that members of the LGBTQIA+ community, especially those that people of color, have access to the mental health services.

Requested Amendments:

Page 2, Lines 10 -13:

"biennium[--]; provided that at least ~~three~~ four hours of continuing education shall be on topics relating to cultural diversity, cultural competence, sexual orientation, gender identity, or health equity."

Stonewall Caucus Testimony Requested Amendments House Bill 2318

Page 3, Lines 1 – 3:

“licensing biennium[--]; provided further that at least ~~six~~ seven hours of continuing education shall be on topics relating to cultural diversity, cultural competence, sexual orientation, gender identity, or health equity.”

We do not expect every licensed psychologist in the state to be an expert on the sexual orientation or gender identity. It is our hope that with these amendments that more licensed psychologists in our state had at least a basic understanding and the vernacular surrounding of the LGBTQIA+ community. This way we would hopefully receive less complaints about community members not being able to find a licensed psychologist that would refuse to see them even when their request to see a psychologist was not specifically about their sexual orientation or gender identity.

The Stonewall Caucus hopes that you will accept these amendments to help ensure that everyone has access to the mental care and support that they need.

Mahalo nui loa,

Michael Golojuch, Jr.
Chair and SCC Representative
Stonewall Caucus for the DPH

Testimony of the Board of Psychology

**Before the
House Committee on Health, Human Services, & Homelessness
Tuesday, February 15, 2022
9:00 a.m.
Via Videoconference**

**On the following measure:
H.B. 2318, RELATING TO MENTAL HEALTH LICENSING**

Chair Yamane and Members of the Committee:

My name is Christopher Fernandez, and I am the Executive Officer of the Board of Psychology (Board). The Board's Legislative Committee (Legislative Committee) appreciates the intent of and offers comments on this bill.

The purpose of this bill is to require psychologists licensed in the State to complete at least three (3) hours of continuing education per licensing biennium on topics relating to cultural diversity, cultural competence, or health equity.

The Board will review this bill at its next publicly noticed meeting this month. In the meantime, the Legislative Committee appreciates and sees the benefit in requiring continuing education in the topics of cultural diversity, cultural competence, or health equality. Psychologists address socio-cultural factors daily throughout their practice. Keeping abreast of this type of information will only make for a better practitioner. Further, these types of courses are offered frequently by approved organizations defined in Hawaii Revised Statutes section (HRS) 465-1.

Lastly, the Legislative Committee respectfully suggests that the term "cultural diversity" on page 2, line 12, be changed to "socio-cultural-gender diversity," which would specify acceptable continuing education course titles and topics. This change would aid the Board in verifying compliance with the continuing education requirements established by HRS section 465-11.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on this bill.

Hawai'i Psychological Association

For a Healthy Hawai'i

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COMMITTEE ON HEALTH, HUMAN SERVICES, & HOMELESSNESS

Rep. Ryan I. Yamane, Chair

Rep. Adrian K. Tam, Vice Chair

DATE: Tuesday, February 15, 2022 9:00 A.M. - VIA VIDEO CONFERENCE – Room 329

The Hawai'i Psychological Association (HPA) strongly supports HB2318, which would require psychologists to complete at least 3 hours of continuing education (CE) every two years on topics relating to cultural diversity, cultural competence, or health equity to maintain their license in Hawaii.

In Hawaii, it's easy to understand that cultural barriers often prevent members of minority populations from receiving appropriate mental health care. Such barriers include: mistrust and fear of treatment; alternative ideas about what constitutes illness and health; language barriers and ineffective communication; and a lack of diversity in the mental health workforce.

However, the need for quality mental health services could not be more stark. According to research recently published in 2019:

- Suicide was the leading cause of death for Native Hawaiians/Pacific Islanders (NHPIs) ages 15-24;
- Native Hawaiians/Pacific Islanders were three times less likely to receive mental health services or to receive prescription medications for mental health treatment as compared to non-Hispanic whites¹.
- Medicaid members who were either Asian or Native Hawaiian were significantly less likely to have used outpatient or inpatient mental health services than white Medicaid members.²

Another 2008 study in Hawaii concluded that Mothers with depression who were Asian or Native Hawaiian/Other Pacific Islander were significantly less likely to have received mental health services than white mothers with depression.³

It is now 2022, and disparities have worsened. The pandemic has further exposed significant inequities for many populations - disenfranchised on account of their race, culture, ethnicity, disability, age, and more.

¹ US Dept of Health & Human Services - Office of Minority Health Study: <https://minorityhealth.hhs.gov/omb/browse.aspx?lvl=4&lvlid=172>

² Lim, E., Gandhi, K., Siriwardhana, C., Davis, J., & Chen, J. J. (2019). Racial and ethnic differences in mental health service utilization among the Hawaii medicaid population. *Journal of mental health (Abingdon, England)*, 28(5), 536–545. <https://doi.org/10.1080/09638237.2018.1521917>

³ Ta, V. M., Juon, H. S., Gielen, A. C., Steinwachs, D., & Duggan, A. (2008). Disparities in use of mental health and substance abuse services by Asian and Native Hawaiian/other Pacific Islander women. *The journal of behavioral health services & research*, 35(1), 20-36.

Moreover, the American Psychological Association (APA) has formally noted that psychologists and the APA need to take a role in dismantling racism; and passed a resolution on healthy equity recognizing that race/ethnicity and racism are the key drivers of health inequities.

Hawaii Revised Statutes (HRS) chapter 465-11 currently requires psychologists to complete 18 continuing education credits in *any* topic. This bill would require only 3 of those credit hours to be in Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion. Such a requirement is a simple measure, that will enable them to better address the disparate mental health outcomes for minorities in Hawaii. In a recent survey, 63% of our membership expressed support for this measure. This statutory requirement would also harmonize with many of the Frameworks, Principles, Guidelines, Resolutions, adopted by the APA – as well as its Strategic Plan and Code of Conduct.

Ten other states have already instituted continuing education (CE) requirements in culture, diversity, cultural competence, and equity. Examples include: Oregon⁴, requiring cultural competency training for all licensing boards in health care professions; Maryland⁵, requiring 3 CEs; Ohio⁶, requiring 4 CEs in professional conduct, ethics, or culture/diversity; New Mexico⁷, requiring 4 CEs, 2 of which must be in ethnic diversity; and Texas⁸, requiring 6 CEs in cultural diversity. As arguably the nation's most ethnically diverse state, it is time Hawaii instituted similar requirements.

Finally, by being one of the earlier states to enact this CE requirement, Hawai'i will be seen as a leader in promoting equity, diversity, and inclusion efforts to reduce bias and harm within historically and systemically marginalized communities.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide input on this important bill.

Sincerely,



Alex Lichton, Ph.D.

Chair, HPA Legislative Action Committee

⁴ <https://www.oregon.gov/oha/OEI/Pages/CCCE.aspx>

⁵ <http://www.dsd.state.md.us/comar/comarhtml/10/10.36.02.04.htm>

⁶ <https://codes.ohio.gov/ohio-revised-code/section-4732.141>

⁷ <https://www.rld.nm.gov/boards-and-commissions/individual-boards-and-commissions/psychologist-examiners/psychologist-examiners-requirements-and-continuing-education/>

⁸ <https://bhec.texas.gov/online-license-renewal-system/index.html>

HB-2318

Submitted on: 2/13/2022 7:55:03 PM

Testimony for HHH on 2/15/2022 9:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Remote Testimony Requested
Samantha Bailo	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Continuing Education (CE) is something that most other states require of their mental health clinicians. It is a way to maintain and constantly be improving our competency. I fully support this bill.

HB-2318

Submitted on: 2/14/2022 7:19:55 AM

Testimony for HHH on 2/15/2022 9:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Remote Testimony Requested
Eileen McKee	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Aloha,

I support the passage of HB 2318.

Mahalo,

Eileen McKee

Kihei