

May 2, 2017

The Honorable Lorena S. Gonzalez Fletcher
Chair, Assembly Committee on Appropriations
Capitol Office, Room 2114
Sacramento, CA 94249

RE: **AB 1188 (Nazarian) – Health Professions Development: Loan Repayment – SUPPORT**

Dear Assembly Member Gonzalez Fletcher:

At its April 21, 2017 meeting, the Board of Psychology (Board) adopted a **Support** position on AB 1188 (Nazarian). This bill would increase the biennial fee collected at the time of renewal from \$10.00 to \$20.00 for specified licensees of the Board of Psychology (Board) as well as the Board of Behavioral Sciences (BBS), which would be deposited in the Mental Health Practitioner Education Fund.

The Board supports and agrees with the author's desire to increase access to mental health care for underserved communities by providing larger incentives to licensees who are working with these vulnerable populations. The Mental Health Practitioner Fund distributes grants to eligible mental health professionals that work in underserved communities to reimburse educational loans accrued for the purpose of becoming a licensed mental health provider. By increasing the fees deposited to the Mental Health Practitioner Fund, more grants will be awarded to psychologists and other mental health providers, which will result in more providers serving vulnerable populations in underserved communities in California. Additionally, this bill would increase the amount of funds available for loan repayment and therefore assist psychologists and other mental health professionals in reducing their student loan debt.

The Board's mission is to advance quality psychological services for Californians by ensuring ethical and legal practice and supporting the evolution of the profession.

For these reasons, the Board asks for your "**Aye**" vote when AB 1188 is heard in the Assembly Committee on Appropriations. If you have any questions or concerns, please feel free to contact the Board's Executive Officer, Antonette Sorrick, at (916) 574-7113. Thank you.

Sincerely,



STEPHEN C. PHILLIPS, JD, PsyD
President, Board of Psychology

cc: Members, Assembly Committee on Appropriations
Assembly Member Nazarian
Lisa Murawski, Principal Consultant, Assembly Committee on Appropriations
Jared Yoshiki, Consultant, Assembly Republican Caucus