

Board of Psychology

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June 19, 2014

The Honorable Richard Pan
Chair, Assembly Health Committee
State Capitol, Room 2191
Sacramento, CA 95814

RE: SB 570 – **Support if Amended**

Dear Assembly Member Pan:

At its June 17, 2014 meeting, the Board of Psychology (Board) took a **Support if Amended** position on SB 570 (DeSaulnier).

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.

The Board agrees with and supports the goal of licensing all Alcohol and Drug Counselors (LAADC) and registering all Alcohol and Drug Counselor Interns (AADCI). Alcohol and Drug Counselors and Interns serve vulnerable patient populations, and the Board is concerned about the lack of oversight and educational standards currently in place for LAADC's and AADCI's. The Board, however, will only be able to adopt a "Support" position if an amendment is added to address the following concerns:

- Proposed Section 11975.43 of the practice act *could* allow an individual who lacks an advanced degree to become licensed for independent practice at the same level as an applicant who has an M.A., M.Sc., or Ph.D. The Board proposes an amendment that requires an advanced degree for licensure or registration as an LAADC or AADCI.
- Even with the advanced degree that would be required commencing January 1, 2016, the "single diagnosis" possibility for that degree (alcohol and drug counseling) does not ensure that those individuals would be sufficiently trained in how to recognize when a more serious mental health condition is occurring along with the substance abuse. The Board proposes amending the bill to require training in how to recognize when a mental health issue is at the base of the substance abuse, how to assess for mental health issues and how to determine when a referral to a trained mental health practitioner would be appropriate.
- Because the Board views alcohol and drug abuse primarily as psychological problems that also can lead to other health concerns, we believe that Alcohol and Drug Counselors and Interns should be regulated by a board or department, like the Department of Consumer

Affairs, that is more familiar with issues that can arise for the consumer group being treated by this proposed license group, Alcohol and Drug Counselors.

If you have any questions or concerns, please feel free to contact the Board's Administrative Services Coordinator, Jonathan Burke, at (916) 574-7137. Thank you.

Sincerely,



MICHAEL ERICKSON, PH.D.
President, Board of Psychology

cc: Assembly Member Richard Pan (Chair)
Assembly Member Brian Maienschein (Vice Chair)
Assembly Member Tom Ammiano
Assembly Member Susan A. Bonilla
Assembly Member Rob Bonta
Assembly Member Rocky Chávez
Assembly Member Wesley Chesbro
Assembly Member Jimmy Gomez
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Assembly Member Roger Hernández
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Assembly Member Allan R. Mansoor
Assembly Member Adrin Nazarian
Assembly Member Brian Nestande
Assembly Member Jim Patterson
Assembly Member Sebastian Ridley-Thomas
Assembly Member Freddie Rodriguez
Assembly Member Donald P. Wagner
Assembly Member Bob Wieckowski
Senator Mark DeSaulnier
Board Members
Tracy Rhine, Deputy Director, Legislative and Policy Review, Department of Consumer Affairs