

Dear Senators Gerratana, representative Ritter and Members of the Public Health Committee:

I am writing to offer my testimony on HB 5521.

As a CT licensed psychologist with more than 40 years of working experience in public institutions and private practice settings, I want to strongly emphasize and strenuously object to the confusing and misleading notion of allowing people with only a master of science or education degree in psychology and the commensurate level of training to work or offer services using the formal title of "Psychologist."

First, there is a ready confusion in the public mind about all of the qualifications that are appropriate to Mental Health practitioners of various degrees of training. It is a necessary protection for consumers to depend on the accuracy of the title *Psychologist* as a dependable indication of the level of extensive doctoral level education, advanced training and required supervisory and clinical experience to provide appropriate clinical and therapeutic services. The title "Psychologist" both in CT and on a national level is held to be indicative of Doctoral level training, not lesser levels of preparation and qualification.

Second, Master's level clinicians are currently able to apply and, if able to qualify, use the title of "Licensed Professional Counselors (LPCs)," which title does NOT convey the full scope of the training of a doctoral degree in psychology.

Third, the sub-specialty required for the vital and necessary work in school systems— one which requires training beyond the scope of a typical Masters program, is Certified School Psychologist, a field in which one can indeed earn a doctoral degree with additional advanced training. The School Psychologist licensure in CT allows for the practice of this specialty ONLY in school systems under the authority of the CT State Department of Education. As such, the needs of schools can be met without indiscriminate use of the title Psychologist in a way that confuses the distinct levels of training.

For these reasons, I firmly believe it is in the best public interest that you oppose HB 5521.

Thank you for your time and your consideration.

Sincerely,

Elliot Zelevansky, Ph.D.  
Licensed Psychologist