

Joanne Hutt, Ph.D.

Below is my testimony in opposition to HB 5521.

Dear Senator Gerratana, Representative Ritter and Members of the Public Health Committee:

As a Licensed Psychologist in Connecticut, I am writing in strong opposition to HB 5521, for the following reasons:

- 1) The term "psychologist" reflects doctoral level providers (both in Connecticut and on a national level);
- 2) Allowing licensure of master's level psychologists would create enormous public confusion regarding provider education and training; and,
- 3) Master's level clinicians are currently able to become licensed in Connecticut as "Licensed Professional Counselors" (LPC's).
- 4) This bill does not impact school psychologists, as they are under the authority of the Department of Education.

Doctoral level psychologists work extremely hard over many years, including the national requirement for 1 year of internship and 2 years of post-doctoral training, in order to become licensed. Getting our Master's degree after 2 years is considered part of the process, but not at all considered to be enough to guarantee competence to practice clinical psychology. Those who pursue this 2 year degree should be encouraged to enter LPC or LCSW programs if they have the goal of practicing psychology or counseling after a short time. These other programs typically provide much more in the way of clinical practicum experiences, as opposed to someone with a Master's in Psychology which can be obtained after 2 years of classroom study and a thesis or research paper.

For each of these reasons, I am urging you to oppose HB 5521.

I thank you very much for your time.

Joanne Hutt, Ph.D.
Licensed Clinical Psychologist