



March 7, 2016

HB No 5537: An Act Concerning Various Revisions to the Public Health Statutes

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

My name is Dr. Timothy Belliveau. I'm a clinical neuropsychologist at Hospital for Special Care, a not-for-profit long term acute and chronic care hospital in New Britain. My practice includes evaluation and treatment of patients of all ages, pediatrics through geriatrics, for many different medical or neurological conditions. Thank you for this opportunity to provide testimony on behalf of the Connecticut Psychological Association **in support of Section 28 of HB 5537, which would allow the use of psychology technicians in Connecticut.**

Psychology technicians are trained and supervised by licensed psychologists to administer psychological or neuropsychological tests, following pre-determined administration procedures that are specified in test manuals, and scored according to objective criteria. House Bill 5537 would allow licensed psychologists in Connecticut to use psychology technicians, and would appropriately limit and regulate their activities.

Psychological or neuropsychological test procedures often require hours to complete. The use of psychology technicians to administer and score these tests facilitates public access to timely mental health evaluation, diagnosis, and treatment recommendations. The availability of time-sensitive examination, diagnosis, and treatment recommendations is particularly important for vulnerable populations, which include children with autism, children or adults with cerebral concussion, and older adults referred due to concern about possible dementia.



Psychology technicians, working under the supervision of licensed psychologists, are now widely used across the country, an evolution of practice which is supported by the major psychological and neuropsychological professional organizations. For example, results of a professional practice survey of 1,777 psychologists, published in the February 2016 issue of *The Clinical Neuropsychologist*, found that between 52% and 56% of neuropsychologists across the country use technicians. While many states have laws or explicit regulations allowing the use of technicians, some states laws are silent on the issue and technicians are used but unregulated. Connecticut is the only state in the country in which use of technicians is explicitly prohibited, following a 1985 declaratory ruling by the Board of Examiners of Psychologists. The Connecticut Psychological Association has consulted with and received the support of the Board of Examiners of Psychologists for this proposal, which addresses the need for technicians to have the appropriate educational credential, and for the supervising licensed psychologists to adhere to regulations for the training process and test administration activities of the technician. We respectfully advise that House Bill 5537 incorporate public health safeguards, the most important of which include restriction of technicians to test administration and scoring activities under the supervision of a doctoral level, licensed psychologist, and exclusion of technicians from clinical interviews, selection of tests, interpretation of test results, or communication of results, diagnosis, or recommendations to patients or families, all of which are the sole responsibility of the licensed psychologist. Our proposed language also includes additional recommendations such as details about technician training requirements, limits to the ratio of technicians per



licensed psychologist, the informed consent process, and appropriate documentation requirements.

Again, thank you for your time and consideration of Section 28 of House Bill 5537.