

As a President of the American Psychological Association's Division 55, The Society for Prescribing Psychology, I write in strong support of H.237. This legislation would allow highly trained doctoral psychologists with advanced training leading to a master's degree in clinical psychopharmacology to prescribe and deprescribe psychotropic medications.

I fully support the Office of Professional Regulation's endorsement of this bill following its thorough and inclusive review. The legislation is carefully scoped, includes robust safeguards, and meaningfully addresses the concerns that have been raised in opposition.

I also support the proposed amendments to include primary care physicians as collaborators (avoiding unnecessary bottlenecks) and to streamline clinical rotations to five core areas while maintaining a 14-month training period—more than sufficient for safe, competent practice.

In 2016 I led the successful effort allowing prescribing psychologists in Iowa which includes similar components to the legislation being proposed in Vermont. While I do not reside in Vermont, I believe the struggles with access in rural areas exists there as it does in Iowa. Legislation allowing advanced trained psychologists prescriptive authority can improve access to much needed psychiatric care.

While an accelerated timeline would also improve access to care, I respect OPR's current licensing workload and appreciate the care being taken to implement this responsibly.

Thank you for your thoughtful consideration of this important step toward improving mental health access for Vermonters.