

My name is Marielle Abell, and I am a Physician Assistant practicing in Brattleboro, Vermont. I am writing to express my support for H.237, the legislation that would allow appropriately trained doctoral psychologists to prescribe and deprescribe psychotropic medications.

In my work, I see how difficult it can be for patients to access timely and consistent mental health care. Many Vermonters face long wait times for psychiatric services, and primary care settings are often stretched thin trying to meet complex behavioral health needs. Expanding the role of highly trained psychologists with additional education in clinical psychopharmacology is a practical and thoughtful way to increase access to care. Psychologists already provide much of the psychotherapy and psychological assessment in our communities. With the additional master's-level training and supervised clinical experience required under H.237, they would be well prepared to collaborate with physician assistants, nurse practitioners, and physicians to deliver integrated, patient-centered care. This kind of team-based approach is especially important in rural areas like much of Vermont.

As a Physician Assistant, I value collaborative care models that use each professional's training to its fullest. I believe prescribing psychologists would be strong and responsible partners in supporting patients with mental health conditions across our state.

Thank you for your consideration of this important legislation and for your continued work to improve access to care for Vermonters.