



**House
Legislative
Analysis
Section**

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ADD TENURED PROF. TO PSYCHOLOGY BOARD

House Bill 4745 with committee amendments
First Analysis (11-18-87)

Sponsor: Rep. Joseph Young, Jr.
Committee: State Affairs

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THE APPARENT PROBLEM:

University professors who teach doctoral students in psychology in Michigan are urging that one of their number have a guaranteed seat on the state's board of psychology as a means of improving communication between those who license psychologists and those who train them. Placing a practicing academic on the board, they say, will help keep regulators apprised of new thinking in the field, thus preventing insularity and improving the process by which professional standards are developed. Recent rules proposed by the psychology board, academics say, were sufficiently out of touch with graduate curricula that it affected the ability of graduate programs in psychology to attract faculty and students.

THE CONTENT OF THE BILL:

The bill would add to the Michigan Board of Psychology a fully licensed psychologist who is a tenured faculty member at Michigan State University, the University of Michigan, or Wayne State University and who is directly involved in training doctoral-level psychology students. (This would increase the board membership to nine from eight. Currently, the board comprises five psychologists, including at least one nondoctoral psychologist, and three public members.)

MCL 333.18221

FISCAL IMPLICATIONS:

There is no fiscal information at present.

ARGUMENTS:

For:

The bill would bring the much-needed perspective of the academic world and an improved awareness of new developments in clinical psychology by adding a trainer of doctoral psychologists to the psychology profession's licensing board. Obviously, there is a need for coordination between the standards for the profession developed by regulators and the training offered those entering the field. Efforts to attract students and faculty members to graduate psychology programs can be hurt if the state's professional standards are out-of-date or unrealistic. Standards will be enhanced if a representative of one of the state's major graduate psychology programs serves on the licensing board.

Response: Why limit board membership to faculty from only three of the state's psychology programs? Don't other schools train psychologists?

Against:

More than half of Michigan's clinical psychologists are masters-degree level professionals practicing under limited licenses (requiring some degree of supervision). Yet these practitioners now are guaranteed only one of eight seats on the licensing board while doctoral-level psychologists have four. This bill would reduce limited license psychologists to one of nine and increase representation

for doctoral-level psychologists. Given some of the disagreements in the past between the two groups, is this wise? If the board is to be expanded, why not add another limited license psychologist and require that one of the other positions be filled by a tenured professor? The adding of an academic to the board may well be a good idea, but it should not result in a reduced voice for one segment of the profession.

Response: Strictly speaking, the health code says "at least one nondoctoral psychologist" is to be among the five psychologists on the licensing board. More than one could be appointed now or under this bill.

POSITIONS:

The Michigan Psychological Association supports the bill. (11-17-87)

The Department of Licensing and Regulation has no position on the bill or on the committee amendments. (11-18-87)

The Michigan Association of Professional Psychologists opposes the bill in its present form. (11-17-87)

H.B. 4745 (11-18-87)