

**CAPP**  
CALIFORNIA ASSOCIATION  
OF PSYCHOLOGY PROVIDERS

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The Honorable Sheila Kuehl  
Chair, Senate Health Committee California State Senate  
Sacramento, California

Dear Senator Kuehl:

I am writing to you on behalf of the California Association of Psychology Providers (CAPP). The mission of CAPP is to protect the practices of licensed psychologists and the right of the Public to the services of licensed psychologists. CAPP has been a state-wide psychology association since being formed in 1983. Full membership is composed solely of licensed California Psychologists.

We are probably most famous for our victory at the California Supreme Court (*CAPP v. Rank*) that affirmed the legal right of Clinical Psychologists, as established by the Legislature in 1978, to independently treat our patients in in-patient facilities.

I am writing to urge your support of SB1427. This is an important legislation that will help with our state's crisis in mental health care, especially the need for timely provision of psychotropic medication and psychotherapy to those in need. This legislation is the result of efforts of dedicated psychologists who have consulted at length with our medical colleagues to produce this legislation, and it deserves your support.

This legislation will enable psychologists who obtain highly specialized education and training, at their own expense, and have also obtained extensive direction and collaboration with medical doctors to provide and prescribe psychotropic medication to patients in need. This Legislation is well thought out, is the proper result of negotiations among the relevant professions, and provides safe and responsible care for Californians. *In addition, this careful and structured legislation will result in economic savings for the state. By expanding prescriptive authority under controlled conditions, the increased access and supply will result in lower prices and expenditures for a person who needs medication. This includes the reduction in health care costs when targeted persons in need receive the correct psychotropic medication. The cost offset literature is replete with examples of cost savings in healthcare expenditures when correct diagnosis and treatment is offered to a targeted population.*

Please excuse the length of this message. We are aware that it is best to keep such messages to a single page. However, this Legislation is extremely important for California. We may not have an opportunity to provide other "testimony" to you, and California is beginning to fall behind other states (see Louisiana and our neighbor, New Mexico) in making services of these highly specialized and trained psychologists available to those in need.

The California Senate and Assembly have a proud history of taking the necessary steps to address the needs of our fellow citizens, especially in regard to providing access to the services of psychologists. We believe it is important to take your time to remind you that in 1978, the Legislature enacted Health and Safety Code Section 1316.5 authorizing that specially trained Clinical Psychologists could be on the staff of a California hospital. Only 2 years later, the Legislature strengthened this Legislation making it explicit that Clinical Psychologists could be on the **Medical Staff** of the hospital, and that hospitals were not to discriminate against such psychologists. The Legislation explicitly stated that the Legislature recognizes psychology as an independent profession and that (medical doctors) were unduly restricting patients from receiving services of psychologists.

Unfortunately, an administrative agency, the Department of Health Services (DHS) decided to defy the Legislature and wrote Regulations that thwarted the Statute. Because of that action, CAPP was formed as a separate, independent state-wide association. CAPP prevailed when the Trial Court ruled that DHS Regulations thwarted the will of the Legislature

and ruled the Regulations were improper. Organized medicine then entered the case. Eventually, CAPP had to go to the California Supreme Court, and in 1990 the Court ruled that the Legislature's decision that Clinical Psychologists could serve on the Medical Staff of a hospital and be allowed to treat our patients without discrimination as an independent profession was to be honored (*CAPP v. Rank*). The wisdom of the Legislature has been vindicated by the nearly 3 decades of exceptionally safe and effective services provided by psychologists in hospital settings.

We are at another critical point in history. A group of dedicated psychologists (National Alliance of Professional Practice Psychologists) has supported a bill in the Legislature to enable specially trained psychologists to obtain further education and training under the direction of medical doctors so that those psychologists can then provide psychotropic medications and psychological treatment to their patients in continuing collaboration with medical doctors. This bill was not created by the California Psychological Association nor was it created by CAPP. However, history has shown us that sometimes it takes a different group than our own to bring to fruition, and implement critical legislation. The issue here is not whether CAPP or any other group of psychologists agrees with every word of the bill. Modifications can take place through the Legislative process as you do your deliberations on the bill.

What is critical is that you know that the California Association of Psychology Providers, with over 20 years of dedication to protecting the rights of Californians to our services, most respectfully requests that you not be misled by groups and individuals who have agendas other than the needs of our citizens, and that you give full consideration to SB1427 and that you support its enactment. We hope it is not presumptuous for CAPP to think that after we took on the burden of having the Courts validate the Legislature in *CAPP v. Rank*, that we stand in a special place to urge the Legislature to take this action on behalf of the mental health needs of Californians.

More can be found on our web page at [www.capp.nappp.org](http://www.capp.nappp.org).

Most Respectfully,

Jay Slosar, Ph.D., President

