

Eddie Sleeper

From: Jordyn Fisher <jordynfisher.we@gmail.com>
Sent: Monday, September 30, 2019 11:25 AM
To: Eddie Sleeper
Subject: HB4325 - Ways & Means Committee Written Testimony

I am contacting you with urgency to represent the future of my career as a counselor and for the well being of those receiving mental health treatment in the state of Michigan.

Please VOTE YES on House Bill No. 4325 without amendments which would provide an alternative way to solve the concerns of Michigan's Department of Licensing and Regulatory Affairs (LARA).

LARA has proposed rule changes for Licensed Professional Counselors that would severely limit the scope of practice for LPCs. Included in this repeal is the definition of "counseling techniques" for LPCs and the related ability to "diagnose and identify the problem". LARA is also pursuing the repeal of rules that identify the requirements for providing counseling supervision. If these rules are rescinded then Michigan's LPCs would be put in violation of the American Counseling Association's Code of Ethics. Additionally, insurances will likely stop reimbursing for the services of LPCs due to the significant limits on scope these rule changes would impose.

I actively oppose these rule changes and I urge you to instead pass HB 4325, introduced by Rep. Aaron Miller (R-Sturgis), which would negate the need for LARA's rule changes altogether.

Please act now as the mental health of Michigan's residents depends on it!

Thank you!

--

Jordyn Fisher, MA, LLPC, Art Therapist
Willows Edge Counseling and Healing Arts Center
Office: 248.834.0614
Direct: 586.244.8012

Eddie Sleeper

From: Marilyn Kistler <marilyn@daylightcounseling.com>
Sent: Monday, September 30, 2019 11:18 AM
To: Eddie Sleeper
Subject: HB4325 - Ways and Means Committee Written Testimony

Greetings

I am a Licensed Professional Counselor with an office in Westland, Michigan. I have been licensed by the State of Michigan for 11 years.

I am alarmed by the rule changes being proposed by LARA. These changes will effectively shut down my practice because they will deny me the ability to diagnose clients and use counseling techniques with them. This means that my 30 active clients will have to look for a different counselor who may or may not accept insurance. Fees for psychologists and psychiatrists are much higher than what I charge and they are less likely to negotiate lower fees for clients who are struggling financially, which I do for many of my clients. The rule changes will have a negative impact on those who need mental health counseling the most and it is entirely unnecessary.

The concerns about LPC's ability to diagnose and treat mental health conditions are addressed in house bill HB 4325, which puts into law what has been the practice for 30 years. The bill does not expand LPC's scope of practice.

My request is for HB 4325 to pass without amendments ASAP.

Regards

Marilyn Kistler, MA, LPC, NCC
Daylight Counseling, PLLC
33300 Warren Rd. Suite 17
Westland, MI 48185
734-331-0773

Eddie Sleeper

From: Angela Mott <amott7556@ucumberlands.edu>
Sent: Monday, September 30, 2019 10:17 AM
To: Eddie Sleeper
Subject: HB4325 - Ways & Means Committee Written Testimony

Dear Mr. Sleeper,

Below is my written personal written testimony for the committee meeting on 10/2.

My name is Angela Mott and I currently live in Kalamazoo, MI with my husband and twin 13-year-old daughters. I went back to college 3 years ago to fulfill a lifelong dream of helping others be the best versions of themselves, and will be finishing my master's degree in Mental Health Counseling in August of 2020. I have sacrificed countless hours of family time and missed several important activities in my family's lives to be able to keep my 4.0 GPA status and eventually become the best counselor possible. I would be devastated to graduate next August only to be left with student loans and a piece of paper that I won't be able to utilize in Michigan. Please pass HB 4325 WITHOUT AMENDMENTS to ensure that all counselors in Michigan are able to provide much needed mental health services for years to come!

Thank you for your time and consideration,

Angela Mott

(a current counseling intern that's really hoping to put all of her education and hard work to good use)

Eddie Sleeper

From: Jessica Prevost <jprevost@newoakland.org>
Sent: Monday, September 30, 2019 10:20 AM
To: Eddie Sleeper
Subject: Testimony in Support for HB 4325

Good morning,

My name is Jessica Prevost, a recent graduate who chose to work for and acquire a Limited Licensed Professional Counselor license in Michigan because of my love for this great state! I currently treat consumers in Genesee county including the currently under served population of Flint. I feel very lucky I am able to provide support to this population and have a passion for outpatient therapy work I do. However, I am concerned that in the near future not only will **10,000 Michigan counselors including myself will lose their ability to work, hundreds of thousands of mental health consumers will be displaced and experience an even more limited access to mental healthcare.**

Being able to diagnose and perform psychotherapy is my livelihood and the alternatives available for myself, my colleagues and the clients we treat are grim. **Not passing HB 4325 does not help anyone except it gives psychologists a greater pool of consumers to choose from.** Please note many psychologists do not even see medicaid clients due to the low reimbursement rate (the majority of my clientele are medicaid) and so an already under served population will become even more under served in Michigan. Please do not make this possible!

Also, in a recent newsletter by Michigan Psychological Association (3rd Quarter) there was a segment entitled, "Your Clinical Practice Impacted by Advocacy Work of the MPA Insurance Committee" on page 14, the author says "We have been talking with BCBSM regarding their reimbursing Licensed Professional Counselors for clinical services, which in our opinion is outside the scope of practice of LPCs. MPA's position has had some support from LARA. We intend to continue to persist on this issue." What this means is that the MPA is actively campaigning against us because we are competition for them in the free market.

Please pass HB 4325 to avoid limiting employment of 10,000+ professionals and displacing the mental health consumers they treat! If we have to turn away clients/shut down our practice due to the changes LARA is proposing, that means hundreds of thousands of people will want to know why and will learn how the people currently in office made it possible for LARA to discredit and strip our profession of it's 30 year history of service.

Jessica Prevost
Outpatient Therapist
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Eddie Sleeper

From: Bria Maclin <bmaclin2@emich.edu>
Sent: Monday, September 30, 2019 10:36 AM
To: Eddie Sleeper
Subject: HB4325 - Ways & Means Committee Written Testimony.

RE: Proposed LPC rule changes by the Department of Licensing and Regulatory Affairs (LARA)

To Whom It May Concern:

I am appalled to read the proposed changes that LARA is trying to implement. Their proposal will drastically decrease the resources available for people suffering with mental illness in the state of Michigan. This change will also inevitably affect our adolescent population who are experiencing a drastic spike in depression, anxiety, and suicide.

It is apparent that our state needs *MORE* mental health providers as we are facing a mental health crisis, as well as an opioid crisis. We need *MORE* mental health professionals who are educated to diagnose, create proper and ethical treatment plans, and implement evidence based practice with clients in order to help increase their quality of life and mental health. It is vital that we have Licensed Professional Counselors.

If LARA's proposed changes go through, not only will thousands of Michigan's Licensed Professional Counselors be without work, thousands of mentally ill Michigan residents will be denied and/or severely limited in receiving the proper treatment for their symptoms.

I believe that should LARA feel these changes are necessary, perhaps it would be better practice to implement CEUs for LPCS, much like social workers are required to pursue. CEUs would help us to continue to refine our knowledge so that we can continue to practice with integrity and confidence.

HB 4325 is a viable solution to solve the concerns that LARA has. I beg you, please seek HB 4325 out as a resolution that would be effective and reasonable, and would not limit the mental health care available to 10s of thousands of people here in the state of Michigan. Without the LPCs who serve the people in this state, we do not have enough professionals to service these 10s of thousands of people! The proposed changes that LARA would like to make do not make logical sense, they are destructive and will result in despair for many.

Please, consider HB 4325.

Respectfully,

Bria Maclin

Eddie Sleeper

From: Xinyi Jessica Fang <counseling@jubileexinian.com>
Sent: Monday, September 30, 2019 11:13 AM
To: Eddie Sleeper
Subject: testimony for HB 4325

Dear Committee Members,

My name is Jessica Xinyi Fang. I graduated from the rehabilitation counseling program at Michigan state university. I am one of the three mental health providers in the Greater Lansing area, who can speak fluent Mandarin and Cantonese Chinese. I work closely with our international and local communities.

I am utterly disappointed to hear about the proposed proposition by LARA regarding LPCs ability to diagnose and provide necessary treatment for those with emotional disorders. LPCs cover 30-40% of the mental health needs in Michigan. With this rule adopted, 100,000+ patients will lose their mental health therapists.

So I am writing to you to express my concerns as well as my support for the HB 4325. This house bill will ground the scope of practice for LPCs, thus, allowing us to continue helping our communities.

Each year, we have lost Michiganders in this time of mental health crisis. That's one loss too many. Each loss painfully reminds me and the communities how far we still are from where we need to be in terms of advocating for mental health care. So, to limit the access to mental health providers at a time of crisis is devastating.

I hope to continue serve the people of Michigan as a qualified mental health counselor. Licensed professional counselors are trained practitioners to help people with emotional disorders. We are a group of professionals who have been obtaining continuing education courses despite LARA never had such requirements. LPCs are a group of individuals who are passionate about mental health and we are at the frontline of treating people with mental health disorders.

Thank you for your time and consideration on this very important matter.

Yours Sincerely,

Jessica Fang, MA, LPC, CRC
Jubilee Xinian Counseling
2517 E. Mount hope Road, Suite 2,
Lansing, MI 48910

Eddie Sleeper

From: Brandon Snook <bsnook@gihn-mi.org>
Sent: Monday, September 30, 2019 11:13 AM
To: Eddie Sleeper
Subject: HB4325 - Ways and Means Committee Written Testimony

Honorable Members of the Ways and Means Committee,

I am writing to request that you act swiftly to pass HB4325 out of committee without amendments when you meet October 2nd. This bill does not expand the scope of what Licensed Professional Counselors (LPC's) such as myself do, but codifies the work that we have already been doing for over 30 years. The training and education required to become licensed in Michigan is extensive and thorough, with as much or more emphasis on diagnosing and providing effective and ethical psychotherapy as any other provider. This bill would ensure that the estimated 10,000 LPC's practicing in Michigan will be able to continue earning a living and helping our client's live productive and meaningful lives.

Regards,

Brandon Snook, MA, LPC
GIHN Community Support Programs Supervisor
bsnook@gihn-mi.org
(989) 463-4971

Eddie Sleeper

From: Erica McLaughlin <erica@mindfulcounselinggr.com>
Sent: Monday, September 30, 2019 11:17 AM
To: Eddie Sleeper
Subject: HB4325 - Ways & Means Committee Written Testimony

I am writing today to submit my testimony opposing LARA's proposed regulation change and to speak in favor of the passing of House Bill 4325.

I would like to see HB4325 passed out of the Ways and Means Committee as soon as possible and without ammendments.

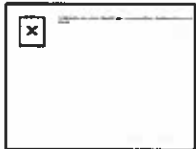
Passing this bill is critical for the mental health care of 150,000 Michigan residents. In a state with mental health problems, an opioid crisis and a currently under-resourced population needing mental health services, losing 10,000+ LPCs would create undue burden on an already strained system.

Additionally, if this bill doesn't pass and the proposed LARA regulation change goes into effect, it will put 10,000 Michigan LPCs out of work. This will create financial implications at the state level with LPCs no longer able to create a tax revenue.

LPCs play an important role in our state's individual and collective wellbeing. Please regard the importance of this matter for so many Michiganders.

Sincerely,

Erica McLaughlin



ERICA MCLAUGHLIN
COORDINATION SPECIALIST
P: 616.425.2412
mindfulcounselinggr.com

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Eddie Sleeper

From: Kari Schmidt <kari@karischmidt.com>
Sent: Monday, September 30, 2019 9:32 AM
To: Eddie Sleeper
Subject: HB4325 Ways and Means Committee Written Testimony

If LARA revised the rules and the HB4325 bill does not pass, you will be eliminating a revenue stream. LARA licensed over 10,000, tax paying, LPCs. Personally, the state would lose tens of thousands of dollars per year in taxes from my practice. Indeed.com reports the average Michigan LPC salary at \$90,704 per year, which is 44% above the national average. Eliminate that revenue, for all 10,000 of us, and you are looking at a MORE THAN A \$900 BILLION LOSS OF REVENUE. A more realistic LPC salary of \$50,000 per year would create HALF A BILLION DOLLAR LOSS OF REVENUE. If LARA revised the rules and the HB4325 is denied, the State of Michigan will also see a \$38 MILLION DOLLAR LOSS OF REVENUE in license renewal fees.

Over the past 19 of 37 years, I have poured my heart and soul into providing mental health services in our communities as well as with youth in a secure facility charged with sexual offending and other violent crimes. My practice is my sole income, I will be in immediate need of Medicaid insurance and food assistance. Wexford County reported a suicide rate ABOVE the national average, at 32.9% in 2018. Historically, Michigan's suicide rates have been at or ABOVE the national suicide average. I've had hundreds of clients at my practice, many with past or present suicidal ideations. Where are the estimated 300,000+ Michigan families, individuals, and children with mental health needs supposed to go? Abrupt termination of clients interferes with all mental health treatment progress and stability. This is not what is best for our clients or our communities. Please help us LPC's continue to serve our communities.

Do no harm

Kari Schmidt LPC, NCC, PLLC
Professional Counseling
201 N. Mitchell Street, Suite 204
Cadillac, MI 49601
231.250.8281
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Eddie Sleeper

From: Anna Richards <anna.richards520@gmail.com>
Sent: Monday, September 30, 2019 9:35 AM
To: Eddie Sleeper
Subject: HB 4325

Good morning and thank you so very much for meeting in regards to HB4325. As you well know, this is an urgent matter. As a trained LPC and a private practice therapist, I would like to urge you to note that we are in no way, shape or form requesting to increase our scope of practice but instead continue as we have for the past 30 years. Please pass this through the Ways and Means Committee as soon as possible so that we can assure the continuity of care for those that need it so dearly.

I would like to also note that I went to OU and graduated in 2007. I, myself, completed the Community/Agency track which was absolutely designed to become a mental health practitioner. I am a therapist who is also trained in career counseling theory and assessment and it has been a beautiful marriage for my clinical vantage point.

I trained for 3000 hours to become fully licensed. I hold my NCC, national certification which I maintain with 100 hours of CEU's every 5 years. It is essential to what I do and the fabric of my being.

Please note - my specialization is child loss. I work with parents who have lost children. If any of you understand this excruciating loss and trauma, you will understand the secondary loss of losing the trained person you are going to, to try and breathe again in this world. The decisions you are making right now matter deeply. Please take this all into consideration and THANK YOU for all you have done and are doing.

Warmly,
Anna Richards (Arciero), MA, LPC, NCC
Only Human Counseling Services, LLC
2010 Hogback Rd. Ste 7
Ann Arbor, MI 48105
734-320-7838

Eddie Sleeper

From: Lara Schaible <wglyss@hotmail.com>
Sent: Monday, September 30, 2019 9:52 AM
To: Eddie Sleeper
Subject: 10/2 Agenda HB4325 Ways and Means Committee Written Testimony: LPC License "Right vs. Wrong" and "What is"

Attention:Ways and Means Clerk:

Edward Sleeper

Representatives:

Brandt Iden; Jim Lilly; Eric Leutheuser; Beth Griffin; Roger Hauck; Bronna Kahle; Jason Wentworth; Rebekah Warren; Wendell Byrd; Sheldon Neeley; Kevin Hertel and any other Ways and Means committee representatives not listed.

HB 4325 and LARA Proposed Rules:

Please consider that this issue may be about **right/wrong** and I urge you to consider **"WHAT IS"**

I urge you to move forward with this issue from "what is" rather than getting caught in all of the muck of what is right/wrong as time is of the essence.

FACTS:

- 1.The state of Michigan Issued me an LPC License** in which I provided a professional disclosure statement indicating what my practice would look like.
- 2. For 10 years I have been diagnosing, billing insurance and using clinical researched evidenced based treatments with my high risk adolescents and adults.**
- 3. I have INTENTIONALLY AND DILIGENTLY CONTINUED MY CLINICAL SUPERVISION AND EDUCATION IN CLINICAL RESEARCHED/EVIDENCED BASED TREATMENTS FOR PSYCHOTHERAPY EVERY YEAR OF PRACTICE.**
- 4. Insurance pays me 30-50+% LESS THAN THAT OF LICENSED DOCTORAL LEVEL PSYCHOLOGISTS** to do some of the same work. With the deficit in education that I have from them - this makes some sense however the % not entirely so.
- 5. Clients have the right to mental health services and to continue with the continuity of care** that they currently are in.

I am an **LPC with my Supervisor Certification**. I have practiced for 10 years and have worked diligently to keep myself in clinical supervision for those years as well as intentionally continued my education in clinical care.

Following the information that is flooding our field it is apparent that there are many tentacles to all of what is happening. **People are blaming and this is NOT helpful.**

Professionals on all sides of the table are being discredited for the work that they have put into their professions and this is infantile in my opinion. We are intelligent people who have a passion for serving others.

Do things need revision? Seems so!

I am strongly urging that any changes made to the LPC licensure would provide for the continuation of what I am currently doing:

Continuity of care for my current caseload and any new clients seeking help from an LPC in the state of Michigan

Ability to Diagnose

Ability to bill insurance

Ability to practice clinical / psychotherapy techniques in sessions

Ability to administer assessments in alignment with the specific instruments requirements of administration

As I understand HB 4325 - this bill will allow for the continuance of the above things.

Regards,
Lara Schaible MA, LPC-S
License # 6401012142
616-617-0396

Eddie Sleeper

From: Elizabeth Teklinski <elizabethmteklinskihd@gmail.com>
Sent: Sunday, September 29, 2019 4:42 PM
To: Eddie Sleeper
Subject: This Palliative Care/Hospice LPC implores you please support HB4325

Dear Representatives on the Ways & Means Committee,

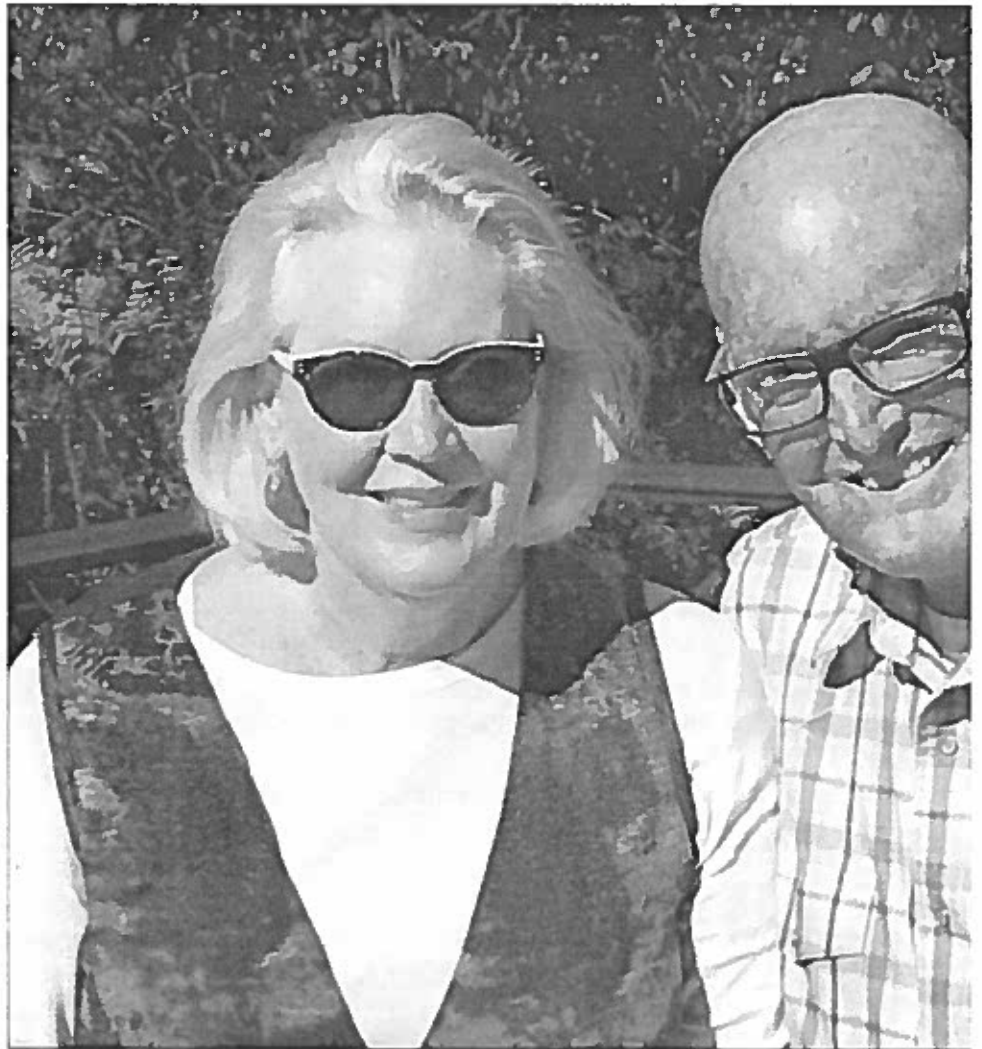
I am a Licensed Professional Counselor. I hold a BA in education from the University of Michigan; an MA in counselor education from Western Michigan University; and a doctorate in East-West Psychology from the California Institute of Integral Studies (CIIS).

I will be attending the LARA hearing in Lansing on October 4th to make the case that my role as a licensed professional counselor integrating spiritual care in psychotherapy from the very first Palliative Goals of Care conversation with a terminally ill patient is significantly making a difference not only in our patients' lives but in terms of improving medical care.

For instance, The Dream Foundation is showcasing me and my work with terminal cancer patients and helping them realize their final dreams as part of the National Palliative Care Month of November, 2019. Here, also, is a recent Traverse City Record-Eagle article providing an example of the work I do as an LPC everyday: https://www.record-eagle.com/news/body_and_soul/former-hospice-patient-shares-music-online-with-help-of-staff/article_90c94394-da49-11e9-9859-17a78d45f0ea.html#utm_campaign=blox&utm_source=twitter&utm_medium=social

A little more about what I do with my LPC working in Palliative Care that affects healthcare. As part of a broader aim toward greater patient-centered care, an increasing number of medical leaders are urging health care systems and providers to offer more meaningful attention to patients' spiritual concerns. According to the National Consensus Project for Quality Palliative Care, palliative medicine promotes comprehensive care in a holistic (mind, body, and spirit) context. Further, the goal of palliative care is to prevent and relieve suffering while supporting the best possible quality of life for patients and their families, regardless of the stage of their disease or their desire for additional therapies. Dame Cicely Saunders expanded the definition of suffering, or *total pain*, to include physical, psychological, social, and spiritual dimensions. Palliative care has thus emerged as an area of medicine where matters of spirituality have an increasingly important role in whole-patient care. The demonstrated benefits of addressing spiritual and existential questions to end-of-life discussions and decision-making include increased scores on patient satisfaction surveys, higher rates of hospice enrollment, and significant reports of better quality of life. There also appears to be a strong association between integrating spiritual care services and significantly lower rates of hospital deaths, decreased medical costs, fewer aggressive high-cost, life-sustaining medical interventions at the end of life, and a patient is much more likely to recommend the hospital system.

It is critical that you pass HB4325 so that I can continue on my mission to help people who are dying and for more than 150,000 Michigan residents to continue to receive their mental health services.



Carol and Doug Luther, of Frankfort. Doug wrote several songs about his 14-year uploaded to YouTube and a CD before his death in early September.

'FOR THOSE I LEAVE BEH

*Former hospice patient shares
with help of staff*

Sincerely,

Elizabeth

Elizabeth M. Teklinski, Ph.D., LPC
263 Midtown Drive
Traverse City, MI 49684

231.622.1928
eteklinski@att.net

Sent from my iPhone

Eddie Sleeper

From: Michelle Kasinec, PhD <michellekasinec@gmail.com>
Sent: Sunday, September 29, 2019 5:11 PM
To: Eddie Sleeper
Subject: HB 4325
Attachments: PastedGraphic-2.tiff

This purpose of this letter is to address my concern about the potential rule changes that the Department of Licensing and Regulation Affairs (LARA) has proposed regarding the Licensed Professional Counselor (LPC) license. This proposed change would not only drastically impact the livelihood of nearly 10,000 LPC mental health providers in the state of Michigan, but it would also negatively impact the clients LPC- licensed counselors help. Existing clients would face abandonment and would no longer be able to maintain established relationships with their counselors, which would in turn cause a mental health crisis.

I am requesting the following action from you:

OPPOSE these rule changes at the forthcoming public hearing on October 4th.

PASS HB 4325, introduced by rep. Aaron Miller (R-Sturgis) BEFORE OCT 4TH , which would negate the needs for LARA's rule changes altogether.

Please stand up for LPCs and the people who depend on their service – in my practice that includes individuals, couples, and families of all ages.

Thank you,

Michelle

Dr. Michelle Kasinec LPC CAADC
Owner/Licensed Professional Counselor &
Substance Abuse Specialist
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Eddie Sleeper

From: Tracy Thompson <tthompson@fountainhillcenter.com>
Sent: Sunday, September 29, 2019 5:28 PM
To: Eddie Sleeper
Subject: HB4325

Hello,

My name is Tracy Thompson and I am a licensed professional counselor with my own group practice in Grand Rapids Michigan. I work with LMSW's and LPc's and LLPC's in my practice. I have been working in private practice settings since 2011 when I graduated with my LLPC.

I received 100 hours of supervision under an LPC during 3000 hours of practice prior to getting my full licensure from the state of Michigan. I also received additional supervision under a psychologist practicing my skills and gaining expertise in treating children, families, working in schools, diagnosing, treating depression, trauma, anxiety, developmental trauma, abuse and neglect cases. I continue to receive ongoing supervision to stay up to date with my skills and my ethical duty to provide quality care. I have taught multiple courses of Abnormal Psychology instruction and teaching others about diagnosis. I have my advanced counselors certification to provide supervision to LLPC's

I have received certifications in treatment for mental health, I continue to receive yearly expert trainings to continue to serve my client in the most effective way. I continue to receive supervision, I consult with other practicing LPC's to talk about issues related to treatment, diagnosis, and ethics. In my practice I value my clients and the treatment they receive. If this law changes my ability to practice in the way I have been practicing for the last 8 years this will be a crisis in which children, families, individuals with PTSD, depression, anxiety, psychosis etc will be without a mental health counselor whom they have trusted.

Please allow HB 4325 to pass by voting Yes! If this doesn't pass, 10,000 LPCs and 150,000 of their clients will be without proper treatment for their mental health condition and we will have an emergency in Michigan.

Thank you for reading this and for your vote of YES on HB 4325

Thanks

Tracy Thompson LPC

Sent from my iPhone

Eddie Sleeper

From: Kathryn Watson <kscurson@gmail.com>
Sent: Sunday, September 29, 2019 5:29 PM
To: Eddie Sleeper
Subject: Please SUPPORT HB 4325

Members of the House,

I am emailing you because the livelihood of 10,000 of my Michigan colleagues as well as the mental health treatment for tens of thousands of people in our state is being unfairly threatened.



I will be directly impacted by a bill that needs to be passed by the Ways and Means Committee ASAP without amendments. I wanted to take a moment to educate you on the importance of HB 4325 and dispel any misinformation you may have heard about Licensed Professional Counselors.

I am strongly opposed to the the Michigan Department of Licensing and Regulatory Affairs' proposed rule change: 2019-063 LR. These proposed changes would repel nearly the entire scope of practice for Licensed Professional Counselors (LPCs) in the state of Michigan. Without a clearly defined scope of practice, LPCs will be unable to play our vital role in mental health treatment in the state. HB 4325 does not expand LPC Scope of Practice, it only solidifies how Professional Counselors have been practicing for the past 3 decades in the state of Michigan.

If these proposed changes are enacted, thousands of LPCs in the state will be at risk of losing their jobs. Clinics that employ LPCs will no longer be able to bill insurance for services and will have to make cuts. LPCs working in private practices will likely be out of business in months.

2019-063 LR would also repeal all requirements in training and supervision of counselors in Michigan. Without these guidelines, LPCs in the state will be in violation of the American Counseling Association's Code of Ethics and could face explosion from the profession all together, through no fault of their own.

There has been controversy and misinformation regarding the educational and supervision training and requirements of Professional Counselors. As an LLPC, I completed a 60-hour Graduate-level Master's program of study that included the following courses: Theories of counseling, Individual appraisal and assessment, Psychopathology and counseling, Research and program evaluation, Social and cultural foundations in counseling, Counselor professional identity, function, and ethics, Human growth & development, Theories of counseling, Counseling techniques, Group processes, Integration of psychology & theology, Theology & spirituality in counseling, Marriage and family counseling, Career development & counseling, Diagnosis and Treatment of addictive behaviors, Crisis counseling, Clinical diagnosis and treatment. *Techniques, diagnosis, and assessments were integrated into most of these courses.* After my course work was completed, I was expected to complete a practicum and internship. The practicum experience included a minimum requirement of 100 total hours onsite with a required 40 hours of direct client contact with site supervision as well as university supervision. Internship requirements included a minimum of 600 total hours onsite with a required 240 hours of direct client contact with site and university supervision. As a condition of graduation, I was required to take an exit exam called the Counselor Preparation Comprehensive Examination (CPCE). Before provisional licensure LARA reviewed my transcripts and Professional Disclosure statement.

Now that my provisional license was granted (Limited License Professional Counselor), I am now required to complete a minimum of 3,000 hours with 100 supervision hours over a period not less than 2 years and pass

the National Counselor Exam before being granted full licensure. I currently have over 2000 hours and have successfully passed the NCE. My colleagues who are fully licensed had LARA review their application for full licensure and sent in their NCE test scores, Professional Disclosure statement, and post-graduate counseling experience. As you can conclude, LPCs in Michigan have education, supervision, and experience that are equivalent to both Counseling Psychologists and Counseling Social Workers.

These proposed changes would devastate the counseling profession in Michigan and leave the hundreds of thousands of Michiganders currently receiving treatment from LPCs and LLPCs in the state with nowhere to turn for help. I urge the House of Representatives, Senate, and Governor to support and pass HB 4325 WITHOUT AMENDMENTS to codify my Scope of Practice to allow me to continue providing quality and much needed mental health care in the state of Michigan.

Currently, I work at Beatty Early Learning Community (a preschool serving low income families in Ypsilanti) counseling 3 and 4 year olds that have experienced trauma, homelessness, and difficult life transitions including parents being incarcerated and death of family members. My case load is overflowing with children who need direct mental health care. Out of a school of 128 children, I am the only constant mental health provider.

I also work in private practice downtown Ypsilanti where I see a wide range of individuals- children, men, women, couples, and young adults. My caseload has grown primarily from word of mouth and recommendations from past clients.

I am worried about my clients, many of whom have made tremendous progress towards their treatment goals and who have responded favorably to their individualized treatment plans. Others are just starting to trust the therapeutic relationship and moving in the direction of positive and healthy change. Ethically how do I explain to these clients that they will no longer have access to their counselor? Trust is the cornerstone of building a counseling rapport with a client and it takes time and patience. It cannot be easily nor quickly duplicated with another provider of services. The client's wellbeing and safety are at the forefront of my concern. Please allow me to continue my dedicated work to help these individuals achieve peace in their chaotic lives.

I urgently request your support for HB 4325 WITHOUT AMENDMENTS so that the citizens of Michigan can have the availability of quality mental health practitioners like Licensed Professional Counselors, especially during a shortage of services and providers in this state.

I appreciate and respect your position and understand that you have the authority to change the direction of this bill. I hope you make the decision to give Licensed Professional Counselors of Michigan a chance to continue our practice of mental health counseling with the quality, dedication, and calling bestowed upon us to change the lives of so many hurting citizens.

Best Regards,

Kathryn Watson, MA, LLPC, NCC

Eddie Sleeper

From: Julie Artinian <julieartinian@gmail.com>
Sent: Sunday, September 29, 2019 5:33 PM
To: Eddie Sleeper
Subject: HB 4325

Dear Ways and Means Committee,

Hello. I am a licensed professional counselor (LPC) and limited license social worker (LLMSW) in Michigan. I am writing ask you to bring HB 4325 to a vote this week, which would protect the work of licensed professional counselors' scope of practice in Michigan.

As you may have already heard, efforts are being made to greatly restrict the scope of practice of LPCs, which would in turn negatively affect people who suffer from various emotional and mental disorders. I have been fully licensed in Michigan since 2002 and I have worked with Michigan citizens with all kinds of mental health issues. Many of my clients have been small children in foster care, while others are both men and women who have suffered from sexual assault as children but are still picking up the pieces of their lives as adults.

It is imperative that you understand that as an LPC I was trained in assessment and counseling, giving me the ability to diagnose and treat clients. I was supervised for 700 hours in my graduate program and for 3000 hours post graduate, while working. I have passed the NCE, National Counselor Exam, a requirement to obtain my LPC. This training has allowed clients the opportunity to benefit from services in a variety of my practice settings from non-profits to the private practice where I am now.

My practice is an individual LLC, but I rent space with four other therapists: two LPCs and two LMSWs. If LARA's rules go uncontested and HB 4325 is not passed, then myself and the other LPCs will default on our office lease. Hundreds of clients will go without services indefinitely, since my county is an underserved. This is the same for many other counties. If HB 4325 is not passed, and LPC's scope of practice is restricted, 200,000+ citizens in Michigan, the 10,000 LPCs, thousands of LLPCs, are all directly affected. Please help by bringing HB 4325 to the floor this week. Thank you!

Thank you for your time,

Julie Artinian Callaway, LLC
Trillium Counseling Group

117 E. Maumee Street, Ste 300A
Adrian, MI 49221
517-442-2777

Eddie Sleeper

From: Julie Glass <julie.glass@ihcwestmichigan.com>
Sent: Tuesday, October 1, 2019 1:05 PM
To: Eddie Sleeper
Subject: HB4325 - Ways & Means Committee Written Testimony

LARA's proposed rules threaten the well being of thousands of MI residents all of whom currently receive sometimes life saving assistance from Licensed Professional Counselors. If the LPC is taken away, there will not be enough therapists to meet the needs of MI residents. There is already a shortage of professionals so many of us are working off of waiting lists. LARA is threatening to make this exponentially worse.

I have worked as an LPC since 2001. My MA includes 71 credit hours of intensive training. I am more than qualified to diagnose and treat a variety of mental health challenges. Plus I have attended countless other trainings and master classes with some of the leading experts in the nation. I have invested a great deal in my ongoing professional development to my clients' benefit as well as my own.

If I were to suddenly lose my job, I would lose a part of my life that brings me significant satisfaction, reward and joy. Plus, the financial stressors that I would suffer would become the financial stressors of the state as thousands of counselors are put in a financial crisis, forcing them to seek financial assistance.

Please support HB 4325. It is the only responsible option.

Sincerely
Julie Glass MA LPC LMFT

Eddie Sleeper

From: Libra, Deanna (DHHS) <LibraD@michigan.gov>
Sent: Tuesday, October 1, 2019 1:13 PM
To: Eddie Sleeper
Subject: HB4325 - Ways and Means Committee Written Testimony

To the Letter to Ways and Means Committee:

Greetings, leaders. Thank you for the work you do on behalf of the citizens of Michigan. I am writing regarding HB 4325, which you will soon be taking up, I have heard will be meeting this week.

It is critical that HB 4325 move through the Ways and Means Committee unamended.

The changes LARA is going to be requesting October 4th are not reasonable, and will cost the livelihoods of 10,000 counselors in Michigan, have devastating consequences for up to 300,000 clients we are serving, and lead to home foreclosures, business closures, defaulting on student loans, and other catastrophic consequences.

What LARA is seeking to do directly contravenes the work they have done with us for thirty years. In that time, they have been receiving our disclosure statements (which state forthrightly the nature of the work we do), our transcripts, and our supervision experience forms, and granting us licenses to do the work they are now saying we cannot do. That we are highly trained to do diagnosis and treatment of mental illness is simply beyond question, though the American Psychological Association certainly wants you to think otherwise.

HB 4325 seeks to do what LARA has been asking the Board of Counseling to do for years, which is get our profession and its proper scope of practice enshrined permanently into law, like it is for the Limited Licensed Psychologists and the Licensed Master Social Workers, two other professions beside whom we work shoulder to shoulder and are verifiably trained to an equivalent level (there's no reason this is even up for discussion -- the classes we take and the requirements we meet are a matter of public record).

I ask that you please allow HB 4325 to move through the Ways and Means Committee unamended, and that you support it unanimously. The bill itself, the 10,000 LPCs in

Michigan carrying sky high rates of student debt for our education, up to 300,000 clients who will lose mental health coverage, and the current anxiety, depression, opioid, and mental health shortage crises all make that the right thing to do.

Sincere thanks for your time and consideration,

Deanna Libra MA, LPC, CAADC
Michigan Rehabilitation Services
903 S. Telegraph, Ste. B.
Monroe, MI 48161

phone: 734-241-1340
fax: 734-241-1523
email: LibraD@michigan.gov



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Eddie Sleeper

From: J. Marciel <marcielj@yahoo.com>
Sent: Monday, September 30, 2019 4:20 PM
To: Eddie Sleeper
Subject: HB4325

Please pass HB4325 out of committee WITHOUT AMMENDMENTS. HB4325 is for the mental health care of 150,000+ Michigan residents and the implications would be significant if LPCs were no longer allowed to diagnose. Not only it will be financially devastating on the state level if 10,000+ Michigan LPCs were suddenly without work and the state no longer had that tax revenue, but also for the LPCs' livelihood. It does not make sense to reduce the availability of counselors at a time when there is increasing need for the population.

Thank you

Eddie Sleeper

From: Novak, Chandra <Chandra.Novak@beaconhealthoptions.com>
Sent: Monday, September 30, 2019 4:30 PM
To: Eddie Sleeper
Subject: Testimony for HB 4325

DATE: September 30, 2019

TO: Michigan House of Representatives, Committee on Ways and Means

RE: HB 4325

Hello. I am a Licensed Professional Counselor and I am writing to you in support of the facilitation of HB4325. I am very concerned that LARA (influenced by APA and MPA lobbyists) will severely limit the scope of practice for myself and my fellow Counselors. It is clear, based on the Michigan Psychological Association's recent newsletter, that it is their goal to lobby AGAINST Counselors being able to diagnose and use "psychotherapy techniques" to treat mental health conditions. I'm guessing their primary concern is their ability to maintain a higher rate of reimbursement with insurance companies like BCBS since Master's level clinicians get reimbursed much less than a PhD level Psychologist for the same CPT codes. By limiting a Counselor's scope of practice, it would eliminate thousands of jobs in Michigan and leave those seeking treatment abandoned by their clinicians. I know that is not the goal of anyone but the APA/MPA's lobbying abilities are powerful. What concerns me is that they are not recognizing the ethics or consequences of what they are lobbying for and they absolutely do not have the FACTS.

The facts are, I got my Master's degree in 2009 from a CACREP accredited program at Oakland University. My courses included (but were not limited to) Theories of Counseling and PSYCHOTHERAPY, DIAGNOSIS AND CASE CONCEPTUALIZATION, HUMAN DEVELOPMENT, CLINICAL COUNSELING TECHNIQUES, as well as a practicum AND an internship. (I am happy to provide my transcripts upon request). After receiving my limited license, I completed 3000 hours of supervision in order to become fully licensed.

I have been previously employed on the front lines providing mental health care for substance abuse treatment facilities and CMH programs. I have assessed and diagnosed hundreds of individuals – something I have taken very seriously as I understand how a diagnosis could help or hinder a vulnerable person depending on the circumstances. For over 4 years, I worked with a high risk population for a low salary – this is something I don't think a PhD level psychologist would even consider as a career choice. The rate of turn over for these positions is extremely high and clearly can not be satisfied by Social Workers alone.

Currently, I work for an insurance company that manages the behavioral health care nationally for more than 40 million people. Many times, we are unable to find a provider with open appointments in a reasonable time frame leaving those seeking mental health treatment to wait for WEEKS for an appointment. Many of our callers are high risk – they may be

having suicidal or homicidal thoughts. They may need treatment for opiate dependence. These are not individuals that you want waiting for DAYS or WEEKS for an appointment. The alternative is over-loading our already stressed hospital systems.

By limiting the scope of practice for licensed professional counselors, we would be taking away their ability to network with insurance companies. That, alone, could be financially devastating for individuals seeking to use their insurance for mental health or substance abuse treatment. If left without ready and available treatment options, they'd be forced to pay out of pocket.

THERE IS ALREADY A SHORTAGE OF QUALIFIED MENTAL HEALTH PROVIDERS IN THE STATE OF MICHIGAN!

PLEASE help us remedy this situation!

PLEASE DO WHATEVER IS IN YOUR POWER TO KEEP LARA FROM LIMITING OUR CURRENT SCOPE OF PRACTICE PRIOR TO THE PASSAGE OF HB 4325!

PLEASE FIGHT TO PASS HB4325 WHICH WILL PROTECT ACCESS TO MENTAL HEALTH AND SUBSTANCE ABUSE TREATMENT FOR THOUSANDS IN THE STATE OF MICHIGAN!

Thank you for your time and attention,

Chandra Novak, MA, LPC

Clinical Care Manager

Beacon Health Options

PLEASE NOTE:

This is an unsecured email which is not intended for sending confidential or sensitive information. Please do not include your social security number, account number, or any other personal or financial information in the content of the email.

Eddie Sleeper

From: Grace Elizabeth Yensch <grace.e.yensch@wmich.edu>
Sent: Monday, September 30, 2019 4:47 PM
To: Eddie Sleeper
Subject: Testimony for HB 4325

Grace Yensch, MA, TLLP
Therapist, North Kent Guidance Services & Forest View Psychiatric Hospital
4929 Mildred Ave SE, Kentwood, MI 49508
734-735-3400
grace.e.yensch@wmich.edu

Monday, September 30, 2019

Good afternoon,

I am emailing you today because I cannot attend the Ways and Means Committee meeting this week but I would like to submit a testimony in my absence. Although I am not an LPC or LLPC this affects my community greatly. As a TLLP, I work very closely with other master's level clinicians, including LLPCs and LPCs. I have seen how much help these professionals have to offer to individuals suffering from mental illness, and I can confidently say they are no less qualified to diagnose and treat them than any other LLP, LP, or MSW working in the mental health field. As mental health professionals, many of our waitlists are weeks long and our availability to our clients is maxed out. It has been estimated that over 10,000 providers will be affected by the proposed changes. If 10,000+ providers are suddenly unable to practice, unable to serve the dozens of clients that they each see, the effects on those clients and their loved ones will be devastating. For counselors of Michigan, and citizens who struggle with mental illness, I am asking you to **please support House Bill 4325**.

Additionally, some have described that individuals with an LPC/LLPC in the state of Michigan do not have the proper education to diagnose, treat and counsel clients with various diagnoses. This is simply not true. While some university programs vary slightly I would like to point out that Western Michigan University's Counselor Education programs (who attain LLPC/LPCs after graduation) and are accredited by CACREP take the following classes relevant to this argument: Psychopathology (class which covers both diagnosing and treatment), Counseling Techniques, and Group Dynamics and Procedures (covers group counseling techniques & treatment). Additionally, they are required to take Counseling Practicum which is under the supervision of fully licensed faculty member and includes a minimum 40 hours of direct client contact as well as almost 100 hours reviewing video-tape of counseling sessions, writing case notes, discussing cases with supervision, and researching diagnoses/treatments to best meet client's needs. After students complete this they then are required to complete a Field Practicum (internship) which is an additional 600 hours as working in the counseling field (240 hours must be directly working with clients). This education is comparable to other Masters-level clinicians including LMSW and LLP. You can review WMU's Counselor Education requirements here:

<https://wmich.edu/sites/default/files/attachments/u1635/2019/masters%20handbook%20August%202019%20v17%20%282%29%20Final.pdf>

After one attends a program similar to that of WMU's there are additional hours of highly supervised work that LLPs, MSWs and LPCs need to complete. This includes diagnosing and counseling techniques being supervised, often videotaped and reviewed by fully licensed clinicians. Below are the requirements:

LPC: 3,000 hours post-degree

LMSW: 4,000 hours post-degree

LP: 2,000 hours post-degree

LLP: 2,000 hours post-degree

As you can see the hours of supervision vary but they are very comparable and therefore are all qualified to provide treatment including using techniques and diagnosing.

The proposed policy changes by LARA would be devastating to the state of Michigan. This would leave over 10,000 counselors without jobs. Some have private practices which are small businesses and could not survive this detrimental blow to their scope of practice. Most importantly, over 150,000 clients would lose their mental health provider, leaving them without support to treat their symptoms of mental illness. Many settings that provide counseling are OVERWHELMED with clients/patients. Waitlists are common practice and hospitals are usually unable to care for patients longer than necessary. As it is currently, the state of Michigan is already in a state of MENTAL HEALTH CRISIS and this would only increase that exponentially. Again please support House Bill #4325.

Thank you so much for your time and your service to Michigan.

Warm regards,

Grace Yensch, MA, TLLP

Pronouns: she/her

Eddie Sleeper

From: Amy Szaraz <amy@szaraz.net>
Sent: Monday, September 30, 2019 4:49 PM
To: Eddie Sleeper
Subject: HB4325 - Ways and Means Committee Written Testimony

Dear Representatives,

I urge you to pass HB 4325, without amendments, out of the Ways and Means Committee on Wednesday October 2, 2019, so the bill can get to the House for a full vote.

The need to move HB 4325 quickly to Governor Whitmer is critical. The livelihoods of 10,000 + mental health professionals and the well-being of the many thousands of clients they serve depends on it.

HB 4325 puts into law what the practice of Licensed Professional Counselors (LPCs) has been for over three decades. It allows counselors to maintain their ability to appropriately and properly diagnose and treat individuals with mental and emotional disorders.

LPCs are well trained in diagnosing and providing mental health therapy. In addition to strict requirements for graduate course work, LPCs must complete supervised practicum, an internship, and 3000 hours post-graduate counseling under the supervision of an LPC certified to provide supervision. We must pass a National Counselor's Exam.

Aside from being a parent, my most important contribution to society is providing quality mental health services. LPCs are highly trained to help individuals better understand symptoms, gain coping skills, heal from trauma, overcome a crisis, build resilience, and thrive, both personally and in the workplace.

LARAs proposed rule changes would severely affect my ability to earn a living a would remove an experienced clinician from providing services to Michigan's citizens.

I greatly appreciate your support in this serious matter to codify the important work of LPCs. Michiganders deserve access to mental health therapy and your support of HB4325 supports that access.

Sincerely,
Amy Szaraz, MA, LLPC

7645 Fosdick Rd.
Saline, MI 48176

Eddie Sleeper

From: Rita Astzian <rha120269@gmail.com>
Sent: Monday, September 30, 2019 4:50 PM
To: Eddie Sleeper
Subject: Re: Delivery Status Notification (Failure)
Attachments: icon.png

On Mon, Sep 30, 2019, 4:33 PM Mail Delivery Subsystem <mailer-daemon@googlemail.com> wrote:



Address not found

Your message wasn't delivered to Esleeper@houstr.mi.gov because the domain houstr.mi.gov couldn't be found. Check for typos or unnecessary spaces and try again.

The response was:

DNS Error: 9094973 DNS type 'mx' lookup of houstr.mi.gov responded with code NXDOMAIN Domain name not found: houstr.mi.gov

----- Forwarded message -----

From: Rita Astzian <rha120269@gmail.com>
To: Esleeper@houstr.mi.gov, senmshirkey@senate.michigan.gov, stevenjohnson@house.mi.gov
Cc:
Bcc:
Date: Mon, 30 Sep 2019 16:33:28 -0400
Subject: HB4325
Hello,

I am writing to you as a concerned Michigan citizen and counselor practicing in the state.

Please support the passing of HB4325 which will allow more than 10,000 counselors to keep their jobs and provide services to thousands of individuals in need of mental health services. There is already a shortage of counselors. We cannot afford to lose any counselors given the increasing suicide rates, depression numbers and opioid epidemic.

Thank you for your leadership and support,

Rita Astzian, MA, LPC, CAADC

Eddie Sleeper

From: Abigail Lewis <a~~h~~aelewyn@gmail.com>
Sent: Monday, September 30, 2019 5:35 PM
To: Eddie Sleeper
Subject: HB4325 - Ways & Means Committee Written Testimony
Attachments: HB4325.pdf

Edward Sleeper,

Please see the attached testimony regarding HB 4325. I am available for any questions or concerns as seen fit.

Abbie Lewis, MA, SCL, LLPC
P: (248) 978-3411
E: [a~~h~~aelewyn@gmail.com](mailto:ahaelewyn@gmail.com)

Dear members of the House Ways and Means Committee,

I am not likely a constituent of your area. However, I will be directly impacted by a bill that will be placed in the Senate for a vote very soon. I wanted to take a moment to educate you on the importance of HB 4325 and dispel any misinformation you may have heard about Professional Counselors.

I am strongly opposed to the Michigan Department of Licensing and Regulatory Affairs' proposed rule change: 2019-063 LR. These proposed changes would repeal nearly the entire scope of practice for Licensed Professional Counselors (LPCs) in the state of Michigan. Without a clearly defined scope of practice, LPCs like me will be unable to play our vital role in mental health treatment in the state. HB 4325 does not expand LPC Scope of Practice, it only solidifies how Professional Counselors have been practicing for the past 3 decades in the state of Michigan.

If these proposed rule changes are adopted, my scope of practice will be limited so severely that insurance companies will likely cease reimbursing me for any services. At a time when mental health is a growing concern in the state, we should not be imposing rules that would limit the number of available providers.

If these proposed changes are enacted, thousands of LPCs in the state will be at risk of losing their jobs. Clinics that employ LPCs will no longer be able to bill insurances for services and will have to make cuts. LPCs working in private practices like mine will likely be out of business in months.

2019-063 LR would also repeal all requirements for training and supervision of counselors in Michigan. Without these guidelines, LPCs in the state will be in violation of the American Counseling Association's Code of Ethics and could face expulsion from the profession altogether, through no fault of their own.

There has been controversy and misinformation regarding the educational and supervision training and requirements of Professional Counselors. As both an LPC and a counseling professor, I can speak to both my training as it was and the current level of education under the CACREP standards for accredited counseling programs. As an LPC, I completed a 48-hour Master of Arts in Community Counseling that included the following courses: Theories of counseling, Individual appraisal and assessment, Research and program evaluation, Social and cultural foundations in counseling, Counselor professional identity, function, and ethics, Human growth & development, Theories of counseling, Counseling techniques, Group processes, Integration of psychology & theology, and Career development & counseling. The field experience part of the program included 100 hours in practicum and 600 hours in internship. The practicum experience included a minimum requirement of 100 total hours onsite with a required 40 hours of direct client contact with site supervision as well as university supervision. This experience included videotaped sessions and feedback from peers and university

professors. **Internship** requirements included a minimum of 600 total hours onsite with a required 240 hours of direct client contact with site and university supervision.

The 2016 CACREP accreditation standards include 8 core areas that ALL counseling programs must meet as a foundation level of education, these include: (1) professional counseling orientation and ethical practice, (2) social and cultural diversity, (3) human growth and development, (4) career development, (5) counseling and helping relationships, (6) group counseling and group work, (7) assessment and testing, and (8) research and program evaluation. The common core areas represent knowledge areas that are fundamental to the counseling profession. CACREP also accredits programs by specialty area, which has been mentioned by members of the Michigan Psychological Association. My assertion is that their information is outdated and does not currently represent the curricula of counseling programs in the state of MI. All counseling students, regardless of accreditation specialty, receive education in these areas, including diagnosis, assessment, and counseling theories and techniques that are also known as evidence-based practices in psychotherapy. To say a “career counselor might work with someone with schizophrenia” is a misrepresentation of the education that counselor received, which in fact **WOULD** allow the career counselor to work with that individual. However, by definition, the career counselor would be working on **CAREER** related counseling and not provide CBT or other psychotherapy techniques. This is but one way the MPA has misrepresented and misconstrued the counseling profession, and as such they are making public comments about a degree program they have no direct knowledge of since they are psychologists, and not trained as counselor.

Before provisional licensure, LARA reviewed my transcripts and Professional Disclosure statement. Once my provisional license was granted, I was required to complete a minimum of 3,000 hours with 100 supervision hours over a period not less than 2 years and pass the National Counselor Exam before being granted full licensure. LARA reviewed my application for full licensure along with my NCE test scores, Professional Disclosure Statement, and post-graduate counseling experience before granting my full license. As you can conclude, my education, supervision, and experience are equivalent to both Masters-level Psychologists and Clinical Master Social Workers.

These proposed changes would devastate the counseling profession in Michigan and leave the hundreds of thousands of Michiganders currently receiving treatment from LPCs in the state with nowhere to turn for help. I urge the House of Representatives, Senate, and Governor to **support and pass HB 4325 WITHOUT AMENDMENTS** to codify my Scope of Practice to allow me to continue providing quality and much needed mental health care in the state of Michigan.

I urgently request your support for **HB 4325 WITHOUT AMENDMENTS** so that the citizens of Michigan can have the availability of quality mental health practitioners like Professional Counselors, especially during a shortage of services and providers in this state.

I appreciate and respect your position and understand that you have the authority to change the direction of this bill. I hope you make the decision to give Professional Counselors of

Michigan a chance to continue our practice of mental health counseling with the quality, dedication, and calling bestowed upon us to change the lives of so many hurting citizens.

Kindest Regards,

Nicholaus Erber-LaPierre, PhD, LPC, CAADC, CCMHC, ACS
Clinical Faculty, Southern New Hampshire University
Traverse City, MI

Eddie Sleeper

From: Paul Krauss <krauss.paul@gmail.com>
Sent: Monday, September 30, 2019 5:55 PM
To: Eddie Sleeper
Subject: HB4325 - Ways & Means Committee Written Testimony. and Much More.

The Honorable Edward Sleeper,

Thank you for your time and attention to an important matter to myself, my family, my staff, and on behalf of all my patients and all of the patients of 10,000 other Licensed Professional Counselor's in the State of Michigan. Most LPCs see 20-35 patients a week for 1-hour at least and sometimes in Group Therapy, more—so we can estimate between 200,000 and 350,000 patients will be affected if their LPC counselors can no longer do the job that they have always been doing in Michigan.

Thank you for your time and attention to my letter. One would think that this matter is simple, however, due to the lobbying and misinformation campaigns of some people in our state, I write you an extensive version of my comments regarding these related issues. I wish I could be spending my time like I had planned this week, attending more continuing education courses for my upcoming EMDR-IA certification (a peer-reviewed and empirically valid counseling technique), so that I could begin training LPCs, Social Workers, LMFTs, and (yes) Psychologists in the state of Michigan. Instead, I am spending time advocating that my profession—which is respected nationwide (including where I lived previously: Arizona & Illinois), is actually a valid and well-educated group, worthy of maintaining their licenses, scope of practice, and rights to work in the state of Michigan.

I am writing regarding changes to the rules governing counseling licensure (LPC). The changes LARA is going to be requesting October 4th are not reasonable, and will cost the livelihoods of 10,000 counselors in Michigan, have devastating consequences for up to 300,000 clients we are serving, and lead to home foreclosures, business closures, defaulting on student loans, and other catastrophic consequences. Not to mention, the state will likely see an uptick in suicides, and violent crimes—oftentimes unfortunate consequences of not receiving mental health treatment for some.

What LARA is seeking to do through these rule changes directly contradicts they work they have done with us for over thirty years. In that time, they have been receiving our disclosure statements (which state forthrightly the nature of the work we do), our transcripts, and our supervision experience forms, and granting us licenses to do the work they are now saying we cannot do. That we are highly trained to do diagnosis and treatment of mental illness is simply beyond question, though the American Psychological Association certainly wants you to think it is. Please note that while the Michigan LPCs are not as organized politically (yet), that is because most LPCs are spending all of their work time caring for patients—it didn't cross our minds until recently that a certain group who is spearheading a misinformation campaign against us, would be interested in putting us out of practice—I mean in the 2 other states I worked in (Arizona, Illinois), we all worked together to help the people that need it most.

1. **Comments regarding Psychologist Dr. Andert's testimony from the Sept 5th, 2019 meeting of the House Health Policy Committee related to HB4325.**
2. **Comments on Lara's Regulatory Impact Statement and Cost-Benefit Analysis (RIS)**
3. **My Comments on HB4325**
4. **My Comments on LARA's Rule Changes**
5. **A Rough Summary of My Education**
6. **The Personal Effects of LARA's Proposed Rule Change for LPCs on myself and my family**

7. Summary of the Negative Effects that a rule change or not passing HB4325 will have upon mental health patients across the state of Michigan.

1. Here are only a few of my comments regarding Psychologist Dr. Andert's testimony from the Sept 5th, 2019 meeting of the House Health Policy Committee.

Direct quote from Dr Andert's testimony on this video (Dr. Andert is the former chair of the Michigan Psychological Association):

"...HB4325 specifically allows LPCs "to prevent and treat mental health and emotional disorders" but does not require the licensees to have specific coursework in psychopathology or mental illness. Licensure laws for mental health providers must minimally assure quality of care to the members of our public with serious and persistent mental illness."

That's a somewhat true statement. The law itself DOESN'T specifically require classes in psychopathology. However, getting a license as an LPC in the state of Michigan does require that. That's right; those classes are definitely required for obtaining a License (LPC) in the state of Michigan. That is how I received my license.

This is easily fact-checked. He also consistently refers to LPC program education that was required in the 1980s for Counseling Programs, and appears to tie it to today—there have been many advances and additional requirements since the early 1990s—and even more in the past 15 years. So why aren't we talking about the curriculum and training standards from the current day.

(B) "Diagnose the problem" means to identify the problem through the application of recognized counseling techniques and psychotherapy skills and theories, including the use of the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual for Mental Disorders, obtained through the successful completion of a qualified program."

Successful completion of a qualified program, it says. Which programs are considered "qualified" programs? Yep. Programs that include "specific coursework in psychopathology or mental illness." (The bill refers to CACREP, the accrediting body for LPC programs, which requires these classes for accreditation and licensure.)

So the law doesn't say we have to study psychopathology and mental illness, it just says we can't be counselors unless we went through a "qualified program," and any master's degree counseling program, to be considered qualified, must provide this training (by default).

It is odd to me that a known Ph.D psychologist who has worked in the field as extensively as this Dr. Andert can actually believe the stuff he is saying. It is almost unbelievably disingenuous.

FACT: Every LPC does, in fact, take the very classes he claims we do not take. I know professors at multiple Michigan Universities who are LPCs that actually teach those very classes.

FACT: Psychologists don't have to declare, as part of their training, whether they are a "career" psychologist or "marriage" psychologist, or "spiritual" psychologist. They take their standardized or CORE training, and then choose whatever population/specialty suits them, then pursue advanced training in that area -- exactly like LPCs do. He tries to frighten with images of career counselors diagnosing mental illnesses, but that's exactly what all of us LPCs are trained to do -- assess (within a specific scope of practice), diagnose, and treat mental illness in whatever populations we choose to serve. And that is where tons of additional training comes in. For instance, I have logged over 120 hours (low estimate) in working with people who suffer from Post Traumatic Stress Disorder and Substance Addictions since I graduated in 2007.

FACT: Dr. Andert asserts that the training of social workers is superior to that of licensed professional counselors. With greatest love and respect to my LMSW friends, this is simply not the case, and I think the

majority of MSWs would agree with that. Our training is, in fact, incredibly similar. (But by all means, don't take my word for it. Go to any university with an MSW program, and any university with an LPC program, download their course catalogs, and check it out. That's something the APA definitely doesn't want people to do.) Counselors are no less trained to assess, diagnose, and treat mental illness than MSWs. This was particularly disingenuous of the good doctor.

FACT: Dr. Andert asserts that if this bill passes, you could have LPCs treating schizophrenics. That is not the case, as we are not allowed to work beyond the limits of our scope of practice. We can often identify these conditions, and refer out for treatment, but few of us choose to work with severe mental illness, or seek the necessary training to do so. If we wanted to do that, we'd have become psychologists, who receive specific training in doing that.

FACT: HB 4325 seeks to take the exact scope of practice LPCs have been working under for thirty years, with the exact same restrictions, guidelines, and hierarchies of accountability, and codify it into state law. It does this and nothing more. If HB 4325 is passed, counselors will go on doing what we have been doing for over thirty years -- and that is work that is desperately needed in the state of Michigan, and in our country.

2. Comments on Lara's Regulatory Impact Statement and Cost-Benefit Analysis (RIS) which states repeatedly that businesses and small businesses will NOT be affected by the rule changes "only licensees will be affected." - the RIS was approved which allowed LARA to move to the next step of holding the hearing on October 4th). The RIS also states on page 9. "There is no expected disparate impact on rural areas because of the proposed rules." On RIS page 9. 19A LARA writes "...The only small businesses affected by these rules are health practitioners practicing in small business settings...The rules do not affect the operation of the small business. The probable impact on small business is small."

- That is a mostly bogus claim. I have no idea where they got that information. But it is FALSE. In fact, LMSWs are more likely to work in a hospital or school because of their training, whereas LPCs have much more training in outpatient therapy, which means they are more likely to be in a private practice—which is a small business!
- Most LPCs are in PRIVATE PRACTICE, which means that they own their own business, are renting a space, paying a billing person and support staff, and possibly employing other LPCs or LMSWs, and LMFTs to work in their space.
- I started a business in Michigan in 2017 and I employ 5 LMSWs, 1 LMFT, and 4 LPCs! I also see patients every week—around 25 per week as an LPC. If I am unable to practice due to LARA's rule changes, I will most likely go out of business because I can no longer practice or supervise the other LPCs! I will be on the hook for a rental space, when my entire business is predicated around helping people recover from PTSD and Trauma assaults and accidents.
- LARA's sudden rule change is a mass "lay off" for possibly 10,000 of LPCs in Michigan. And for what reason? We provide excellent services to the citizens of this state: We save lives. We save families from divorce. We help repair marriages. We literally save lives from suicide and drug addiction, we repair relationships (the fabric of our communities), and we help people overcome trauma, PTSD, depression, anxiety and more so that they can function and work a job or raise kids in Michigan.
- At my clinic, we have a specialization in helping people psychologically recover from traumatic events such as sudden job loss, car accidents, divorce, loss of a child, assault, rape, divorce, and all sorts of other issues that could lead (if untreated) to major long-term diagnoses. And we utilize empirically valid counseling treatments. LARA will be putting an end to my ability to help people. 95% of our patients utilize insurance because they cannot afford counseling out of pocket. So what am I supposed to do with all of these patients who can no longer afford to see me because I cannot accept insurance?
- HB 4325 seeks to do what LARA has been asking the Board of Counseling to do for years, which is get our profession and its proper scope of practice enshrined permanently into law, like it is for the Limited Licensed Psychologists and the Licensed Master Social Workers, two other professions beside whom we work shoulder to shoulder and are verifiably trained to an equivalent level (there's no reason

this is even up for discussion – the classes we take and the requirements we meet are a matter of public record).

- I ask that you please allow the legislative process to work, rather than simply accepting LARA’s rules and allowing an enormous amount of harm to happen to an enormous number of people. There is no reason to take this radical step when an appropriate legislative procedure is already in the works.
- LARA needs to rethink its “proposed rule change.” Michigan needs to be a leader other in helping its community and taking mental health and recovery from addiction seriously.
- LARA needs to take a positive and not a neutral stance on House Bill 4325.
- LARA needs to focus on health professionals committing malpractice and ethical violations. LARA needs to halt this manufactured crisis and work with LPCs as they advance the mental health care of this state.

3. My Comments on HB4325:

Thank you for your time and attention to this matter. The people of Michigan need your help in pushing back against LARA’s proposed rule changes for LPCs and helping pass HB4325.

In my long letter, I clear up misconceptions about LARA’s proposed rule changes, including their erroneous regulatory impact statement and cost-benefit analysis, and I outline why HB4325 is not really changing anything except holding counselors to higher educational and supervision standards—it would literally not change a thing in the way LPCs have been practicing for 31 years.

Comments on why HB4325 is necessary to pass and soon:

- HB4325 is NOT an expansion of scope of practice or adding any new powers or abilities for Licensed Professional Counselors in the State of Michigan. It simply clarifies what we have already been doing in the State of Michigan for 31 years.
- If HB4325 is signed into law, absolutely NOTHING will change in the way I have been practicing as an LPC and treating patients during my entire time living in Michigan (as well as 14 years in Arizona and Illinois).
- If HB4325 is signed into law, the only changes are for the LPCs to have higher standards of education, more continuing education, and solidifying the supervision requirements. All of which, I welcome!
- If HB4325 is signed into law, it clarifies language written in 1988 that (until this past month) LARA and the State of Michigan did not have a problem with. LPCs have been practicing and doing a great job helping citizens of this state with a myriad of mental health problems as well as recovery from addiction, PTSD, and working on repairing marriages and keeping families together.

4. Comments on LARA’s proposed rule changes LPCs R338.1751 that they are trying to push through before HB4325 is signed into law:

- Now, I agree with LARA that the old rules (1988) are outdated and should be updated—however, the way that LARA is proposing to “update” the law with their proposed rule changes is completely disingenuous and wrecks of an agenda. Not only that, it is dangerous for an estimated 200,000 to 350,000 patients currently in treatment with LPCs (most of whom could not afford care without utilizing insurance reimbursement). If LARA changes the rules on Oct 4, 2019, it will be “career ending” and catastrophic for over 10,000 LPCs as we will be Licensed Professional Counselors in “name only” as our rights to diagnose and treat patients will be stripped of us—rendering us unable to seek reimbursement for our services from Insurance Companies. We will also be unable to supervise LLPCs

as they gain 3000 direct care hours and over 100 hours of supervision on their ways to obtain an LPC license.

- LARA's sudden rush to move on proposed rules changes is absurd, and they even called the rules changes "minor". However if these rules changes went through they would be taking away LPC's right to diagnose and practice psychotherapy, as well as supervise. LARA is essentially labeling LPC's as "second class therapists." Even worse, LARA's rules will put LPC's out of private practice and essentially make us "un-hirable." Who would want to hire someone who does not have a scope of practice? It's like going to a dentist that can't touch your teeth but will give you free toothbrushes and floss because LARA still issued them a dentist license. LARA's officials are engaged in an overreach that is manufacturing a "crisis" and a push for a rule change that is tantamount to vocational assassination. LARA's rule changes will make me an LPC in name only—because I will no longer be able to do my job as I have since I was first licensed in 2007 in the state of Illinois.

5. A Rough Summary of My Education:

- Michigan State University: Secondary Education and Psychology Bachelor's (2004)
- The Chicago School of Professional Psychology: Master's Degree in Clinical Psychology; Clinical Counseling Specialization (2007)
 - Completed 700 hour clinical internship at Loyola University Chicago
 - Completed 4000+ supervised clinical hours (only 3000 required for LPC)
 - Passed the National Counselor Examination Test required.
- Approximate Official Continuing Education Units (by hour) earned since 2007: 210 hours! (Not including those listed below)
 - *I have the records in my files and these do not include those listed below:*
 - Supervisor Training: Approved by the Board of Behavioral Health of Arizona from 2012-2018 (I attended over 36 hours of training) I supervised LACs in Arizona.
 - Supervisor Training to supervise LLPCs in Michigan (I attended over 40 hours of training in 2017) and have been supervising LLPCs in Michigan.

Specialty Counseling Training beyond the basics:

- A Certified A-CRA Instructor and Supervisor by Dr. Robert Meyers and Associates from the University of New Mexico (Over 100 hours of all levels of this training) (Adolescent Community Reinforcement Approach type of therapy for substance abuse)
- EMDR Level II Trained by The EMDR Therapy Institute (Over 50 hours)
 - Empirically Valid and arguably the most newly popular therapy technique for people suffering from Post Traumatic Stress Disorder and more.
- EMDR International Association Additional Training on my way to become an official consultant, supervisor, and trainer (Over 65 hours so far)
- Additional Psychology and Clinical related Trainings I have not received CEUs for, in hours since 2007= Over 80 hours!
- Amount of Money Invested for Graduate School= Approximately \$60,000 USD –and yes I am still paying off my student loans.
- I was accepted to multiple APA accredited Licensed Psychologists Programs including one in Seattle, WA. I chose to get my Master's Degree in Clinical Psychology; Counseling Specialization instead. The major factor was cost—because I did not come from money, and because, of this moment, in 49 states LPCs practice independently once they have completed at least 3000 supervised clinical

hours as well as 700 supervised internship hours and passed the National Counseling Examination Test as well as any additional state-by-state requirements. So I understood Psychologists have additional training in testing diagnostics (which they use for court testimony and forensics, and occasional hospital or school reports), but I knew that as far as a clinician, I was an equal. I could diagnose, and treat with psychotherapy, just as a licensed Psychologist. My Psychologist friends and colleagues agree with this statement—there just happens to be a political consortium in Michigan that does not understand this—or they do not want to.

If these proposed rules changes by LARA are allowed to go through before HB4325 is passed into law—it will nullify my life’s work and my ability to help the vulnerable in the state of Michigan.

There must be a different way to handle this, rather than the “nuclear option.”

Not only will our patients (95% of which utilize insurance for counseling services) not be able to meet with us, they will lose access mental health care in general—as they have to start over and try to find a provider that has openings (Social worker or Psychologist or LMFT) who matches their schedule and insurance—and they have to do this quickly—because 10,000 LPCs will not be able to practice. The dangerous outcomes of LARA’s proposed rule changes are actually catastrophic and inhumane for patients. For most many patients suffering from a mental illness, they also have tremendous shame and it takes a lot of guts for them to enter into counseling in the first place. Our goal as the LPCs is to treat the person until they need less and less therapy and eventually to go out back to their life, functioning with out suffering as much.

Recently, I had a former patient (from 2 years ago who had successfully gone into remission from a Major Depression Episode), called me because they had recently gone through a traumatic event. They stated that they were suicidal. Luckily, I know my scope of practice and I know how to triage according to level of care—I worked with them on the phone until we could get the crisis line involved—and from there, we made sure they were admitted to the hospital. Only after the hospital, were they ready to engage in outpatient therapy (Counseling) with an LPC. If I had had no rights in Michigan (not to mention my malpractice insurance), it would have made it difficult for me (legally) to have any authority to work with this person who called me on the phone, literally suicidal, and work with them to comply and give their address to crisis services and get proper treatment (at the time, acute-higher level of treatment was necessary).

The Personal Effects of LARA’s Proposed Rule Change for LPCs on myself and my family:

- I was born in Michigan but moved out of state for economic reasons in the early 2000s. I received my Master’s Degree in counseling in 2007 and was welcomed with open arms by all license holders in both the states of Illinois and Arizona, as we worked together on the front lines to destigmatize and work towards more effective mental health treatments. In both Arizona and Illinois, I was treated with respect as a professional who could diagnose and provide psychotherapy and (after the essential training) provide supervision to other clinicians. I worked among social workers, psychologists, and marriage and family therapists and was treated with respect.
- In fact, I conducted over 25 2-day trainings paid for by a State Agency in Arizona, where I personally instructed and provided Continuing Education Units to LPCs, Social Workers (LMSW), and LMFTs, as well as Fully Licensed Psychologists.
- I moved back to Michigan in 2017 (from out of state) to help take care of my nephew and aging parents (who are both struggling socioeconomically). I found success in Grand Rapids, MI as an LPC due to my devotion to training that I had taken for years since I graduated in 2007. I quickly established a reputation in Grand Rapids and am now overwhelmed with referrals from previous clients and their

families, because I have the skills to help people get well and out of therapy and back into participation in the community.

- Personally, after a few years of self-employment banks approve a few lucky people for a mortgage and, at 35, I was able to purchase the first house of my lifetime (I grew up poor). Yet, now my mortgage is cause for worry as LARA is working to narrow my scope of practice and essentially take away my right to be self-employed in the state of Michigan. That is right, I would be “unable” to work at a job that I created in the state of Michigan, and where I work alongside LPCs, LMSWs, and LMFTs. I would be unable to supervise LLPCs, something I have been doing for over 7 years (including being an approved supervisor in Arizona). Upon moving to Michigan, I took a 40-hour NBCC approved training to be able to properly supervise LLPCs in Michigan—Arizona only requires a 12-hour training every 2 years.
- If these rules changes proposed by LARA pass on Oct 4, 2019, I will likely not be able to maintain my business as I will no longer be able to diagnose— something critical to our job, and because I signed a 5-year lease on our office I would likely have to file for bankruptcy (even if I was able to find a job elsewhere), and then I would lose my house and the very ability to take care of my aging parents and nephew—unless I move out of state.

8. Summary of the Negative Effects that a rule change or not passing HB4325 will have upon mental health patients across the state of Michigan.

The work of counselors (LPCs) is imperative to the socioeconomic health of the State of Michigan, and compromising an entire profession's ability to do the work they have been doing for decades is not only absurd but will render profound economic ramifications.

There is an excellent bill waiting to pass the house and senate of Michigan to make sure the LPC scope of practice is solidified. It is called House Bill 4325 (proposed substitute H-3). We urge LARA and the Governmental Authorities of Michigan to focus on passing House Bill 4325 before gutting an entire profession based on LARA's obvious bias.

1. Michigan already has a shortage of mental health professionals.
2. We are in the middle of a suicide epidemic; opioid epidemic and teen depression is at an all-time high.
3. Michigan needs LPCs practicing independently as they have since 1988.
4. Over 10,000 LPC Counselors will not be able to practice if this passes.
5. These LPC Counselors will lose their private practices, and their financial life is at risk, as well as their dependents and support staff.
6. This proposed rule change is wrong for the people of Michigan.

Why is LARA deciding to change these rules after 31 years when LPCs have quite a similar education to LMSW and LMFTs? LPCs have been leading the way in trauma-informed counseling techniques and new empirically proven treatments such as EMDR therapy, which has had tremendous results with people who have Post Traumatic Stress Disorder. LPCs are also on the front lines of fighting the opioid epidemic as well as the suicide crisis.

I am asking you to lead the charge in Michigan being a leader in mental health and recovery, instead of falling behind from LARA's proposed rule changes.

Sincerely,

Paul Krauss MA LPC
#6401015610

PS. I would be glad to speak to you 616-365-5530, just give me a call.

Eddie Sleeper

From: Matt Pierson <mattpglpg@gmail.com>
Sent: Monday, September 30, 2019 6:09 PM
To: Eddie Sleeper
Subject: HB4325 - Ways & Means Committee Written Testimony.

To The Clerk of Ways & Means Committee:

My name is Matt Pierson, a proud Licensed Professional Counselor in the State of Michigan. I am writing you to ask for your opposition for LARA's proposed regulations that will eliminate our ability to diagnose and perform psychotherapy for our clients. I encourage for you put House Bill 4325 up for a vote immediately, without amendments.

I completed my Master's Degree at Wayne State University; a counseling program which has CACREP accreditation. CACREP standards require extensive knowledge and education on diagnosing, psychotherapy, intake and assessment. Please note, psychotherapy and diagnosis were key domains for passing the National Counselor Exam. A passing score on the National Counselor Exam is required to become LPC.

I am willing to be reached by email or by phone at 248-308-4336 should you have any additional questions. I assure you that passing House Bill 4325 is in the best interest for thousands of vulnerable populations in the State of Michigan.

--

Matt Pierson, MA, LPC, CAADC

Eddie Sleeper

From: Tracy Pittman <trayci@gmail.com>
Sent: Monday, September 30, 2019 6:21 PM
To: Eddie Sleeper
Subject: Opposition to LARA counseling rule changes / Support of HR 4325

I am writing to you today in opposition to the rule changes to the counselor licensing code proposed by the Department of Licensing and Regulatory Affairs (LARA). It is my understanding that LARA feels Licensed Professional Counselors in Michigan (LPCs) have been operating beyond the scope of practice set forth in the public health and licensing codes, specifically in the domains of diagnosis and treatment of mental illness. This assertion is occurring despite LARA itself clearly specifying the necessary coursework for diagnosis and treatment planning, as well as psychotherapy techniques in its LPC licensing requirements. LARA has been granting licenses to LPCs for over 30 years with the understanding that diagnosis, treatment, and reimbursement for services have been occurring. The sudden urgency and contradictory nature of this rule change and its far-reaching consequences is distressing to LPCs and Michigan citizens.

It has been well documented and publicized that America is facing a crisis in mental health treatment. Citizens are suffering from addiction to drugs and alcohol (a diagnosable mental illness) at alarming rates. Multiple people every day die from heroin and fentanyl overdoses. Michigan's suicide rate has increased by 1/3 over 2 decades, specifically hitting youth, rural residents, and veterans. Rates of clinical depression and anxiety have steadily risen, while the percentage of people receiving proper treatment for these problems is less than 50%. In my practice as an LLPC, I have diagnosed and treated all the above-mentioned mental illnesses and more. I have worked with hundreds of clients and spent thousands of hours building a relationship with them, earning trust, and successfully employing the skills I've spent years and tens of thousands of dollars in higher education mastering. This is my profession, my passion and my future. The thought of telling clients like the ones I've had the privilege to work with that LARA's rule change will prevent me from providing them services seems like a terrible dream.

Further, in the impact statement filed by LARA regarding the proposed rule changes, it is stated that there will be no impact to small businesses in the state. That is false. There are thousands of LPCs currently in private practice that will lose their livelihood if this rule change takes effect. This will impact the economy in Michigan and will displace people currently receiving treatment. There is no safety net for these clients, some of whom are suicidal and unstable. LPCs often treat the most marginalized members of society, including persons struggling with addiction and others who cannot afford to access psychologists and other mental health professionals. The cost in dollars is obvious, while the cost in human suffering is unacceptable.

Respectfully, I plead with you to consider either dropping this proposed rule change or at the very least postponing it until the Michigan state government can pass bill HR 4325. The language of this bill clearly defines the LPC scope of practice and will put to rest any ambiguity that LARA or other professional associations feel may exist in the current codes. It will protect over 10,000 jobs, protect mental healthcare access for over 150,000 citizens in Michigan and will preserve a profession that has practiced with impunity for over 30 years. Now is not the time to restrict access to mental health care in Michigan. Now is the time to recognize the vital place LPCs occupy in the helping professions and aid them in continuing their work unimpeded.

Respectfully,
Tracy Pittman, LLPC
Dundee, MI

Eddie Sleeper

From: Shannon Wysinger <shannonwys@yahoo.com>
Sent: Monday, September 30, 2019 7:47 PM
To: Rep. Jason Wentworth (District 97); Rep. Rebekah Warren (District 55); Rep. Wendell Byrd (District 3); Rep. Sheldon Neeley (District 34); Rep. Kevin Hertel (District 18); Rep. Bronna Kahle (District 57); Rep. Roger Hauck (District 99); Rep. Beth Griffin (District 66); Rep. Eric Leutheuser (District 58); Rep. Jim Lilly (District 89); Rep. Brandt Iden (District 61); Eddie Sleeper
Subject: HB4325 Ways and Means Committee Testimony

Dear Representative,

I am contacting the Ways and Means Committee to voice my support for HB 4325 and ask that you pass it out of committee ASAP WITHOUT AMENDMENTS.

If LARA revises the rules and the HB4325 bill does not pass, the impact will render profound economic ramifications in Michigan:

- You will be cutting out a massive revenue stream.

Indeed states, "\$90,704 The average salary for a Licensed Professional Counselor is \$90,704 per year in Michigan, which is 44% above the national average." With LARA reporting over 10,000 LPC licenses this year, that would equal over \$907 BILLION in income. By allowing LARA to revise the rules and if HB 4325 is denied, it will result in income tax REVENUE LOSS OF \$38 MILLION PER YEAR to the State of Michigan.

- This will put 10k Michigan LPCs out of business placing them, their dependents and support staff in financial ruin.

Many of us are in private practice as small business owners here in Michigan and would be forced to shut down our practices. We would not only lose our businesses and our household income, but since our degree and license would be worthless, we would not be qualified to get a financially equivalent job anywhere else. This would ultimately cause over ten thousand families to go bankrupt, foreclose on their homes and also be unable to continue paying back the government for their their \$80,000+ student loans.

- Unemployment rates will skyrocket.

10,000+ LPCs will instantly be unemployed ...for an EXTENDED period of time due to their nullified degree/qualifications to get another professional job. Furthermore, we are also career counselors that support unemployed or underemployed individuals to help them get back out into the workforce. Without counselors to help them, the number of citizens who will remain unemployed is incalculable.

- A ripple effect crisis will occur when more than 200,000 Michiganders will instantly be without their counselors and unable to contribute to our economy
- We are in the middle of an opioid crisis, a suicide epidemic, and record-breaking rates of depression and anxiety issues. We need to be expanding access to mental health services right now, not contracting it, so that we have more high-functioning citizens positively contributing to our society.

Once again, I am asking for your support for HB 4325 and ask that you pass it out of committee ASAP WITHOUT AMENDMENTS.

Thank you for your time and consideration,
Shannon S. Wysinger, MA, LPC, NCC

Eddie Sleeper

From: Kate Longenbarger <katelongenbarger@gmail.com>
Sent: Monday, September 30, 2019 8:04 PM
To: Eddie Sleeper
Subject: HB4325- Ways & Means Committee Written Testimony

Dear Ways & Means Committee Members,

I am writing to you today in regards to HB 4325. I understand that you will be meeting Wednesday, 10/2/19 in regards to this proposed bill. I am asking you to pass HB 4325 out of the committee and onto the House as soon as possible. I am a Limited Licensed Professional Counselor here in Michigan and I have grave concerns about how the proposed changes by LARA will impact the citizens of this State. There is a public hearing that is scheduled for Friday, October 4th regarding the proposed changes by LARA and I will be coming to Lansing to oppose those changes. Should the proposed changes by LARA be put into effect, thousands of clients receiving mental health services in Michigan will be impacted. As you are most likely aware, we have a mental health crisis in Michigan as it is between the surge of drug abuse and suicide rates in our State. Crippling 10,000+ counselors by stripping us of our right to diagnose and treat will only increase the problem!

Unfortunately, it appears that the Michigan Psychological Association has taken the stance and LARA has sided with them that LPC's are practicing outside of their scope of practice which is completely and utterly false. This is merely monetarily and politically motivated and frankly, an injustice to clients and patients who access mental health services. LCP's are trained in assessment, diagnosis, and treatment of mental health conditions. We are required to pass the National Counseling Exam where we are tested on our knowledge of diagnosing and evidence-based treatment models for mental health disorders. I am currently awaiting my testing date. I completed 60 hours in a required 48 semester hours or 72 quarter hours in counseling topics which must include: career development, consulting, counseling techniques, counseling theories, counseling philosophy, group techniques, professional ethics, research methodology, multicultural counseling, testing procedures, practicum, and an internship of no less than 600 hours supervised clinical experience in order to receive our limited license. In order to obtain our full, LPC we are required to complete to complete 3,000 hours of post-degree counseling in not less than a two-year period with at least 100 hours accrued in the immediate physical presence of our supervisor.

I am asking that you pass HB 4325 out of the committee, WITHOUT amendments, as soon as possible in order to avoid worsening the mental health crisis in Michigan. I am in full support of HB 4325 and agree an update is needed. If HB 4325 is passed then the rule changes that LARA is trying to impose will be null and void. If 10,000+ LPC's are no longer able to diagnose and treat, there will be 150,000 if not more Michigan residents who will be terminated from treatment causing a huge burden on the rest of the professionals who treat mental health. In addition to the implications to our citizens receiving mental health services the impact of the proposed LARA changes will leave 10,000+ suddenly without work and will impact the State financially.

While I am waiting my testing date I am also impacted personally. My husband is a Federal Correction Officer and the EAP stands to lose LPC's who service our government employees and my son has just completed his first year as a Police Officer. His evaluation for duty and recommended professional for his department is an LPC. In addition to the clients I served in my private practice I now work as a Student Service Provider in a local elementary school and the need is great. The mental health of our youth is at risk as higher and higher number present with a mental health diagnosis. I would stand to lose my practice and my position in the schools. I will no longer be able to do a job I have trained to do including assessment, diagnosing and therapeutic techniques. I hope you will support my future.

I appreciate your time and effort in analyzing the implications of HB 4325 both professionally and ethically for the thousands of clients and LPC's in the State of Michigan.

Kind Regards,
Kathryn C. Longenbarger
2573 N. Raisinville Rd.
Monroe, Mi. 48162
License # 6401012636

Eddie Sleeper

From: Kristen Kowalczyk <15kkowa@gmail.com>
Sent: Monday, September 30, 2019 8:27 PM
To: Eddie Sleeper
Subject: Testimony for HB4325

Dear Legislators,

If HB4325 doesn't get put into law before October 4th, LARA is poised to make a rule change that would kill the bill and force 10,000 Licensed Professional Counselors to lose our jobs and no longer be able to treat our clients. Please help us!

1. 10k Licensed Professional Counselors (LPCs) will no longer be able to see our clients if we can no longer diagnose. This could result in 150k + clients who suffer with anxiety, depression, PTSD, substance use issues, trauma, Suicidal Ideation, etc., being abandoned.
2. This will result in a statewide mental health emergency. We already have a shortage of mental health clinicians in the state. We need more counselors, not fewer.
3. LARA is wanting to change a rule that has been in place for 30 years.
4. HB 4325 is moving through the legislative process and would update the antiquated language of the original law regarding LPCs scope of practice and would eliminate the need for LARA to change their rule. This whole crisis could be avoided if the bill passes.
5. There is a misconception about HB 4325, that it would expand LPCs scope of practice, but this is not true. It is not an expansion of our scope of practice but will rather codify our current scope, which has been in place for the past 30 years, with much more clear language. Please make this abundantly clear to all other Reps. and help us make members of the Senate aware of this crucial point as well.
6. This will put 10k Michigan LPCs out of business. We have extensive Master's level training in diagnosis and evidence based treatment of mental health conditions. Many of us are in private practice as small business owners here in Michigan and would be forced to shut down our practices. We would lose our income and the ability to use our training to support ourselves financially.
7. Governor Whitmer has the authority to stop LARA from changing the rule. We would love her support in allowing us to continue to serve the mental health needs in Michigan as we have for the past 30 years. We want her to stop LARA and support HB 4325 instead. That one action would avoid a mental health crisis and save 10k Michigan jobs.

Thank you for your time and consideration of this critical issue!

-Kristen Peers, MA, LLPC, NCC

Eddie Sleeper

From: Sarah Santiago <sarah@bloommq.com>
Sent: Monday, September 30, 2019 8:31 PM
To: Eddie Sleeper; Rep. Brandt Iden (District 61); Rep. Jim Lilly (District 89); Rep. Eric Leutheuser (District 58); Rep. Beth Griffin (District 66); Rep. Roger Hauck (District 99); Rep. Bronna Kahle (District 57); Rep. Jason Wentworth (District 97); Rep. Rebekah Warren (District 55); Rep. Wendell Byrd (District 3); Rep. Sheldon Neeley (District 34); Rep. Kevin Hertel (District 18)
Subject: Testimony for HB4325

Dear members of the Ways and Means Committee,

I am contacting the Ways and Means Committee to voice my support for HB 4325 and ask that you pass it out of committee as soon as possible, without amendments. It is critical that HB 4325 move through the Ways and Means Committee unamended.

You may be aware that LARA has proposed to remove the ability to diagnose and treat mental disorders from the scope of practice for Michigan's LPCs. The changes LARA is going to be requesting October 4th are not reasonable, and will cost the livelihoods of 10,000 counselors in Michigan, have devastating consequences for up to 300,000 clients we are serving, and lead to home foreclosures, business closures, defaulting on student loans, and other catastrophic consequences. Indeed states, "\$90,704 The average salary for a Licensed Professional Counselor is \$90,704 per year in Michigan, which is 44% above the national average." With LARA reporting over 10,000 LPC licenses this year, that would equal over \$907 billion in income. By allowing LARA to revise the rules and if HB 4325 is denied, it will result in income tax revenue loss of an estimated \$38 million per year to the State of Michigan. This will put 10,000 Michigan LPCs out of business placing them, their dependents and support staff in financial ruin.

What LARA is seeking to do directly contravenes they work they have done with us for thirty years. In that time, they have been receiving our disclosure statements (which state forthrightly the nature of the work we do), our transcripts, and our supervision experience forms, and granting us licenses to do the work they are now saying we cannot do. **That we are highly trained to do diagnosis and treatment of mental illness is simply beyond question, though the American Psychological Association certainly wants you to think otherwise.**

I graduated from a CACREP accredited Counselor Education program in 2015. My program was three years of full time course work, including a full semester course on Mental Health Diagnosis in which we studied the DSM-5 in entirety. My program required a semester long practicum in which I was observed and trained thoroughly by professors to ensure proper diagnoses of my practicum clients. I also completed a two-semester long, 600 hour clinical internship in a community mental health agency in which I again was observed and trained by licensed professionals on the proper use of the DSM-5 and mental health diagnosis.

After graduation, I completed 3,000 clinical hours working closely under the supervision of a trained and licensed professional.

I completed and successfully passed the National Board for Certified Counselors (NBCC) National Counselor Examination (NCE) which included a section on the DSM-5 and diagnosing. I currently hold my National Certified Counselor (NCC) certification from the NBCC to prove that I maintain 100 hours of continued education every 5 years in order to remain up to date on my training in order to best serve my clients.

I live in the Upper Peninsula of Michigan where I've recently opened a private practice due to a shortage of mental health providers in my community. Within just a few months I was completely full and unable to take on any more clients. There is a significant need for mental health professionals in my community. I currently have 35 clients on my caseload whom I am treating for various mental health issues; most commonly being Generalized Anxiety Disorder, Major Depressive Disorder, and Adjustment Disorder. Many of my clients are actively suicidal and would likely be in great danger if I were to no longer practice in the State of Michigan due to the shortage of licensed mental health professionals in my community.

Over 99% of the clients on my caseload utilize insurance benefits to cover the costs of their treatment and if I were no longer deemed able to provide a mental health diagnosis, I would no longer be able to be paneled and reimbursed through insurance companies. This would completely stop my income, leaving me in great financial distress. I would be forced to move out of state, to start my practice over from scratch and leaving 35 people without treatment, furthering the shortage of licensed mental health professionals in my community. I would lose my business and be forced to leave the state that I was born and raised in, and love so dearly.

HB 4325 seeks to do what LARA has been asking the Board of Counseling to do for years, which is get our profession and its proper scope of practice enshrined permanently into law, like it is for the Limited Licensed Psychologists and the Licensed Master Social Workers, two other professions beside whom we work shoulder to shoulder and are verifiably trained to an equivalent level (there's no reason this is even up for discussion -- the classes we take and the requirements we meet are a matter of public record).

I ask that you please allow HB 4325 to move through the Ways and Means Committee unamended, and that you support it unanimously. The bill itself, the 10,000 LPCs in Michigan carrying sky high rates of student debt for our education, up to 300,000 clients who will lose mental health coverage, and the current anxiety, depression, opioid, and mental health shortage crises all make that the right thing to do.

It's important to recognize that HB4325 does not widen the scope of practice for LPCs, it simply allows LPCs to continue to do our jobs the way that we have been extensively trained and educated to do.

Thank you for your consideration,

Sarah Santiago, LPC, NCC



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It is important to be aware that email communication can be relatively easily accessed by unauthorized people and hence can compromise the privacy and confidentiality of such communication. Emails, in particular, are vulnerable to such unauthorized access due to the fact that servers have unlimited and direct access to all emails that go through them. Please notify me if you decide to avoid or limit, in any way, the use of email. Unless I hear from you otherwise, I will continue to email you.

Eddie Sleeper

From: Martie Gerecke <lifepathways@att.net>
Sent: Monday, September 30, 2019 8:41 PM
To: Eddie Sleeper
Subject: HB 4325

Dear Rep. Sleeper:

My email is in regard to LARA's proposed changes in licensing of professional counselors in our state. I'm writing to enlist your support in passing HB 4325 to ensure that LPCs maintain the ability to diagnose and treat our clients as has been the practice for 30 years. My understanding is the problem stems from a lack of knowledge of the coursework, training, and supervision LPCs are required to obtain prior to application for full licensure, and poorly written policy by the regulatory commission.

Not only am I, personally, a Licensed Professional Counselor, but I passed the exam given by the National Board of Certified Counselors (NBCC) to be recognized as a Nationally Certified Counselor (NCC). LPCs go through rigorous education, training, and supervision like our counterparts in the Psychology and Social Work fields. The differences in degree programs are essentially very little, aside from the nuances in these disciplines (i.e., psychological testing, linking to community programs/resources, empowerment through insight and skill development). However, there is much overlap in these disciplines as long as the clinician is properly educated and trained to practice them. The following is coursework required by the NBCC in order to take the National Counseling Exam (NCE):

- Human Growth and Development Theories in Counseling
- Social and Cultural Foundations in Counseling
- Helping Relationships in Counseling
- Group Counseling Theories and Processes
- Career Counseling and Lifestyle Development
- Assessment in Counseling
- Research and Program Evaluation
- Professional Orientation to Counseling
- Counseling Field Experience

The field experience is a combination of 750 hours of practicum/internship and 3000 hours of supervision. In addition to that, we must provide a resume of relevant work history and a list of professional references.

Like our counterparts in other mental health fields, LPCs need to maintain state licensing and liability insurance. As a NCC, I am required to obtain 100 hours of continuing education units in a 5 year certification period (averaging 20 per year).

With the explosion of need for mental health care providers in response to the opiate crisis and other pertinent issues, stripping our ability to diagnose and treat clients with a variety of evidence-based practices and techniques would place a great strain on the mental health system and our community as a whole. Many of us have large caseloads of clients who would be negatively impacted. You may be unaware, but the therapeutic relationship sometimes takes several sessions to develop especially

with clients who have experienced trauma. Once a therapeutic relationship is established, clients are reluctant to change. LARA's proposed changes could adversely affect some of our most vulnerable clients. These changes would also render our degrees useless as we would be unable to continue work in our chosen vocation.

My hope is that you have a greater understanding of LPCs and that we can count on your support. Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Martie Gerecke, LPC,NCC
Life Pathways Counseling & Coaching, LLC
4345 Meigs Ave., Ste. 109
Waterford, MI 48329
ofc. (248) 599-7590
fax (844) 270-3954

Eddie Sleeper

From: stephaniegrantphd@gmail.com
Sent: Monday, September 30, 2019 8:42 PM
To: Eddie Sleeper
Subject: HB4325 - Ways and Means Committee Written Testimony

I am writing regarding passage of HB 4325 through the House Ways and Means Committee this Wednesday.

I would like the Committee to be appraised of the following:

- The Department of Licensing and Regulatory Affairs (LARA) is moving to swiftly restrict the scope of practice of Licensed Professional Counselors (LPCs), specifically regarding our ability to diagnosis and use psychotherapy techniques.
- Despite claims to the contrary, LPCs have advanced training at the graduate level on both psychological diagnosis and the use of psychotherapy techniques (the two areas of practice LARA proposes be removed from our roles) and have been required to show competency in both of these areas through successful course completion, passage of a national standardized exam, and supervised experience. We have been practicing within this same scope for 30+ years and it aligns with the scope of practice of LPCs across the nation. Any information to the contrary is simply inaccurate and perhaps intentionally misleading.
- LARA has made it clear they feel they need to change the LPC scope of practice within their regulations, as they state the current law is not aligned.
- HB 4325, which would codify the longstanding understanding of the rules into statute and therefore supersede the proposed changes proposed by LARA, was approved by the House Health Policy Committee on September 19th and the House Ways and Means Committee you sit on has scheduled a hearing on it for this Wednesday, October 2.
- To clarify, in contradiction to some false claims put out there by lobbyist groups supporting the scope of practice changes, HB 4325 does NOT seek to widen LPC scope of practice, nor does it include any areas of practice LPCs are not provided high levels of training on in every Professional Counselor graduate program across the state.
- HB 4325, if passed, will render LARA's concerns null and void. However, without HB 4325 in place, should LARA's proposed changes move forward, 10,000+ mental health counselors in the state will suddenly find themselves legally unable to provide therapeutic services to tens of thousands of consumers in Michigan, thereby significantly contributing to the mental health crisis across the state. The ethical implications of this are alarming and the potential impact life threatening.
- Additionally, the financial implications of this occurring are worth noting. Not only would there be a significant loss of revenue should 10,000+ graduate trained level professionals suddenly find themselves unable to bring in income (which is estimated between \$50K and \$100K per clinician) as they have been doing without question for 30+ years, but the increased costs of crisis level mental health services and psychiatric hospitalizations would quickly add up and have a compounding effect as mental health crises do when they extend through families and communities.

Therefore, I respectfully urge all members of the Committee to vote in support of the passage of HB 4325 when it comes before you on Wednesday as well as when it comes to you for a vote in the full House.

Thank you.

Stephanie Grant, PhD, LPC, IMH-E®

Eddie Sleeper

From: Jane Fetzer <janefetzer@yahoo.com>
Sent: Monday, September 30, 2019 8:44 PM
To: Eddie Sleeper
Subject: Fwd: HB 4325 Ways and Means Committee written testimony

Sent from my iPhone

Begin forwarded message:

From: Jane Fetzer <janefetzer@yahoo.com>
Date: September 29, 2019 at 5:58:34 PM EDT
To: ealeeper@house.mi.gov
Subject: HB 4325 Ways and Means Committee written testimony

I am an LPC and I have been practicing since 1997. I am asking that HB 4325 goes up for vote without amendments. I am not looking to change the scope of LPC practice just clarify and stabilize what LPCs have been doing for 30 years.

LPCs in Michigan number nearly 10,000 and serve 150,000 mental health clients. There is already a shortage of counselors in Michigan. It would be a detriment to society to not pass HB 4325 without amendments.

Thank you,

Jane Fetzer, MA, LPC

Sent from my iPhone

Eddie Sleeper

From: Tianna Rooney <trooney@perspectivestherapyservices.com>
Sent: Monday, September 30, 2019 8:56 PM
To: Eddie Sleeper
Subject: HB4325 - Ways and Means Committee Written Testimony

Dear Ways and Means Committee Clerk Sleeper,

I am requesting that the following be included in the record for the Ways and Means Committee hearing of HB 4325 on Friday, October 4th, 2019.

As the business owner of Perspectives Therapy Services, LLC, one of the largest outpatient group mental health practices in Michigan, I humbly ask for you to oppose LARA's recent proposed changes to the rules for Licensed Professional Counselors and **support/pass HB 4325 without amendments**. HB 4325 simply puts into law what Licensed Professional Counselors have already been doing at a high level for 30+ years.

I have spent my career pulling together the very best mental health practitioners to effectively, compassionately and professionally treat mental and emotional concerns of individuals, couples and families in our communities. With clinics in Brighton, Fenton, Lansing and Highland, my clinical teams are diverse and consist of 54 licensed mental health practitioners which include social workers, psychologists, marriage and family therapists and licensed professional counselors. LPCs are an invaluable and irreplaceable group of quality providers who are critical with the current mental health crises of opioid addiction and suicide.

With more than 10,000 LPCs and LLCs contributing to the economic and health care landscape of our State, I ask you to consider the wellness of Michigan to be at stake. Without professional counselors, thousands and thousands of residents will not have access to quality mental health treatment. Not to mention, the thousands of clients currently working with professional counselors and making progress toward their health goals will be abandoned with no other providers available to step in and answer the calls. Not passing HB 4325 has the potential to launch Michigan into a health crisis of tremendous magnitude.

An additional consequence is the likelihood of a mass exodus of highly educated professionals leaving our state with their families as their livelihood would be rendered extinct. Displacing this segment of our population and watching them go across the state's borders to set up successful businesses and contribute to the wellness of a new place is a reality that needs to be considered.

Michigan is a state that attracts professionals. With our amazing number of colleges and universities to our booming industry of engineers and health care professionals, Michigan has a reputation for drawing in hard working Midwestern residents who take root and raise families here for generations. This is my personal story of migrating to Michigan and deciding to make it our long-term home. My husband and I were born and raised in Minnesota, where all of our family continues to live today. Following our graduation from the University of Minnesota, we moved to Michigan for my husband to pursue a career as a mechanical engineer with General Motors and myself graduate education at Michigan State University where I earned both my Masters and Doctoral degrees. Today, we raise our 4 teenage sons here and contribute positively to the economic landscape and socio-political environment of Michigan by being business owners, professionals, voters and good neighbors.

The long-lasting consequences of disallowing Professional Counselors from practicing meaningfully will be damaging for years, and generations to come. LPCs are not only significant to our healthcare service delivery, but vital. Entire departments at colleges and universities such as Western Michigan University, Michigan State University, Oakland University, the University of Michigan, Eastern University, Central Michigan University, Sienna Heights and Spring Arbor will be forced to close due to lack of enrollment as students will be opt for educational degrees in a place where they end up being useless. Eager students wanting to pursue a career in professional counseling will flee our state, likely not to return.

As a Licensed Marriage and Family Therapist myself, I stand with my Licensed Professional Counselors colleagues. The simple truth is that we need LPCs. They are educated and qualified to diagnose and then treat using counseling and psychotherapy techniques and interventions. Motivation to change the rules by LARA and oppose HB4325 are politically-driven by lobbying dollars of the American Psychological Association and by extension, the Michigan Psychological Association. I sincerely hope that you can see through these efforts and do what is right and just for your neighbors and constituents.

I am grateful for your time and consideration. Thank you for your service and on-going commitment to serving the best interests of all Michigan residents.

Kindest regards,

Dr. Tianna Hoppe-Rooney, LMFT

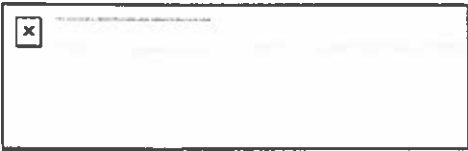
Executive Director and Owner, Perspectives Therapy Services

Website: www.perspectivestherapyservices.com

Email: trooney@perspectivestherapyservices.com

Phone: 810-772-1401

Home address: 4863 Aljoann Road, Brighton, MI 48116



Eddie Sleeper

From: Sarah Bell <sarah.glp@yaho.com>
Sent: Monday, September 30, 2019 9:07 PM
To: Eddie Sleeper
Subject: HB4325 - Ways & Means Committee Written Testimony

Dear Mr. Sleeper,

Please help me and thousands of other LPCs by passing HB4325 out of committee without amendments. Passing HB4325 is critical for the mental health care of 150,000+ Michigan residents who would lose access to services if LARA's rule change goes through. It would also cause an economic crisis by putting 10,000 LPCs out of work. Please do the right thing and stand by us now.

Thank you for your support!

Sincerely,

Sarah Bell MA, LPC
Great Lakes Psychology Group
(248) 802-7750

Eddie Sleeper

From: Kelly Van Moen, MS, LLPC <kvanmoenms@yahoo.com>
Sent: Monday, September 30, 2019 9:14 PM
To: Eddie Sleeper
Subject: Testimony for HB 4325

Dear members of the Ways and Means Committee,

I am reaching out to show my support of HB 4325 and ask you to quickly pass this bill without amendments. The proposed rule changes that are currently being discussed in LARA could have catastrophic repercussions in Michigan for both providers and clients. There would be a loss of approx. 10,000 counselor jobs in Michigan which would decrease the amount of revenue being generated and contributed to the tax base by millions of dollars, forcing several smaller agencies and private practices to shut down and potentially causing an exodus of people from the state who are seeking work. Those who are suddenly put out of work by this rules change would be seeking unemployment at staggering rates. The drain on the economy would cause lasting consequences for everyone in Michigan. Clients would be left waiting even longer times to get a qualified counselor, which is currently at times up to a month.

As an LPC in Michigan who spent several years in training with inclusion of diagnosis and treatment of clients the proposed change to rules causes me great concern. During my time in school I completed classes including diagnosis and assessment, counseling techniques, and ethics which includes knowing and understanding when to refer a client to someone more skilled in their area of concern. This was all prior to completing an internship and practicum which gave me over 700 hours of practice under direct supervision of both my site supervisor and school supervisor. I then practiced with my limited license in Michigan under supervision by a certified clinical supervisor for two years and over 3000 hours. During this time and still I continue to work on continuing education courses including online, conferences, and workshop trainings which I believe are extremely important to staying knowledgeable in changing issues. Because I have also recently finished my development plan for Certified Addiction specialization, I also completed another 100 hours of supervision, 190 continuing education credits and extra practice hours specific to addictions counseling.

For the past 3-4 years I have had the pleasure as well as responsibility of working with adolescents who are dealing with both substance use and mental health issues. As an LPC in Michigan I have been able to work with students in local schools to begin the introduction to counseling as well as bridge the gap to those who are severely underserved by therapist due to several barriers. Besides engaging this population in counseling and working on interventions with them, some of my job has been engaging adolescents and their parents who have been unaware of how to obtain services and educating on counseling and insurance barriers. This includes how to obtain services via their insurance to create ongoing therapeutic relationships and help those in crisis for mental health and substance use. I have personally seen how even a limited scope of intervention can be extremely powerful in helping these adolescents to identify and ask for help. With the proposed change in LARA rules and regulations for counselors this population would be left with little to no services. This group who is already severely under-served, dealing with barriers including high insurance deductibles, lack of financial resources, transportation, and parental involvement would be left without the counseling that so many of them need desperately. If we can no longer diagnose, treat, engage, and motivate our clients we leave them at increased risk for substance use and abuse, self-harm behaviors, and suicidal ideation which is unethical, irresponsible, and inhumane treatment. Mental health and substance abuse issues affect every family in the state of Michigan in some form. Taking away a therapist's ability to do their job in an ethical and responsible way means that we are leaving all these families without support and with lack of options to help them.

Once again, I am asking for your support for HB 4325, please consider passing this bill quickly and without amendments so we can all work together to continue providing the much-needed counseling to citizens of Michigan.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Kelly Van Moen, MS, LPC, NCC

KVanMoenMS@yahoo.com

Sent from Yahoo Mail. [Get the app](#)

Eddie Sleeper

From: Jeanine Madsen <jeaninemadsen@gmail.com>
Sent: Monday, September 30, 2019 9:22 PM
To: Eddie Sleeper
Subject: HB 4325

Jeanine Madsen <jeaninemadsen@gmail.com>

to senmshirkey



A week has passed since I sent my first correspondence to House Ways and Means Committee and I keep sending my thoughts to relevant participants. I am planning, along with many colleagues to speak at LARA on October 4, 2019. I am also contacting you with my concerns as a Licensed Professional Counselor.

During the past week, the enormity of the possibility of 10,000 LPC's being pulled out of the Mental Health field in Michigan has begun to sink in. I would ask that the decision makers weigh the following implications:

1. 10,000 LPC's work to serve approximately 100,000 clients. The Mental Health field is already spread thin, taking us out of the mix or making it difficult for us to practice our profession will hurt the community at large. As a whole, there continues to be a mental health crisis nationwide including the Opioid Crisis. The idea that client's may have to wait months for services is heartbreaking and could be life threatening to already vulnerable populations.
2. Not only do LPC's do what we love and deserve fair compensation for our professional skills, we ensure for many clients that they are able to continue to function at work and in their communities. Without therapy, many clients will fall through the cracks of mental health care taxing emergency mental health services, losing productivity at work (costing their employers productivity and profits) We all know that emergency services are more expensive than maintenance services and for insurance companies, they may initially see a financial gain, but with time, the burden of emergency mental health services will effect insurance companies in a negative manner. This is a financial lose/lose situation that ultimately hurts the State of Michigan.
3. LPC's educated in local universities and accredited CACREP programs ensure that LPC's have appropriate diagnosing skills, therapy modalities, and professional ethics that are being refuted by the MPA. Psychologists, Social Workers and Licensed Professional Counselors all have national standards of practices that are on par with each other. Per the NCSL

"The authority allowing licensed professional counselors to diagnose a patient's mental illness varies from state to state due to differences in state statute. Diagnosis is often an important step in further developing effective patient treatment plans based on patients' individual needs. Without the authority to make diagnoses, LPCs often must refer patients to other licensed professionals with authority to diagnose mental disorders (e.g., psychiatrists)—a challenge in areas with shortages of these professionals. Laws in 31 states explicitly authorize LPCs to diagnosis mental illness"

I would urge law makers to compare apples to apples and do appropriate bench marking both instate and with other states.

4. HB4325 does not give LPC's any "new privileges" as far as Scope of Practice, rather, it allows us to continue to do what we do and what we are highly trained for and will allow us to continue to provide quality mental health care for Michigan. I would urge that HB4325 go through as proposed.

I urge you to move HB4325 forward through the process and protect Mental Health access in Michigan.

I have included here my personal testimony as an LPC who will be directly impacted if HB 4325 does not pass and ensure my ability to continue to practice.

As HB 4325 winds its way through the approval process I would like to add my voice to the list. By now, you are aware of the disbelief and shock that Licensed Professional Counselors are living. The idea that via a small change by LARA, we could all lose our livelihoods is incredible. I understand the need of the state to have consistent and clear standards and as such feel that at a Master's level, Psychologists, Social Workers and Licensed Professional Counselors should all be able to practice what they have been educated and trained to do. We all have a little different approach, and we are all needed in the face of the growing Opioid and Mental Health crisis that is currently present in Michigan.

I would implore you to look at this issue from all angles. As a LPC, I paid well over \$30,000.00 to attend a CACREP accredited school (Oakland University), took and passed the NCE (National Counselor Examination for Licensure and Certification), spent 6 months in an unpaid internship working at an inpatient facility that services drug and alcohol dependent clients. I then went to work at a Community Mental Health clinic to continue my licensing process under a LPC Supervisor, 100 hours of supervision and hundreds of clinical hours over two years. At the same time, I worked over 3 years and 100 hours supervision in ten areas and hundreds of hours with clients, passed a state competency exam, a national exam, completed 186 hours of continuing ed hours to receive my CAADC (Certified Advanced Alcohol and Drug Counselor) required by the State of Michigan for me to continue to work as a clinician. This course of certification added several thousand dollars to the money I already spent on my Master's degree and licensing. I'd remind you that the pay for a community mental health provider in comparison to our education, is low.

Four years after graduating, I am still making low wages as a therapist working in a clinical setting. Recently I have searched for and found a private practice where my skills are a good fit, the practice is growing and I would be able to for the first time since graduation make a living wage. I was offered the position Thursday September 19 and by Sunday September 22 the offer has been put on hold because the practice is unsure if "I am qualified to practice and bill under the LARA proposed changes".

By voting to pass HB 4325 you will ensure that thousands of Licensed Professional Counselors can continue to do what we love, maintain access for the citizens of Michigan who need prompt and professional care for mental health issues and drug and alcohol abuse issues. You will also keep Michigan in line with other states who recognize the levels of training and professional knowledge that Licensed Professional Counselors bring to the table. The United States as a whole is suffering from lack of access to prompt and professional mental health care, Michigan is no exception. Please vote to pass HB 4325.

Sincerely,

Eddie Sleeper

From: Karen Weeks <kweeks@desertstreams.org>
Sent: Monday, September 30, 2019 9:26 PM
To: Eddie Sleeper
Subject: HB 4325 - Ways and Means Committee Written Testimony

Dear Clerk Edward Sleeper,

I am writing to express **grave concern** over the proposed Licensed Professional Counselor (LPC) rules changes formally submitted by the Department of Licensing and Regulatory Affairs (LARA). These proposed changes will have significant negative consequences and threaten the livelihood of all LPCs **AND** the mental health status of clients currently seeing counselors in the state of Michigan.

LARA is recommending the repeal of virtually all the rules that define an LPC's scope of practice under R338.1751 via Counseling – General Rules (ORR 2019-063 LR). These are rules that have been recognized as part of the LPC scope of practice after the passage of our LPC statute in 1988.

Included in LARA's repeal is the practice of "counseling techniques" and the related ability to "diagnose and identify the problem." Without these and numerous other definitions, the LPC scope of practice is severely limited. Restricting LPC's scope of practice in this way will most certainly **reduce** the availability of mental health counseling services in Michigan and at a time **when there is a growing demand for these services.**

With the citizens of Michigan currently struggling to get access to counseling services, LARA's proposed LPC Scope of Practice Rules changes will put all LPCs immediately out of practice and will ensure that the citizens of Michigan will have less access to mental health care.

*Further, LARA's proposed changes in the LPC scope of practice would put LPCs in violation of ACA's Code of Ethics standard E.5.a. Proper Diagnosis, which requires the proper diagnosis of a client's mental disorder before treatment. Furthermore, third-party payors will immediately stop paying for the counseling services provided by LPCs because the billing process **REQUIRES** a diagnosis for a counseling services third party claim to be paid.*

This means that when LARA's proposed Scope of Practice Rules change goes into effect, **thousands of people across the state of Michigan will immediately be stripped of current counseling services.** *This will immediately place all LPCs in the state of Michigan in violation of the American Counseling Association's (ACA) Code of Ethics standard A.12. Abandonment and Client Neglect, which states that "Counselors do not abandon or neglect clients in counseling."* If LPCs cannot bill third party payers because they can no longer diagnose clients, clients will not be able to pay for counseling services in full out of their own pocket, which will result in client abandonment and neglect by LPCs as was legally caused by LARA's LPC Scope of Practice Rules change.

In addition, there has been **controversy and misinformation** regarding the educational and supervision training and requirements of Professional Counselors. My professional background includes first being licensed in the state of Ohio in 2005, after having completed 60 hours of Graduate-level Master's coursework that included the following: *counseling theory, counseling skills & techniques, research & statistics, human growth and development, group counseling dynamics,*

assessment techniques, diagnosis & treatment of psychological disorders, ethics & legal issues, multicultural counseling, concepts of family systems, prevention and intervention methods, personality, and abnormal behavior.

I also completed a practicum and internship as part of my coursework requirements. I studied for the National Counselor Exam (NCE) and passed, allowing me to obtain the Professional Counselor licensure status in Ohio, and to provide counseling services while under the supervision of a Professional Clinical Counselor. I also was required in Ohio to achieve 30 hours of continuing education every 2 years, with 6 of those hours in the area of ethics.

Then after moving to Michigan, I became licensed as an LPC in the state of Michigan in 2011. Since that time I have worked at a private practice in Kalamazoo, providing counseling services to adults of all ages, families, couples, and adolescents. I have assisted clients in managing symptoms of anxiety, depression, PTSD, Bipolar Disorder, and grief & loss, to name a few. I also have taught clients skills to navigate relational discord and conflict, sexual assault and molestation, divorce, affairs, survivors of suicide, self-harm, and addictive behaviors. ***I cannot imagine the negative impact on many of my clients who have chosen to open up their lives, wounds, and secrets to me and to trust the confidential nature of our professional relationship, while also daring to hope for a better life and positive outcomes while engaging in an often uncomfortable, yet necessary, therapeutic journey.***

It is the job of state licensing boards to protect the citizens of the state. LARA's proposed Scope of Practice Rules change via Counseling – General Rules (ORR 2019-063 LR) will place thousands of citizens in Michigan who are currently in counseling treatment to immediately lose needed counseling services and experience abandonment and neglect.

LARA's proposed LPC Scope of Practice Rules change via Counseling – General Rules (ORR 2019-063 LR) must not be adopted. The legislature should instead pass HB 4325 without amendments, introduced by Rep. Aaron Miller (R Sturgis), which would address legitimate concerns and needed updates and negate the need for LARA's LPC Scope of Practice Rules changes altogether.

I hope that my letter will help inform you and others about the negative consequences of LARA's proposed LPC Scope of Practice Rules change. If you desire additional information from me, please contact me via phone at 269-910-1809 or e-mail at kweeks@desertstreams.org.

Sincerely,

Karen S. Weeks, MA, LPC

Eddie Sleeper

From: Deborah Pawell <dpawell@yahoo.com>
Sent: Monday, September 30, 2019 9:50 PM
To: Eddie Sleeper
Subject: HB4325-Ways & Means Committee Testimony

Ways & Means Committee:

I am writing regarding HB 4325. It is critical that HB 4325 move through the Ways and Means Committee unamended. The changes LARA is going to be requesting October 4th are not reasonable, and will cost the livelihoods of 10,000 counselors in Michigan, have devastating consequences for up to 300,000 clients we are serving, and lead to home foreclosures, business closures, defaulting on student loans, hundreds of thousands of clients abandoned without counselors, and other catastrophic consequences.

HB 4325 seeks to do what LARA has been asking the Board of Counseling to do for years, which is get our profession and its proper scope of practice enshrined permanently into law, like it is for the Limited Licensed Psychologists and the Licensed Master Social Workers, two other professions beside whom we work shoulder to shoulder and are verifiably trained to an equivalent level.

I ask that you please allow HB 4325 to move through the Ways and Means Committee unamended, and that you support it unanimously.

Thank you for your time.
Sincerely,
Debbie Pawell MA LLP LPC

Eddie Sleeper

From: Rebecca Beronja <rlberonja@hotmail.com>
Sent: Monday, September 30, 2019 9:55 PM
To: Eddie Sleeper
Subject: HB4325 - Ways and Means Committee Written Testimony

Dear Sir,

I am writing to ask that HB4325 be moved out of committee as soon as possible and without amendments. It is imperative to mental health services in the state of Michigan for HB4325 to be passed without amendments. If LARA were to have their rule changes approved, Michigan would lose 10,000 LPCs and hundreds of thousands of clients would lose access to their mental health services. This would be devastating to the state. Putting 10,000 people out of work is never good for the state. Thousands of those out of work would apply for unemployment and state funded programs such as Medicaid. This would put a huge drain on the system. Small businesses run by LPCs would go out of business and no longer pay business taxes. The state would lose roughly \$1,000,000 per year in licensing renewal fees. Many families, such as my own, would have to move out of state in order to practice the way we need to. We will take our tax dollars and our children's tuition dollars with us as well. LPCs are not asking to expand our scope of practice, but instead want to codify a scope of practice that has been in place for 30 years. We are qualified and competent to diagnose and counsel our clients and should be allowed to continue to do so. Please consider the health and well-being of your constituents and move HB4325 out of committee as soon as possible. Thank you for your time and consideration.

Rebecca Beronja, LPC

Eddie Sleeper

From: Jamie Lettow <jmlettow@gmail.com>
Sent: Monday, September 30, 2019 10:12 PM
To: Eddie Sleeper
Subject: HB 4325 Support

Representative Sleeper,

I wanted to thank you for your hard work and all that you do your constituents. I am sure you receive thousands of e-mails a week so I will make this straight-forward and brief. I SUPPORT HB4325 and OPPOSE the changes LARA is proposing to the counseling guidelines of LPCs. Even though I am a CPA and love numbers, I won't bother you with statistics because I am sure by now you've heard what a significant affect these changes would have on everyone in Michigan looking for mental health counseling. Here are my reasons why I support HB4325 and oppose the changes LARA is proposing:

1. My wife has pursued her career since she was a young teen. She always knew she wanted to help people and realized at a very young age that she could do so very effectively by becoming a counselor. She has spent countless hours at Western Michigan University earning a bachelors and master's degree (along with the debt associated with such degrees) as well as spent years building her own private practice from scratch. Originally, she wanted to be a psychologist, but learned early on that LPCs were the individuals on the front lines meeting with patients and truly changing their lives for the better with first-hand guidance. These changes LARA is proposing would literally destroy her life emotionally and financially. How do you tell someone who has dedicated their life to helping others, jumping through all the hoops set forth by Michigan, that the government who is supposed to be there to support you thinks your work is outdated, unnecessary and could be illegal?
2. Me – I am a product of counseling as a child. My parents took me took an LPC while in my early years and completely changed my personality from a mean, abusive brother and child to a kind and patient individual (not my words – what my parents have always told me).
3. So maybe the first two emotional and very real personal reasons don't resonate with everyone – how about these two that I am sure do:
 - a. MONEY – Personally we just welcomed a wonderful baby girl to this world and the State of Michigan is essentially revoking my wife's ability to make money (let's not even consider all of the rent she is still obligated to pay as part of the rental of her office space). The State of Michigan – I am no lawyer, but with little to no notice, wouldn't revoking rights to licensed individuals with this state who have been practicing in the same capacity for almost 30 years be the exact type of thing a class-action lawsuit is built upon? I hate suing anybody, any company or any government agency, but to literally take away someone's livelihood for no apparent reason (and very little support from counseling associations located in Michigan and around the country) sounds like a pretty easy lawsuit to win (not to mention LPCs already do the same thing in Michigan that they do in almost all over 50 states).
 - b. VOTES – My understanding from speaking with professionals in this topic (including professors, LPCs from other states and politicians) has led me to believe this clarification of the counseling parameters (as proposed by HB4325) should have occurred many years ago. Due to inaction by Michigan LPCs and politicians nothing has been lobbied strong enough or been able to pass the House and the Senate until possibly now. With our country under a "mental health crisis" do you think it will look good for any sitting politician to vote against this bill? Social media is a strong tool society today. If an estimated 200,000+ current LPC patients lose someone they rely on for much of their emotional support I have a good feeling whomever voted against passing this bill will become widely known in the community and eventually lose votes next time they come up for reelection.
4. Let's just say LARA is right, which i think they are – this needs to happen and clarification is needed. Then do so, but please make sure all of the patients currently seeking mental health counseling have the time and resources to find a new counselor/therapist. I care very much about my wife's career and emotional well-being, but it is more important that the patients are given the time to find a new therapist (which they likely will not find without the 10,000+ LPCs unable to practice).

Please consider supporting HB4325 and opposing the changes currently proposed by LARA. Thank you!

-James Lettow (voting residence in 49079 – Paw Paw, MI)

Eddie Sleeper

From: Jennifer Burger <jburger@hegirahealth.org>
Sent: Monday, September 30, 2019 10:26 PM
To: Eddie Sleeper
Subject: HB4325 - Ways & Means Committee Written Testimony

Hello,

I'd like to submit this message as my written testimony for the Ways and Means Committee in relation to HB4325. I would like to urge the committee to pass HB4325 out of committee as soon as possible without amendments.

HB4325 seeks to clarify and keep our existing scope of practice, not to expand it.

It is true that there is a discrepancy between statute (Public Health Code) and LARA rules that needs to be fixed. The way to fix it is through legislation, specifically HB4325, AS WRITTEN. In the 30+ years that LPCs have been licensed to practice in the State of MI, there have been NO formal complaints related to diagnosing and psychotherapy.

Counselor training requirements prepare LPCs for this scope of practice.

There is some misinformation being circulated with regard to LPCs ability to diagnose and to use psychotherapy techniques. The Council for Accreditation of Counseling and Related Educational Programs (CACREP) has long been recognized for the highest level of preparation for counselors. Core coursework for all counselors include both diagnosis and psychotherapy techniques. HB4325 includes language about what an acceptable education is (CACREP or equivalent) related to licensure as an LPC to ensure that these standards are upheld. CACREP programs also set standards for acceptable training requirements in terms of practicum and internship. No counselor exits their education without being prepared to diagnose and treatment mental health disorders, substance use disorders, and those struggling with both simultaneously (co-occurring disorders). No counselor exits their education without being prepared to put psychotherapy techniques into action to treat those disorders.

150,000+ people will be without mental health care and 10,000+ will be without jobs if LARA changes the rules as proposed without a legislative answer.

The impact of LARA rule changes going into effect without HB4325 will be catastrophic. 150,000+ Michigan residents rely on LPCs for their mental health care. These are people that struggle with severe depression, suicidal thoughts, impulsive behaviors, opioid disorders, alcoholism, Schizophrenia, PTSD. It would also be financially devastating at the state level if 10,000+ Michigan LPCs were suddenly without work and the state no longer had that tax revenue.

Please take these points into consideration and pass HB4325 out of committee as soon as possible without amendments.

Sincerely,

Jennifer Burger, MEd, LPC, NCC
Administrator of Adult Outpatient Services
Hegira Health, Inc.
8623 North Wayne Road, Suite 310
Westland, MI 48185
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Eddie Sleeper

From: Gari Nowland <gari.nowland@live.com>
Sent: Monday, September 30, 2019 10:29 PM
To: Eddie Sleeper
Subject: Testimony for HB4325

My name is Gari Nowland, and I am writing as I personally see a Licensed Professional Counselor (LPC) for my mental health needs, and it is extremely important that you PASS HB4325, before October 4th.

It is so important that HB4325 passes, not just to me, but also for thousands of others. Our country is having a mental health crisis. The problem starts with too few locations available to everyone.

My story, for an example, started when I was admitted into an inpatient facility after I tried to overdose on my mental health medications. It was a nightmare for me. I was treated beyond horrible! I refused more pills saying I needed something different, as I was abusing my prescription medications. I asked for other options, at which point in time I was told I needed to leave the facility. Not only was I kicked out, but they even went as far as to pull the one and only person who was trying to help me aside, and tell him I was leaving against Against Medical Advice. They almost cost me everything! It took a lot to convince that person of the truth. (Most people couldn't imagine people meant to help would be that horrible to the ones asking for help.)

From there I have had four different therapist. All within the Community Mental Health Organizations, and the organization has failed me time and time again. I have felt discriminated against by the "untrained" administrators allowed to run these facilities.

I have been truly blessed when I was finally placed with my current LPC. She did work at a CMH, until she left to work full time at her private practice. I am thankful everyday that she allowed me to continue my care with her at her private practice office. I see her once a week, and although I have made a lot of progress, I still have a very long way to go.

If HB4325 doesn't pass I will be losing the only counselor that has taken a true interest in helping me. At which point I will be without any help, and my mental health wellbeing will be threatened. (After my treatment at the CMH offices, I will be unwilling to ever go back to there.)

HB4325 NEEDS to PASS for the wellbeing of those of us who need it the most. If you don't pass it you will be causing more harm to those you are there to represent.

Please give my words true consideration. Feel free to contact me if you have questions that I may be able to help with. My mental health wellbeing is riding on HB4325 PASSING.

Thank you for your time. I appreciate it.
Gari Nowland
1615 W.17 Mile Road
Bitely, MI 49309

Eddie Sleeper

From: Rachael Folkert <rachael.folkert@ihcwestmichigan.com>
Sent: Monday, September 30, 2019 10:37 PM
To: Eddie Sleeper
Subject: HB4325 - Ways & Means Committee Written Testimony

Dear Ways and Means Committee,

My name is Rachael Folkert, and I am a Licensed Professional Counselor in private practice in Wyoming, MI. In order to receive my LPC license, I had to complete a graduate degree, which included taking classes in counseling techniques, as well as assessment and treatment planning. I completed over 3,700 hours of supervised counseling over the span of more than two years. I then had to pass the NCE. I also have a certification in Trauma-Focused Cognitive Behavioral Therapy, which is an evidence based treatment for children and adolescents impacted by trauma and their parents or caregivers. Research shows that TF-CBT successfully resolves a broad array of emotional and behavioral difficulties associated with single, multiple and complex trauma experiences. In order to obtain this additional certification, I attended trainings that took place over the course of a year, had supervision of three cases, and engaged in a cohort. I also have my CAADC (Certified Advanced Alcohol and Drug Counselor). To obtain my CAADC, I had to have at least 100 supervision hours, 186 education hours that included areas such as assessment, diagnosis, and treatment planning. I also had to pass an exam.

In my current practice, I primarily see adolescents and young adults. However, I have a broad range of clients. I help clients overcome trauma symptoms and PTSD. I work with clients struggling with addiction, supporting their efforts for recovery. I see families, and promote improved communication and family interaction. I work to find hope and healing for those who are depressed, anxious, angry or dealing with any difficulty they cannot address on their own. This is not a job to me. This is my calling, my life purpose. I engage in the use of evidenced-based practices including CBT, TF-CBT, BSFT, and motivational interviewing.

It has been brought to my attention that LARA has recently proposed changes that would have significant consequences and threaten the livelihood of counselors all across Michigan. Many of the changes that LARA has proposed are already included in HB 4325 but the most drastic is the recommendation of the repeal of virtually all the rules that define an LPC's scope of practice under R338.1751. A major concern is that this would put Michigan LPC's in violation of the American Counseling Associations Code of Ethics (requiring a proper diagnosis). Additionally, insurance companies will likely stop reimbursing for the services of LPC's due to the significant limits on scope these rule changes would impose. I currently see patients who have Medicaid products, private insurance, and a few who pay out of pocket. My engagement in private practice, and my livelihood are at risk. I currently work two days a week, and bring in about \$3000 per month. The ability to work in private practice has allowed me to spend time with my two children, while also providing needed income for my family. Without this income, it would be difficult for us to meet our everyday needs. My graduate degree cost over \$30,000, an investment that would be rendered void if LARA's proposal is passed.

It is estimated there are more than 150,000 people in Michigan seeking mental health services from an LPC. With an already increasing shortage of mental health professionals in our state, this could be

devastating to the general public's welfare. I personally see about 15 clients per week. If I am unable to practice, my clients will not have quick access to alternative mental health services. For many, there are long waiting lists. I have developed a rapport with my clients, and for them to lose the therapeutic relationship that we have established would be detrimental to their overall wellbeing and mental health. The clients that I work with that have experienced trauma, are in the middle of working towards hope and healing. If this process is interrupted, the consequences would be devastating. The work that I do as a counselor helps improve the mental stability of my clients, and for some helps to keep them from inpatient hospitalization, self-harm, and suicide.

I am urging legislature to pass HB 4325 introduced by Rep. Aaron Miller which would negate the need for LARA's rule changes all together. I am requesting that you pass this bill out of committee as soon as possible without amendments. The passing of this bill is critical for the mental health care of 150,000 Michigan residents!

Rachael Folkert MA LPC CAADC
Therapist, Integrative Health Consultants of West Michigan, LLC.

IHC / 1843 RW Berends Dr SW | Wyoming, MI 49519
Phone 616.773.2908 x119 | Fax 616.532.3046
rachael.folkert@ihcwestmichigan.com

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Sincerely,
Rachael Folkert MA LPC CAADC
Therapist, Integrative Health Consultants of West Michigan, LLC.

IHC / 1843 RW Berends Dr SW | Wyoming, MI 49519
Phone [616.773.2908](tel:616.773.2908) x119 | Fax [616.532.3046](tel:616.532.3046)

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Eddie Sleeper

From: Jennifer Stone <jm.pietrowski30@gmail.com>
Sent: Monday, September 30, 2019 11:24 PM
To: Eddie Sleeper
Subject: Support HB 4325

September 30, 2019

Dear Committee Clerk Edward Sleeper,

My name is Jennifer Stone and I am a licensed professional counselor practicing in the state of Michigan. I am expressing my concerns for what will happen if LARA's proposed rule changes are put into effect as they would limit a LPC's ability to diagnose and practice counseling techniques. I am troubled about the impact that it would have on thousands of Michigan LPCs, including myself, who would be directly impacted if these changes were put in place. My hope is that you will support HB 4325 and move it out of the committee as soon as possible without amendments.

Concerns for the Community

What concerns me even more as a counselor on the front lines working during this time is the number of people that will lose access to their current counselors or be unable to return to their former counselor in a time of need. As LPCs we are there for individuals during some of the most trying and hopeless periods of their lives and when they feel that they have absolutely no support and hit rock bottom. To make this change during a time when we are working to help people being affected by the opioid crisis and while rates of suicide are continuing to increase would severely impact the citizens of Michigan. In addition to seeing clients that are coming in for addiction and mental health disorders, I am an outreach counselor working with adolescents in schools being directly impacted as well by these events in their families.

Moreover, when speaking about the vaping epidemic Governor Whitmer expressed that the safety of our kids is her number one priority. The services I provide through this prevention program help students that are identified as at-risk. These students are able to receive education about the harmful effects of vaping and direct help with how to access services to assist them if they are already vaping. In addition, adolescents are fearful about going to school because of the multiple mass shootings happening across our country. Some of their own schools have been dismissed or closed due to threats being made by their fellow students. As a counselor, the services I am able to provide help these students that would otherwise have barriers to accessing services whether that is due to transportation, parents that aren't involved, or lack of insurance. The changes would pull qualified counselors out of our positions and prevent us from helping these individuals in our community. There are already not enough therapists practicing to meet the need of mental health services being requested in our state and removing a large portion of these counselors through the proposed LARA changes would make it even more challenging for people seeking mental health treatment.

Qualifications and Experience

I urge you to support HB 4325 which would not change our scope of practice, but allow us to maintain the services we have been providing already for 30 years and are trained to be providing. In speaking to my education and experience, I graduated from a CACREP accredited program at Oakland University in 2014 having completed multiple courses in Counseling in Diversity, Developmental Counseling, Testing/Assessment, Theories of Counseling, Career Development/Practice, Community/Agency Counseling, Concept/Treatment Planning, Research, Techniques, Family and

Couples Counseling, Chemical Dependency, and Group. I was also required to complete a supervised Practicum Course directly working with individuals at the campus counseling center. In addition, I acquired 600 hours of supervised experience working at a community agency for my internship before graduating with my Master's Degree in Counseling.

Following my post graduate experience I completed 3000 hours required as a Limited Licensed Professional Counselor before being able to obtain my full license. Apart from those requirements I have successfully passed the National Counselor Exam. I belong to the National Board of Certified Counselors and have completed well over the required 100 hours of continuing education (CEUs) for that certification. Additionally, I have a Development Plan through the Michigan Certification Board for Addiction Professionals as I work toward becoming a Certified Advanced Alcohol and Drug Counselor requiring me to complete 2000 direct hours, 180 educational hours, and 300 hours of supervision. I have so far completed 105 CEUs out of the required 180 educational hours in addition to receiving my weekly supervision and working directly with Substance Use Disorder clients. And lastly, I continue to renew my license through LARA who granted me a license to practice in 2014 and approved the professional disclosure statement that we are required to submit encompassing information about our practice, education and experience, fee for services, explaining confidentiality, and directing individuals to where and how to submit a complaint if needed (which has not happened during the time of my practice).

I am writing this letter to inform you that as LPCs in Michigan, we are trained and qualified to be providing the services that has been granted to us by LARA. Once again, I urge you to fight against the proposed changes to the LPC scope of practice. Additionally, please support HB 4325 as it is of great importance that we are able to continue providing quality counseling services to our clients now and in the future.

Thank you for your time. Please feel free to contact me with further questions at 248-756-2045 or jm.pietrowski30@gmail.com

Sincerely,

Jennifer Stone MA, LPC, NCC

Written Testimony Submitted for the Record for the Ways and Means Committee 10/2/19 meeting

Dear Ways and Means Committee Member,

I am writing to implore you to pass HB 4325 without amendment as quickly as possible. At stake are the livelihoods of 10,000+ Licensed Professional Counselors (LPCs) and the well-being of over 150,000 mental health therapy clients that depend on these counselors for treatment. Moreover, every LPC and every mental health therapy client has a family that will be affected by your decision as well.

The Department of Licensing and Regulatory Affairs (LARA) is currently working toward implementing rules that will change the scope of practice for LPCs – so severely limiting the scope that LPCs will no longer be able to diagnose or provide psychotherapy services. These proposed rule changes could be in effect as early as November of this year immediately rendering Michigan's 10,000+ LPCs unable to legally practice in our state.

This means most LPCs will immediately be out of work including those who work in: emergency rooms, counseling agencies, private practices, substance abuse rehabilitation, Community Mental Health (over 25% of their therapists are LPCs), veterans, inpatient/outpatient detoxification, mental health facilities and agencies, residential care facilities, half-way houses, geriatric related facilities, VA medical hospitals and outpatient clinics, rehabilitation centers, correctional facilities and prisons. This will leave hundreds of thousands of Michigan residents without the mental health treatment they need which will result in a statewide mental health emergency.

Our nation is facing a mental health crisis. There simply aren't enough counselors and other mental health professionals to meet the burgeoning demand for services, according to a recent analysis by the U.S. Health Resources & Services Administration (HRSA).

HRSA estimates nationally we need to add 10,000 providers in each of seven separate mental healthcare professions by 2025 to meet the expected growth in demand.

In Michigan there are nearly 1.4 million adults with mental illness and 67,000 youth suffering from a major depressive episode. The majority of these individuals are not receiving the care they need. We already have a shortage of mental health clinicians in the state. We need more counselors, not fewer.

There is a misconception that HB 4325 would expand LPCs' scope of practice, but this is not true. Rather, HB 4325 will clearly put into law LPCs' current scope which has been in place for the past 30 years.

Please pass HB 4325 without amendment as quickly as possible. Lives are at stake.

Most Respectfully,

Carol Berger, LPC

1623 E 6 Mile Creek Rd.
Owosso, MI 48867

Eddie Sleeper

From: Copeland, Paula L. <Paula.Copeland@ascension.org>
Sent: Tuesday, October 1, 2019 5:07 AM
To: Eddie Sleeper
Subject: HB4325 - Ways and Means Committee Written Testimony

Letter to Ways and Means Committee:

Greetings, leaders. Thank you for the work you do on behalf of the citizens of Michigan. I am writing regarding HB 4325, which you will soon be addressing – perhaps even this week.

It is critical that HB 4325 move through the Ways and Means Committee unamended.

The changes LARA is going to be requesting October 4th are not reasonable and will have devastating consequences for up to 300,000 clients we are serving, cost the livelihoods of 10,000 counselors in Michigan, and lead to home foreclosures, business closures, defaulting on student loans, and other catastrophic consequences.

What LARA is seeking to do directly contravenes their relationship with us for the past 30 years. In that time, they have been receiving our disclosure statements (which state forthrightly the nature of the work we do), our transcripts, and our supervision experience forms, and granting us licenses to do the work they are now saying they never allowed us to do. **That we are highly trained to diagnose and treat mental illness/disturbance is simply beyond question, though the American Psychological Association certainly wants you to think otherwise.** Keep in mind, the APA has never accredited master's level programs – even though their PHD students sat side by side with us in most of the exact same classes.

HB 4325 seeks to do what LARA has been asking the Board of Counseling to do for years, which is get our profession and its proper scope of practice enshrined permanently into law, like it is for the Limited Licensed Psychologists and the Licensed Master Social Workers, two other professions beside whom we work shoulder to shoulder and are verifiably trained to an equivalent level (there's no reason this is even up for discussion -- the classes we take and the requirements we meet are a matter of public record).

I ask that you please allow HB 4325 to move through the Ways and Means Committee unamended, and that you support it unanimously. Without your action, hundreds of thousands of struggling clients will be left without treatment providers and many could end up in costly crises if the LARA decision takes place before the bill is passed.

Thank you for your time.

Paula Copeland, LPC
Kalamazoo, Michigan
Licensed Professional Counselor
Masters of Counseling Psychology Western Michigan University 1998

Paula Copeland, LPC
ER Crisis Screener
Ascension-Borgess Hospital
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Eddie Sleeper

From: Michaela Ayew-ew <michaela.ayewew@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, October 1, 2019 5:39 AM
To: Rep. Brandt Iden (District 61); Rep. Jim Lilly (District 89); Rep. Eric Leutheuser (District 58); Rep. Beth Griffin (District 66); Rep. Roger Hauck (District 99); Rep. Bronna Kahle (District 57); Eddie Sleeper
Subject: HB 4325 - Ways and Means Committee Written Testimony

Dear Representatives,

I am contacting the Ways and Means Committee to voice my support for HB 4325 and ask that you pass it out of committee ASAP WITHOUT AMENDMENTS.

If LARA revises the rules and the HB4325 bill does not pass, the impact will render profound economic ramifications in Michigan:

- You will be cutting out a massive revenue stream.

Indeed states, "\$90,704 The average salary for a Licensed Professional Counselor is \$90,704 per year in Michigan, which is 44% above the national average." With LARA reporting over 10,000 LPC licenses this year, that would equal over \$907 BILLION in income. By allowing LARA to revise the rules and if HB 4325 is denied, it will result in income tax REVENUE LOSS OF \$38 MILLION PER YEAR to the State of Michigan.

- This will put 10,000 Michigan LPCs out of business placing them, their dependents and support staff in financial ruin.
- Unemployment rates will skyrocket.

10,000+ LPCs will instantly be unemployed for an EXTENDED period of time due to their nullified degree/qualifications to get another professional job. Furthermore, we are also career counselors that support unemployed or underemployed individuals to help them get back out into the workforce. Without counselors to help them, the number of citizens who will remain unemployed is incalculable.

- A ripple effect crisis will occur when more than 200,000 Michiganders will instantly be without their counselors and unable to contribute to our economy.
- We are in the middle of an opioid crisis, a suicide epidemic, and record-breaking rates of depression and anxiety issues. We need to be expanding access to mental health services right now, not contracting it, so that we have more high-functioning citizens positively contributing to our society.

Due to the above named reasons, I am concerned about the potential rule changes that Licensing and Regulation Affairs (LARA) is trying to make regarding the LPC license. I have been practicing counseling for 3.5 years as a Licensed Professional Counselor. While this change would be tragic for individuals in the profession, myself included, I think you should recognize that the impact on our clients would be tenfold. If this change were to be made, it would cause a mental health crisis.

THERE IS A SOLUTION!

PLEASE PASS HB 4325 without amendments!

Counselors are well trained in counseling techniques and diagnosing. We have been doing this work for 30 years and there is no reason for LARA to take away our ability to do so.

By passing HB 4325 through the Ways and Means Committee, you will be investing in the lives of Michigan residents by ensuring their continued access to mental health care.

Please stand up for LPCs and the people who depend on their services. Our state depends on your support. Thank you for taking the time to read this message.

Sincerely,
Michaela Ayew-ew, MA, LPC

Eddie Sleeper

From: Artemis Vouharas <avouharas@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, October 1, 2019 8:00 AM
Subject: URGENT HB4325

Dear Representative,

I am writing to implore you to pass HB 4325 without amendment as quickly as possible. At stake are the livelihoods of 10,000+ Licensed Professional Counselors (LPCs) and the well-being of over 150,000 mental health therapy clients that depend on these counselors for treatment. Moreover, every LPC and every mental health therapy client has a family that will be affected by your decision as well.

The Department of Licensing and Regulatory Affairs (LARA) is currently working toward implementing rules that will change the scope of practice for LPCs – so severely limiting the scope that LPCs will no longer be able to diagnose or provide psychotherapy services. These proposed rule changes could be in effect as early as November of this year immediately rendering Michigan's 10,000+ LPCs unable to legally practice in our state. This means most LPCs will immediately be out of work including those who work in: emergency rooms, counseling agencies, private practices, substance abuse rehabilitation, Community Mental Health (over 25% of their therapists are LPCs), veterans, inpatient/outpatient detoxification, mental health facilities and agencies, residential care facilities, half-way houses, geriatric related facilities, VA medical hospitals and outpatient clinics, rehabilitation centers, correctional facilities and prisons. This will leave hundreds of thousands of Michigan residents without the mental health treatment they need which will result in a statewide mental health emergency.

Our nation is facing a mental health crisis. There simply aren't enough counselors and other mental health professionals to meet the burgeoning demand for services, according to a recent analysis by the U.S. Health Resources & Services Administration (HRSA).

HRSA estimates nationally we need to add 10,000 providers in each of seven separate mental healthcare professions by 2025 to meet the expected growth in demand.

In Michigan there are nearly 1.4 million adults with mental illness and 67,000 youth suffering from a major depressive episode. The majority of these individuals are not receiving the care they need. We already have a shortage of mental health clinicians in the state. We need more counselors, not fewer.

There is a misconception that HB 4325 would expand LPCs' scope of practice, but this is not true. Rather, HB 4325 will clearly put into law LPCs' current scope which has been in place for the past 30 years.

Please pass HB 4325 without amendment as quickly as possible. Lives are at stake.

Most Respectfully,
Artemis Vouharas
Current grad student, future LPC

Eddie Sleeper

From: Christin McFadyen <christin.mcfadyen@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, October 1, 2019 8:31 AM
To: Eddie Sleeper
Subject: HB 4325 - Ways & Means Committee Written Testimony

Dear Ways & Means Committee,

I am aware that you have many pressing issues on your desk that need to be addressed, however, one of those issues must be the passage of HB 4325 without amendments.

LARA's proposed change would eliminate 10,000 LPCs from working and ALL of their clients across the state (150k +) from receiving services which would lead to a statewide mental health emergency. LPCs currently make up approximately 25%-30% of the mental health workers in Michigan. Without us working in the field, it will devastate the mental health landscape of our state.

Despite what some may argue, HB 4325 does NOT expand the scope of practice of LPCs. Rather this bill will codify our current scope of practice which has been in place for 30 years. Again, LPCs are NOT asking to expand their practice, just the language in the law to be up-to-date in what we already do and have been doing for decades.

HB 4325 is moving through the legislative process and would update the antiquated language of the original law regarding LPCs and scope of practice and would eliminate the need for LARA to change their rule. This whole crisis could be avoided with the passage of HB 4325.

LPCs have extensive Master's level training in diagnosis and evidence-based treatment of mental health conditions. Many are in private practice and would have to shut down their practices should LARA's proposed change go through.

My undergraduate degree is in education. I attended graduate school to become a counselor and I picked a dual program so I would be eligible for a School Counselor Licence as well as an LPC. Having both allows me options in employment, but they also complement each other well as my LPC training has proven invaluable in my work as a School Counselor. I took classes in my graduate work on evidence-based counseling techniques and strategies taught by licensed counselors working in the field, a year-long practicum and internship, passed both the School Counseling License exam and the NCE, and went through 3,000 hours of supervision before obtaining my LPC. I am a member of the American School Counseling Association, the Michigan School Counseling Association, the Michigan Mental Health Counselors Association, and I'm an NCC through the National Board of Certified Counselors. I maintain these memberships and certifications to continue my professional development and to show my students and their families that I adhere to the highest standards of ethics and accountability. Yet if LARA's proposed changes go through and if HB 4325 does not pass, my LPC will become a worthless piece of paper hanging on my office wall.

I work in a school with almost 500 students of which I am the only counselor. We are in a rural area with limited access to support resources. 60% of my students are on Free and/or Reduced lunch which is just one indicator of the issues my students and their families experience daily. Many times students need more than what I can provide during the school day and school year, and I often refer to outside counseling sources for additional supports or resources for them and their families. Most of these resources are LPCs or agencies that hire LPCs. If the proposed changes by LARA go through, and if HB 4325 does not pass, I will go from having a few resources to help students, to virtually none.

While I am advocating for my professional field, even more so I am writing to you to advocate for my students and their families who need more access to mental health services, not less. I implore you to pass HB 4325 without amendments and quickly.

Respectfully,

Christin M. McFadyen, MA, LPC, NCC, School Counselor

Eddie Sleeper

From: Tracey Galgoci <tracey@tgtherapy.com>
Sent: Tuesday, October 1, 2019 8:47 AM
To: Eddie Sleeper
Subject: Ways and Mean Committee hearing 10/2/19

Mr. Sleeper-

Good morning! My name is Tracey Galgoci and I'm the new Chair of the Public Policy and Advocacy Committee for the Michigan Counseling Association (MCA). I'm wondering if you could tell me how many people will be allowed to give testimony tomorrow regarding HB 4325 and if you need to know ahead of time that someone would like to speak? If so, Michael Joy, President of the Michigan Counseling Association would like the opportunity to speak at the meeting tomorrow. Thank you so much for your time.

Tracey Galgoci, MA, LPC, NCC
Professional Counselor
989-630-4335
tracey@tgtherapy.com

Eddie Sleeper

From: Gongwer News Service <gongwerreports@gongwer.com>
Sent: Tuesday, October 1, 2019 8:50 AM
To: Eddie Sleeper
Subject: Michigan Media Clips, Tuesday, October 1

MEDIA CLIPS

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NEWS

No One Knows Who Demolished Lawmaker's Detroit House (Associated Press, 10/1/2019)

Enbridge halts Line 5 Michigan ads featuring U.S. scientist, apologizes (Bridge Magazine, 10/1/2019)

Rural hospitals in Michigan face a dilemma: Merge or not? (Bridge Magazine, 9/30/2019)

What's next for Michigan budget: Gretchen Whitmer plans more shifts to GOP plan (Bridge Magazine, 10/1/2019)

New lawsuit emerges in fight against Michigan vape ban, which takes effect Wednesday (Crain's Detroit Business, 10/1/2019)

Michigan's flavored vape ban stops sales this week. Here's what you need to know. (Detroit Free Press, 9/30/2019)

Pure Michigan campaign gets budget axe (Detroit Free Press, 10/1/2019)

State rep's Detroit house mysteriously torn down — and officials don't know why (Detroit Free Press, 10/1/2019)

Warren and Klobuchar talk labor policy, immigration in Madison Heights (Detroit Free Press, 9/30/2019)

Whitmer makes big use of veto pen on GOP budget (Detroit Free Press, 10/1/2019)

Judge: Michigan adoption agencies can turn away LGBT couples (Holland Sentinel, 9/30/2019)

Ballot drive to ban abortion procedure in Michigan hits 200k signatures (MLive, 10/1/2019)

Editorial: Michigan's mental health services need change now (MLive, 10/1/2019)

Judges decline to halt Michigan's flavored vaping ban (MLive, 10/1/2019)

Michigan lawmakers push for moose hunting on Isle Royale National Park (MLive, 9/30/2019)

Whitmer signs budget bills with 147 line-item vetoes (MLive, 10/1/2019)

Ethics panel reviewing complaints about Tlaib, Huizenga (The Detroit News, 10/1/2019)

Pure Michigan funding nixed in governor's 147 budget vetoes (The Detroit News, 10/1/2019)

Whitmer signs budgets, blocks road aid boost as part of \$947M in line-item vetoes (The Detroit News, 10/1/2019)

State steps closer to PFAs standard for drinking water (Traverse City Record-Eagle, 9/30/2019)

EDITORIALS

Flint water crisis about to cost the state a whole lot of cash (Alpena News, 10/1/2019)

Column: Your right to know (Oakland Press, 10/1/2019)

BLOGS

Short's Partners With Pure Michigan On Latest IPA (Gongwer News Service Michigan Blog, 9/30/2019)

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Eddie Sleeper

From: Kimberly Donahue <kdonahue1130@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, October 1, 2019 9:08 AM
To: Eddie Sleeper
Subject: testimony for HB 4325

Representatives,

I am writing to request your support for House Bill 4325, regarding scope of practice for Licensed Professional Counselors.

HB 4325 clarifies and codifies the scope of practice for LPCs, bringing statute into alignment with what LPCs have been doing for more than 30 years, which is diagnosing and providing therapy for mental health issues. It does NOT expand our scope of practice; it spells out what we already do.

As you may know, there is urgency in getting HB 4325 passed. LARA has proposed rules changes that will drastically diminish our scope of practice. Under the new rules, LPCs would not be able to diagnose or use "counseling techniques," rendering us unable to practice under our own Code of Ethics, unable to receive reimbursement from health insurance companies, and unable to continue the treatment of thousands of individuals already receiving services from LPCs.

LPCs are well trained in diagnosis, psychopathology, and therapeutic techniques. In addition to class work, we have hours and hours spent in supervised practicum and internships. We have an intense national exam to pass. In order to receive a full license, we work 3000 hours, all supervised. By the time we are eligible for our full license, we are experienced and qualified professionals.

There are over 10,000 LPCs in Michigan, serving well over 150,000 people. LPCs represent the majority of mental health providers in many rural areas, areas which are already desperately under served.

In general, there is already a shortage of mental health providers in Michigan, at a time when the opiate crisis still rages, teenage suicide is increasing, and rates of depression and anxiety in the general population is high. Eliminating 10,000 practitioners could create an acute mental health care crisis in our state. There would be people unable to get services at all, and there would be unimaginably long waiting lists. It is hard enough to make that first call looking for counseling; not finding help or being placed on a long waiting list could be devastating. Interruption of treatment for those already receiving services would be extremely harmful for people already vulnerable.

Personally, I worked in public agencies providing substance abuse and mental health services for years. After years of hard work, I have opened my own private practice, which depends upon insurance reimbursement. I have a case load of wonderful clients with a wide variety of issues, all working hard on getting healthy and developing stable, rewarding lives. The LARA rules changes would put me out of business and largely unemployable in this state, and leave all of my clients hanging.

I am especially concerned about the clients who have Medicaid. They have an additionally hard time finding services, and are so very relieved when I say I will see them. I have had several people actually start crying in relief, because they have had such a hard time finding someone who will take their insurance. It hurts my heart to think of it being even more difficult for them!

I urge you to move HB 4325 out of committee and onto the floor for a vote, without amendment, as quickly as possible.

Thank you,

Kimberly Donahue, LPC, NCC, CADC-M
kdonahue1130@gmail.com
408 N. Davison St.
Davison, MI 48423

Eddie Sleeper

From: Michelle Alexander <mmurta1@aol.com>
Sent: Tuesday, October 1, 2019 9:33 AM
To: Eddie Sleeper
Subject: HB4325 - Ways and Means Committee Written Testimony

Dear Mr. Sleeper,

My name is Michelle Alexander and I have been an LPC for 16 years and currently in my private practice for 7 years. Our profession is in danger if the LARA SOP changes take place. I implore you and the members of the Ways and Means Committee support HB4325 and protect not only our profession but the thousands of clients who are receiving mental health care.

Please pass this bill ASAP without amendments.

Thank you for your time and support of the HB 4325.

Kindly,

Michelle Alexander, MA, LPC, NCC

Eddie Sleeper

From: Zoe Lazar-Hale <zoelazarhale@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, October 1, 2019 9:36 AM
To: Eddie Sleeper
Subject: HB4325 - Ways and Means Committee Written Testimony

I am an LLPC (Limited Licensed Professional Counselor) and began working under supervision with my limited license in August 2016. I will be applying for my full LPC license in November after passing the National Board for Certified Counselors (NBCC)'s National Counselor Examination. Since August 2016, I have worked (under my limited license) as an Outpatient Therapist for one of two Opioid Maintenance Treatment (OMT) programs in Genesee County. During this time, I also earned my Certified Advanced Alcohol and Drug Counselor (CAADC) credential. As we all know, there is a major need for clinicians qualified to work with people seeking to recover from addiction. The impact of the current Opioid Crisis cannot be overstated, **and I am working on the front lines**. My daily practice includes assessment, diagnosing substance use and mental health disorders, practicing psychotherapy techniques including Cognitive Behavioral Therapy and Motivational Interviewing, and developing treatment plans. My scope of practice enables me to provide these vital services for my clients. I completed a master's degree in professional counseling as well as 700 hours of supervised practical training conducting mental health therapy. Since graduating, I have completed hundreds more hours of continuing education to qualify for my CAADC and to continue to sharpen my therapeutic skills. I have also worked over 3000 hours post-graduation under the supervision of a fully Licensed Professional Counselor who has been diagnosing and practicing psychotherapy for decades. Critics of HB 4325 assert that the bill's language does not adequately define the nature and extent of training for LPCs to diagnose & treat mental disorders. I would challenge them to review the training requirements of any of Michigan's Professional Counseling programs, which include specific coursework in diagnosis, assessment, and therapeutic techniques.

LARA's proposed LPC administrative rules changes are a perfect example of the constant threat our profession is under. The rule changes, which appear to be an attempt to subvert the legislative process, could put LPCs immediately out of practice, thereby giving Michiganders less access to mental health care at the worst possible time. To illustrate the impact, consider that I currently work with 75 clients, all of whom are diagnosed (by me) with substance use disorders and many with co-occurring mental health disorders. The majority of these clients are affected by Opioid Use Disorder. Many of them are long-term clients. We have developed rapport which has been shown empirically to be the most important feature of therapeutic efficacy. If these rule changes go through, I would effectively be required by law to abruptly stop providing services to these clients which would be abandonment. The American Counseling Association's (ACA) Code of Ethics standard A.12. Abandonment and Client Neglect, states that "Counselors do not abandon or neglect clients in counseling." Furthermore, the majority of my clients would be unable to seek services from another clinician at my agency because **eight out of ten of us are LPCs**, that would leave **hundreds** of clients currently receiving treatment for Opioid and other substance use disorders abruptly without therapists. Since therapy is a required part of any reputable OMT program, many of these clients would also be cut off from life-saving medication. Clearly it would be extremely dangerous and short-sighted to make the proposed LARA changes, especially at a time of mental health and addiction crisis in this nation and the State of Michigan.

Conversely, House Bill 4325 would protect the LPC scope of practice and our ability to continue providing the same services we have provided for over thirty years. Until HB 4325 is passed, without amendments which render it ineffective, LPC's scope of practice will continue to be under threat by special interest groups who are unaware or willfully ignorant of LPC's training & qualifications. I support HB 4325 because it would protect my profession and Michiganders' ability to receive vital services in their greatest time of need.

Zoë Lazar-Hale, LLPC, CAADC

Eddie Sleeper

From: Amber Somerville <amberesomerville@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, October 1, 2019 9:38 AM
To: Eddie Sleeper
Subject: HB 4325 - Ways and Means Committee written testimony

I am concerned about the news of potential rule changes that Licensing and Regulation Affairs (LARA) is trying to make that would seriously and negatively impact mental health providers with an LPC or LLPC license. This would drastically impact the livelihood of nearly 10,000 counselors in the state of Michigan, but the impact on clients who see them would be tenfold. If this change were to be made, it would cause a mental health crisis wherein many existing clients of LPC-licensed counselors would face abandonment and no longer being able to maintain long-established relationships with their counselors. This decrease in insurance-paneled counselors would dramatically and negatively affect your constituency.

Financially speaking, please also consider the costs to our State associated with up to 10,000 counselors becoming unemployed and the resulting lack of mental health services for clients contributing to potentially higher rates of impatient hospitalizations.

I want to reassure you that LPCs are highly competent to diagnose and practice counseling techniques. They are completely on par with the other Master's level mental health practitioners who they work along side of in the field. Their curriculum consists of diagnostics as well as counseling techniques and they have to complete 3000+ hours of supervised counseling, including taking and passing a national exam before being granted a full license. LPCs are not asking to be given special or new privileges, but to continue practicing and caring for our community as they have been for the past 30 years.

I am asking you to please PASS HB 4325, introduced by Rep. Aaron Miller (R-Sturgis), which would negate the need for LARA's rule changes altogether.

Please stand up for LPCs and the people who depend on their services.

Thank you,

Amber Somerville

Eddie Sleeper

From: Lauren Opra <lopra@emich.edu>
Sent: Monday, September 30, 2019 11:32 AM
To: Eddie Sleeper
Subject: Testimony for HB 4325

Good morning,

My name is Lauren Opra and I am a Limited Licensed Professional Counselor (LLPC) in the state of Michigan. I am writing in full support of HB 4325.

LARA's proposed rules changes for Licensed Professional Counselors (LPC) would have significant consequences on the counseling profession and the workforce in Michigan's public mental health system. Michigan's CMH system relies heavily on LPCs - as much as 25-30% of the workforce is made up of LPCs.

Despite the unanimous objections of the Board of Counseling Rules Committee, LARA is recommending the repeal of virtually all the rules that define an LPC's scope of practice under R338.1751. These are rules that have been recognized as part of the scope since they were first promulgated after the passage of the Licensed Professional Counselor statute in 1988. Instead the department insists these definitions should apply only to the educational preparation of counselors and not to counseling practice. These proposed rule changes would therefore be hugely detrimental to the individuals that rely on skilled mental health care provided by LPCs.

HB 4325 (sponsored by Rep. Miller) would negate the need for any proposed changes and ensure that Michiganders who rely on LPCs can continue to receive much needed mental health care. I urge the committee to support HB 4325. Thank you in advance for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Lauren Opra, MA, LLPC, NCC

Eddie Sleeper

From: Jacquelyn Buffo <jbuffo24@gmail.com>
Sent: Monday, September 30, 2019 11:37 AM
To: Eddie Sleeper
Subject: Testimony for HB4325

To Whom It May Concern:

I am writing in reference to the proposed Scope of Practices Rules Changes for Licensed Professional Counselors (LPC's). I am a Licensed Professional Counselor and I work for Henry Ford Health System as an outpatient clinician. I have my Master's of Science in Mental Health Counseling and I am also a Certified Advanced Alcohol and Drug Counselor through the State of Michigan. I am working on obtaining my certification in Dialectical Behavioral Therapy as well.

I have been a licensed counselor since 2013. I obtained my full license in 2015. I chose the counseling field because it was the only thing I have ever wanted to do. I put myself through my master's program while pregnant with my second child and working full-time. I took out student loans to help me achieve my goals and I repay them every month.

I work with clients who have severe mental illnesses and exhibit serious behaviors such as suicide and self-injury. My clientele is mostly made up of individuals (adolescents and adults) who have borderline personality disorder, PTSD and other severe mental health disorders. This bill would severely impact my ability to work with and help these individuals.

I am the primary source of income for my family of 5. I have three children and a husband who is self-employed. My income as an LPC supports our family financially. It allows me to pay our mortgage, repay my student loans, put food on the table, keep the lights on and give my children a quality of life. If this proposed rule change goes through, the welfare of my family would be at risk and our ability to fulfill our financial responsibilities would be crippled.

Furthermore, my patients would be without a therapist along with over 100,000 other Michigan residents who require mental health services. Limiting our ability to practice and taking away our right to perform essential duties that we EARNED is unethical to us as counselors and more importantly, to the people we serve.

I voluntarily put myself through my master's program which included passing the certification exam, completing an internship, 100 hours of supervision and thousands of hours in the field all while raising a family and working full-time with the intention of becoming a fully licensed counselor, who could practice in the field of mental health alongside other mental health professionals such as social workers and limited psychologists. To take that right away, that I worked so hard for, for is unethical.

Pleas wait for HB4325 to move through the legislative process.

I went into my education program with a very clear understanding of what was required of me and what I would be able to do once I fulfilled those requirements. To change the rules of the game after I fulfilled my obligations is immoral and unjust. I am a competent counselor and I take pride in my title, experience, achievements and

career choice. I am completely opposed to the Scope of Practice Rules changes. If you require anything further from me feel free to contact me.

Jacquelyn Buffo, MS, LPC, CAADC
Jbuffo24@gmail.com
586-4647432

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Jackie Buffo, MS, LPC, CAADC
Clinical Therapist
(586) 464-7432

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Eddie Sleeper

From: Heather Lettow <Heather@lettowcounseling.com>
Sent: Monday, September 30, 2019 11:39 AM
To: Eddie Sleeper
Subject: HB4325

Good Morning

I am sending you this message to request your support in opposing LARA's rule change and to encourage you to support for HB4325 WITHOUT AMMENDMENTS. Please pass it out of committee ASAP. It is critical passing HB4325 is for the mental health care of 150,000+ Michigan residents. If LPCs are no longer allowed to diagnose and utilize counseling techniques (therapy) we lose our ability to bill and be reimbursed by insurance companies, provide services in schools, community mental health organizations, hospitals, private practices, etc. It will be financially devastating on the state level if 10,000+ Michigan LPCs were suddenly without work (up to 40% of mental health providers in each county; an estimated 30% statewide) and the state no longer had that tax revenue. HB4325 is not an increase in our scope of practice as Licensed Professional Counselors. It is the updated language that reflects the scope we have practiced in and have been educated in for 30+ years.

On behalf of my fellow mental health providers and the clients we serve I thank you for your time and support,

Heather N. Lettow, MA, LPC, LMFT
5104 Lovers Lane
Portage, MI 49002
Office: 269-743-7360 Ext 1
Fax: 269-382-0866

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Eddie Sleeper

From: M.J. <mjbrown050@gmail.com>
Sent: Monday, September 30, 2019 11:43 AM
To: Eddie Sleeper
Subject: HB-4325

To whom it may concern

I am writing today urge you to support HB 4325, which would protect the work of licensed professional counselors in Michigan. This bill is of interest to me because I am one of the many individuals this could affect.

Efforts are being made to greatly restrict our scope of practice as counselors, which would in turn negatively affect people who suffer from various emotional and mental disorders. It is vital that we are able to maintain this scope of practice. This scope is encompassed of skills that are mastered during the rigorous training of mental health counselors, and these proposed restrictions by LARA would severely limit the services LPCs can provide, as well as infringe on our ability to bill medical insurance. The access of quality health mental health care to Michiganders would be greatly reduced at a time when they are needed more than ever. HB 4325 rectifies this problem by updating the language of the Public Health Code to reflect the current training and practices of LPCs in Michigan, while bringing the code into alignment with the national standards for professional standards.

As a limited licensed professional counselor who has a vested interest in the health and wellness of the citizens in your district, I believe that you can appreciate the challenges that we face or could face if it is not passed. If HB 4325 is not passed, and our scope of practice is restricted, thousands of Michigan LPCs and LLPC's see their livelihoods severely impacted, while hundreds of thousands of people will lose access to their mental health counselors. With the vast number of Michiganders that need mental health services, it is only fair that they have an ample number of choices as far as mental health professionals that they can go to. Thank you for your attention to this issue.

Sincerely,
Mary Jane Brown MA, LLPC
Limited License Professional Counselor

4221 S. MLK Blvd.

Lansing, Mi 48910

Eddie Sleeper

From: Lori Wilder <lwilder808@gmail.com>
Sent: Monday, September 30, 2019 11:55 AM
To: Brandtlden@house.mi.gov; Rep. Jim Lilly (District 89); Rep. Eric Leutheuser (District 58); Rep. Beth Griffin (District 66); Rep. Roger Hauck (District 99); Rep. Bronna Kahle (District 57); Rep. Jason Wentworth (District 97); Rep. Rebekah Warren (District 55); Rep. Wendell Byrd (District 3); SheldonNeely@house.mi.gov; Rep. Kevin Hertel (District 18); Eddie Sleeper
Subject: HB4325 and Means Ways and Means Committee Written Testimony

I have grave concern regarding LARA's push to change rules that have been in place for 30 years. This movement will take a desperate and devastating toll on LPC providers and our clients.

Michigan already has one of the highest suicide rates in the nation. With the implementation of these "new" rules change from LARA, our already over-burdened Mental Health system will be as well in dire need of help.

We all know that there are not enough Psychologists or Social workers (who are always over-burdened) to fill the gap. If LPCs cannot continue to Diagnose and bill on our clients behalf. This would be a devastation to our state.

It is inconceivable that LARA's want to change rules and regulations that will desecrate an entire workforce in our state of Michigan. You will also be forcing me to not be able to help my clients get well. People will die without the help of LPCs. We have always filled the gap, as there are so few PH.D's in our state! This will be a Mental Health Catastrophe!

I am in my 6th year as an LPC. I love my job of helping my clients get well. I also need to provide for my family. With these changes also come the devastation of taking away our livelihoods as 10,000 of us will be left without jobs!

In addition, I want to share with you that I have taken ALL of the appropriate Masters level courses required by our state.

They include:

Assessment and Testing, Psychopathology, Conceptualization and Treatment, Counseling Techniques in Multi-cultural settings Research, Legal Issues, Developmental issues, Career Counseling Group Counseling, Foundations of Marriage and Family Therapy, Cognitive Therapy, Consulting. I am also a National Certified Counselor (NCC).

I WOULD ALSO LIKE TO SHARE ONE STORY OF A CLIENT I CURRENTLY COUNSEL:

I want to share with you why my clients need me to be able to care for them. I have been an LPC for 6 years. During that time I have worked to help men, women, and most importantly children ages 6-11. Just yesterday I had a guardian (her aunt) of my client who is 7 years old emailed me in a panic. My client started crying and then yelled "I want to kill myself". This is a young girl who has been exposed to so much trauma within her family of origin. Not long ago this child's baby sister was shaken by a boyfriend and the baby died. All the children were immediately removed to foster care. I have been working with her diligently on grief, anger, lashing out in school and at home, even in our counseling sessions. She has a long way to go to be well. It is indeed a sign of the times that a 7 year old would know enough to say she wanted to take her own life. I became a counselor because I have a great heart and desire to see people who struggle mightily to be well again and live amazing lives. I implore you to stop this regulation change and let us show you that we are just

here to do our work to help people get well again as we always have been. We need to continue to diagnose and bill insurances to make sure our clients get the best care and the ability to get better.

PLEASE DO NOT MAKE ME HAVE TO STOP SEEING THIS LITTLE GIRL. I DREAD THE DAY I WOULD HAVE TO TELL HER THAT I CAN'T BE THERE FOR HER ANYMORE. What a devastating impact it would be for her to not have a therapist any more due to these NEW REGULATIONS AND RULES.

I severely oppose the rules changes being proposed my LARA that would remove the ability of LPCs to DX, use counseling Techniques or supervise, etc.

Sincerely,
Lori Wilder MA, LPC

Riverside Counseling & Wellness
41 Washington Ave. Suite 368
(located in the Harbourfront Building)
Grand Haven, MI 49417
phone: 616-402-4262
fax: 616-984-4603
Website: riversidecounselingandwellness.com

Sincerely,
Lori Wilder MA, LPC

Riverside Counseling & Wellness
41 Washington Ave. Suite 368
Grand Haven, MI 49417
phone: 616-402-4262
fax: 616-984-4603
Website: riversidecounselingandwellness.com

"Once you choose hope, anything's possible." ~Christopher Reeve

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Eddie Sleeper

From: Todd .Koch <toddgkoch@gmail.com>
Sent: Monday, September 30, 2019 11:57 AM
To: Eddie Sleeper
Subject: Support for HB4325!

Dear, Mr. Sleeper please find the enclosed email to be one of urgent necessity. I am a 25-year veteran of the Law Enforcement community in Michigan and currently awaiting my LLPC designation from LARA. The first responder community in the state needs more people who can help them not less. Please tell the Ways and Means Committee that our first responders need our support HB4235. Most of these men and woman will not come forward and testify due to the stigma still found in that community. They need our help as well as the over 150,000 others in the state using LPC's for mental health care, and support.
Please help us pass HB4325.

Thank you

-- Regards

~Todd Koch

13500 Trinkle Rd.

Chelsea MI 48118

734-395-6552

Eddie Sleeper

From: Jessica Krueger <jessicakruegerlpc@gmail.com>
Sent: Monday, September 30, 2019 12:11 PM
To: Eddie Sleeper
Subject: HB4325 - Ways & Means Committee Written Testimony

I am writing to voice my strongest objections to the proposed LPC rule changes (ORR 2019-063 LR) that would effectively repeal the ability of counselors to diagnose and practice counseling techniques. Please oppose LARA'S rule change. Please pass HB4325 out of committee without ammendments. It is critical to pass HB4325 for the mental health care of 150,000 plus Michigan residents. It would be financially devastating on the state level is 10,000 plus Michigan LPC's were suddenly without work and the state no longer had that tax revenue.

I am a Licensed Professional Counselor in the State of Michigan, license #6401011950. I work mostly with children, adolescents, and families, which is a great need in our community. LPC's have been diagnosing and practicing for 30 years without incident or complaint. There is a discrepancy between statute (Public Health Code) and LARA rules that needs to be fixed, HB4325 will do that. Thousands of people will be without mental health care and thousands of LPC's will be without jobs if LARA changes the rules as proposed.

I am highly concerned about the devastating impact these changes would have on consumers of mental health services in Michigan. Counselors serve a large proportion of mental health clients in the state of Michigan. Suicide rates are on the rise. Gun violence, depression, anxiety, the opioid crisis, and substance abuse are just a beginning list of the problems that professional counselors work to alleviate on a daily basis. If the proposed licensure changes were implemented, counselors would be forced to stop providing these services and abandon their existing clients. The harm this would cause to consumers of mental health services and the State of Michigan is insurmountable.

I strongly urge you to fight against the proposed LPC licensure rule changes that would repeal the ability of counselors to diagnose and practice counseling techniques. If you would like to speak to me further, I would be pleased to talk with you. Thank you for reading,

Jessica Krueger, LPC
(517) 420-1417

--

Please feel comfortable to email me with appointment requests and questions, and I will respond as I am able; however, if this a mental health emergency, please go to your local emergency room, contact Community Mental Health Emergency Services at [517 346-8460](tel:517-346-8460), or call 911.

This email might contain confidential patient or other information that is protected by federal and state law. If you believe that this email reached you accidentally please reply back to notify me about the error, and please do not share this email with anybody else. If you are not the intended recipient do not review, distribute or duplicate any portion of this email.

Jessica Krueger, LPC
Licensed Professional Counselor

517 420-1417

<https://jessicakruegerlpc.com/>

2025 Abbot Road
Suite 200
East Lansing, MI 48823

Eddie Sleeper

From: Georgiana Arhip <ageorgie86@yahoo.com>
Sent: Monday, September 30, 2019 12:25 PM
To: Eddie Sleeper
Subject: HB4325 Ways and Means Committee Written Testimony

Dear Ways and Means Committee,

Thank you for taking the time to read this message. The licensed professional counselors of Michigan believe that we need everyone working on this issue together.

I am writing in support of HB 4325, a bill that will better clarify LPCs current scope of practice and that is aligned with our education, training, and professional experience. A bill that will continue to allow us to practice in the appropriate capacity.

The rules and changes proposed by LARA will significantly limit and artificially restrict the LPCs professional scope of practice. The ability to "diagnose and identify the problem" as well as the ability to provide counseling techniques has been part of our educational and practical training as well as part of our current clinical practice. It's what we're trained for and what we do. To limit or eradicate this scope of practice, is to eradicate major components of our profession. It would be similar to artificially restricting medical doctors - educated, trained, and experienced in medication management - no longer being allowed to administer medication.

A change like this will most definitely impact thousands of counselors' ability to practice, estimates are over 10,000. This will also impact hundreds of thousands of clients - individuals that actually need, depend on, and thrive from our services. The loss in revenue would be astronomical, but the potential loss of lives -a price can't be placed on that.

Personally, I value my individual and personal growth and the well-being of those around me. I attend trainings on a regular basis to serve my clients in the best and most effective manner. This regular training, costing multiple hundreds of dollars for just one day, consists of training in further diagnostics and in counseling techniques. My formal education, which included classes, practicum, and internship, along with practicing in the clinical field, achieving thousands upon thousands of hours of experience, makes me and others in my field qualified to provide the services that are now being threatened with the rule changes proposed by LARA. HB 4325 can and will help the profession maintain it's ability to practice. Much of our professional viability lies in the ability to diagnose and treat the clients that we work with - again, practices that we are educated and trained to do.

At a time when Michigan, and the United States as a whole, is experiencing much need for mental health services, the rules that are being proposed by LARA will significantly undercut services. Personally, and I know that there are other individuals in my profession having similar experiences, I have a waiting list of individuals trying to get in to see a therapist. These are individuals that are waiting to receive much-needed mental health services. Many times I serve as someone that directs others to a higher level of care due to their severity of symptoms. I do fear the consequences of clients in need of a higher level of care that will not obtain it. We are not only in the business of empowering individuals to live healthy lives, but we are in the business of (at times) literally saving lives.

I do not know if this additional information will be helpful or not, but I would like to add to it in this email in hopes that it will place a legal precedent on any bills that may be considered. In most other states, LPCs or their equivalent are able to diagnose and treat individuals. To limit this ability, standards that have been part of our scope, practice, and education, would put Michigan behind most other states. At a time when Michigan is

experiencing a drug epidemic and an increase for mental health services, it is pertinent that individuals' care is not further limited by artificial restrictions.

I also encourage you to look at the educational courses/required training/supervision between LLPs, LPCs and LMSWs and see if there is any differences in course work that would render them able to diagnose and treat but that would not render LPCs able to do the same. Again, our education and training backs us in regards to being able to perform the roles stated in the bill. The bill is not allowing us to have special privileges, it's keeping in line with our current training.

I encourage and ask that you to look at, consider, and support Bill HB 4325. This bill will help LPCs maintain their scope of practice and help the individuals that most need it - hundreds of thousands of individuals that would be left without services. This bill will also promote that counselors receive ongoing education after their initial education and licensing - a practice that will help counselors maintain and improve their effectiveness and skills, like any other profession.

I thank you again for your time and consideration in regards to this urgent concern and for all that you do for us.

Have a wonderful day!

Sincerely,

Georgiana DesRosiers

Eddie Sleeper

From: Taylour Gillett <taylour.s@gmail.com>
Sent: Monday, September 30, 2019 12:38 PM
To: Eddie Sleeper
Subject: HB4325 - Ways & Means Committee Written Testimony

To Whom It May Concern,

My name is Taylour Gillett and I am writing to oppose the proposed changes from LARA and speak about the importance of House Bill 4325, which will be voted on by your committee on Wednesday, October 2nd.

I am currently an LLPC in the state of Michigan, with having just recently applied for LPC status. I am also in the process of opening up my own private practice, and just signed my lease for office space prior to this coming to light. If the changes LARA is proposing go through, I will be immediately left without an ability to provide the services I have been providing for the past two years. My license will become meaningless. Things are moving fast with the changes LARA is proposing. House Bill 4325 is the single most important thing we have to circumvent the LARA changes.

If LARA succeeds and the changes they are proposing go into effect, everything I have worked for up to this point in my life will be null and void. The changes they are looking to make will completely eliminate my entire scope of practice. I have been working as an outpatient mental health counselor for over two years, and the entirety of my job is dependent upon being able to diagnose my clients, not only for billing purposes but also as a means to direct treatment, and being able to provide psychotherapy techniques. In their proposed rule changes, these two elements (providing psychotherapy and ability to diagnose), will be moved to the education section and removed from the practice section. It makes no sense. I attended a CACREP accredited university where my entire program was based on how to provide effective and proper psychotherapy and utilization of diagnosing and treatment planning. What would the purpose of learning about these things be if I am not actually able to utilize those skills? I have passed the National Counseling Exam to become a Nationally Certified Counselor. I have completed my 3000 hours of supervisory training as an LLPC. I have done all of the things that are required, but for reasons unknown, that is no longer supposed to be good enough? LARA is claiming that these changes won't have a significant impact, but that is simply not true. LPC's and LLPC's have trained to be counselors. Most of us work in direct care. The impact would be disastrous.

I spent years learning and training how to be an effective and empathetic counselor so that I could help those in my community lead happier and healthier lives. If the LARA changes go through, 10,000 counselors in the state of Michigan will be effectively useless as practitioners. And over 150,000 Michigan residents will be left with no one to care for them. Access to mental health services are already in crisis, taking away my ability to practice would only increase this issue. Not only that, the Masters Degree that I spent years of my life and thousands and thousands of dollars to obtain will be nothing more than an incredibly expensive piece of paper. I will be forced to break a lease I just signed, costing me several thousand more dollars. I will be left without a job and a means of supporting myself and my family. I will be forced to either move out of state and leave every single thing that I know or change careers and give up my passion of helping people that I have worked so hard to do and that I can honestly say that I love doing every day. Imagine the financial impact of 10,000 lost jobs in this state. We pay income taxes, we contribute to the economy, many of us own our own small businesses, we pay yearly fees to keep our licenses intact and up to date. All of our revenue will be unequivocally eradicated. Many of us will likely leave the state. There are virtually no benefits if the changes LARA are proposing go through. We NEED House Bill 4325 to move quickly through the system, we NEED your votes to keep it going.

HB4325 is not an attempt to expand our scope of practice. We are not attempting to gain special privileges or broaden our abilities, we are simply looking to be able to continue to provide the services that we have been providing for 30

years. HB 4325 updates the needed language to match current standards, and would allow the continuation of services without interruption, not only for the counselors in this state but their clients.

I cannot express in words how sad I am that we as counselors are being targeted the way that we are by the proposed changes from LARA. There is a long history in this state of certain groups targeting other mental health professionals. This is not the first attempt these groups have taken, but if HB 4325 passes, it could be the last. The LARA changes are senseless. They are certainly not motivated by compassion for the people in Michigan. You have the power to push HB 4325 through and keep our profession intact. We have the legislation that would clarify and codify our position in this state. I am asking for the 10,000 counselors who are in this fight with me, and for the hundreds of thousands of Michigan residents who depend on us each and every single day, please consider what is at stake. Your vote could either destroy an entire profession, or save thousands of jobs and thousands more lives by allowing us to continue our practices and continue our helping profession in our communities.

Please pass HB 4325 out of your committee ASAP.

Thank you,

--

Taylor Gillett, M.A., LLPC, SCL, NCC

Eddie Sleeper

From: Anna Richards <anna.richards520@gmail.com>
Sent: Monday, September 30, 2019 12:46 PM
To: Rep. Brandt Iden (District 61); Rep. Jim Lilly (District 89); Rep. Eric Leutheuser (District 58); Rep. Beth Griffin (District 66); Rep. Roger Hauck (District 99); Rep. Bronna Kahle (District 57); Rep. Jason Wentworth (District 97); Rep. Rebekah Warren (District 55); Rep. Wendell Byrd (District 3); Rep. Sheldon Neeley (District 34); Rep. Kevin Hertel (District 18); Eddie Sleeper
Subject: HB 4325 Ways and Means Committee Written Testimony

Dear Ways and Means Committee,

I would like to address HB 4325. By now, you understand what an important topic this is. I am writing to beg and urge you to pass this bill WITHOUT AMENDMENTS asap. We know that you are working so very diligently on this. Our only aim is to continue to practice as we have for the past 30 years.

I'd like to share how much of my life's goal becoming a therapist has been. I have known and worked towards this the last 26 years of my life. I would like to also note that I went to OU and graduated in 2007. I, myself, completed the Community/Agency track which was absolutely designed to become a mental health practitioner. I am a therapist who is also trained in career counseling theory and assessment and it has been a beautiful marriage for my clinical vantage point.

I trained for 3000 hours to become fully licensed. I hold my NCC, national certification which I maintain with 100 hours of CEU's every 5 years. It is essential to what I do and the fabric of my being.

Please note - my specialization is child loss. I work with parents who have lost children. If any of you understand this excruciating loss and trauma, you will understand the secondary loss of losing the trained person you are going to, to try and breathe again in this world. The decisions you are making right now matter deeply. Please take this all into consideration and THANK YOU for all you have done and are doing.

Warmly,
Anna Richards (Arciero), MA, LPC, NCC
Only Human Counseling Services, LLC
2010 Hogback Rd. Ste 7
Ann Arbor, MI 48105
734-320-7838

Eddie Sleeper

From: ALogan <alogan521@gmail.com>
Sent: Monday, September 30, 2019 12:53 PM
To: Eddie Sleeper
Subject: LLPC Testimony for HB4325

Hello Representative Sleeper,

If HB4325 doesn't get put into law before October 4th, LARA is poised to make a rule change that would kill the bill and force 10,000 Licensed Professional Counselors to lose our jobs and no longer be able to treat our clients. Please help us! I am a newly licensed LLPC as of September 6th!!! These changes come at the very beginning of my career and it is utterly confusing because I have been clinically trained to diagnose clients and provide therapy services.

1. 10k Licensed Professional Counselors (LPCs) will no longer be able to see our clients if we can no longer diagnose. This could result in 150k + clients who suffer with anxiety, depression, PTSD, substance use issues, trauma, Suicidal Ideation, etc., being abandoned. I am working on developing a caseload at the community level with Neighborhood Service Organization (NSO), a non-profit in Detroit. Please support me as I begin doing incredible work with Medicaid recipients.

2. This will result in a statewide mental health emergency. We already have a shortage of mental health clinicians in the state. We need more counselors, not fewer. I have taken the call to this profession and I will fight for my abilities and the LPCs who come before me.

3. LARA is wanting to change a rule that has been in place for 30 years. We understand the need to clarify scope of practice, but not at the expense of ending careers and vital services to our clients.

4. HB 4325 is moving through the legislative process and would update the antiquated language of the original law regarding LPCs scope of practice and would eliminate the need for LARA to change their rule. This whole crisis could be avoided if the bill passes.

5. There is a misconception about HB 4325, that it would expand LPCs scope of practice, but this is not true. It is not an expansion of our scope of practice but will rather codify our current scope, which has been in place for the past 30 years, with much more clear language. Please make this abundantly clear to all other Reps. and help us make members of the Senate aware of this crucial point as well.

6. This will put 10k Michigan LPCs out of business. We have extensive Master's level training in diagnosis and evidence based treatment of mental health conditions. Many of us are in private practice as small business owners here in Michigan and would be forced to shut down our practices. We would lose our income and the ability to use our training to support ourselves financially.

7. Governor Whitmer has the authority to stop LARA from changing the rule. We would love her support in allowing us to continue to serve the mental health needs in Michigan as we have for the past 30 years. We want her to stop LARA and support HB 4325 instead. That one action would avoid a mental health crisis and save 10k Michigan jobs.

Thank you for your time and consideration of this critical issue, Rep. Sleeper!

Sincerely,
Andrea Logan, MA, LLPC

Eddie Sleeper

From: Lindsay <lindsichta@yahoo.com>
Sent: Monday, September 30, 2019 1:09 PM
To: Eddie Sleeper
Subject: HB4325 - Ways & Means Committee Written Testimony

Re: Ways and Means Committee HB 4325:

I am outraged at the political games being played through a State office with regards to the scope of practice for LPCs. LARA suggests that it is updating rules and regulations from thirty years ago, yet LPC graduate programs have only strengthened the scope of practice for LPCs. LARA has not taken the time to research the coursework and hours of supervision to which LPCs must complete in order to obtain licensure. Please understand that coursework is similar to that of MSWs and includes coursework in diagnostics and evidence-based practices. In addition, there are 600+hours prior to graduate and 2000+hours of supervision post-program completion.

In addition to the fact that LPCs are well-trained to practice in the State of Michigan, they are also a majority of current practitioners. Effectively removing 10,000+practitioners in our State only feeds the current shortage of mental health workers. This would effectively lead to over 150,000+ clients without mental health services. Who would fill this void?

As someone who has recently sought mental health supports for situational anxiety, it was difficult enough, with great insurance, to find a practitioner who had an opening. After contacting over 10 therapists (MSW, LPC, MP alike), only three called back and only two had openings (two weeks out).

LPCs, in general, would support updated rules and regs. Most, if not all, complete ongoing training and are happy to submit CEUs to evidence this ongoing learning. There are likely other rules they would be willing to support as well.

Please take the time to have conversations to better understand the training and background of these vital mental health clinicians before rushing to pass rules that will put 10,000+ people essentially out of work overnight.

I encourage you to pass HB 4325 out of committee ASAP WITHOUT AMENDMENTS. As you have likely heard, LARA is looking to rush a vote this coming Friday, October 4. Holding up this Bill could likely lead to an even larger mental health crisis in our State.

Thank you for your considerations.

Lindsay Sichta, MA Ed
lindsichta@yahoo.com
15849 Ryan Drive
Holland, MI 49424
734-717-2541

Eddie Sleeper

From: Nathan Maroney <nathanelimaroney@gmail.com>
Sent: Monday, September 30, 2019 1:14 PM
To: Eddie Sleeper
Subject: HB 4325 Ways & Means Committee Written Testimony

To whom it may concern,

I am writing to you to advocate for the passing of HB 4325. I was recently made aware that LARA is proposing to rewrite the scope of practice for Licensed Professional Counselors. Moreover, I was recently made aware that the Michigan Psychological Association (MPA), whose members would greatly benefit from the entire LPC profession being destroyed, stand against the passing of HB 4325. Many myths exist regarding what LPC's can and cannot do. Moreover, there are many myths about our training. As such, I wish to address mostly facts apropos of this letter, being that I am an LPC, and went through the training.

A) Contrary to what certain MPA members are suggesting, we have significant training apropos of diagnosing, counseling techniques, and testing and assessing. To wit, we must take courses rooted in each of the said endeavors, and then integrate the information into a mandatory 100 hours of practicum, 600 hours of internship, and 3000 hours of post-graduate hours under supervision. Moreover, in addition to the 3000 hours of supervision, counselors work in the mental health field while being supervised. Only once the foregoing is completed, are we fully licensed.

B) We must pass the National Counselors Exam (NCE). This a national test that we are required to pass to be fully licensed.

C) Research has perpetually evidenced that there are no differences relating to patient outcomes among the professional disciplines of psychology, counseling, and social work (e.g., Wampold & Brown, 2005). Put another way, research has perpetually evidenced that no profession is superior to another apropos client/patient outcomes vis-à-vis counseling.

On a personal note, I am the only person in my family to go to college. What's more, I am the only person in my family to become a professional. I am the only person in my family to own a home. I am the only person in my family who has remained married. I have two beautiful daughters, seven and three. I have done everything I can do to be a good human, who serves others. I love my job, as I work for a nonprofit hospital providing services to the indigent. Yet, LARA is proposing to destroy everything that I have accomplished notwithstanding my hard work, compassion, and public service.

I am disgusted that this letter must be written. I am embarrassed that members of the MPA are willing to testify falsehoods to make professional and economic inroads for their members. I am appalled that LARA did not give any warnings to LPC's regarding the proposed changes to their scope of practice. I am baffled that LARA is not even allotting time for people to make the changes that they are proposing. I am incensed that, notwithstanding the professions belief in client/patient service, LARA seems to have no qualms pulling the rug out from under the counseling profession, myself, my family, and the people that we serve.

Please do your all to make sure HB 4325 passes into law without amendments.

Respectfully,

Nathan Maroney LPC

Eddie Sleeper

From: Dan & Chris Sutherland <sutherland1195@yahoo.com>
Sent: Monday, September 30, 2019 1:14 PM
To: Eddie Sleeper
Subject: HB 4325 Ways & Means Committee Written Testimony

Dear Ways & Means Committee Members,

I am writing to you with grave concern regarding the counseling profession. It has come to my attention that on October 4, 2019, the Michigan Department of Licensing and Regulation (LARA) is putting forth rule a proposed scope of practice rules change that will destroy my profession. These proposed changes are in direct conflict with the House Bill 4325. LARA is aware of this conflict. It is my understanding that a companion Senate bill will be introduced soon. I encourage and implore you to support House Bill 4325 and take action against the LARA proposed changes.

Additionally, the Board of Counseling of the state of Michigan has voted against the proposed LARA changes. LARA is proposing a repeal of virtually all the rules which define a counselor's scope of practice under R338.1751. These are rules that have been recognized as part of the scope since they were first promulgated after the passage of the Licensed Professional Counselor statute in 1988. Over 10,000 LPC's will be without a profession if these rules are adopted on October 4, 2019. Further, over 150,000 current clients of these counselors will be abandoned in the middle of their treatment.

As a resident and owner/practitioner of a counseling practice, I am asking you to vote against the changes LARA is proposing and support House Bill 4325 and pass it out of committee ASAP.

Sincerely,

Christine M Sutherland MA, LPC, NCC

Licensed Professional Counselor

National Certified Counselor

Sent from [Mail](#) for Windows 10



September 22, 2019

Re: Proposed LPC Rule Changes by the Department of Licensing and Regulatory Affairs

To Whom it May Concern,

My name is Rebecca Lewis and I am a Licensed Professional Counselor in the state of Michigan. I am extremely concerned about the grave impact the proposed rule changes will have on Licensed Professional Counselors in the state of Michigan and the clients they serve. In Monroe County, where my private practice is located, there is already a shortage of therapists and these rule changes will have a devastating impact.

I have been a Licensed Professional Counselor in the state of Michigan since 2007. I graduated from Central Michigan University in 2006. The coursework and training I received at Central Michigan University is equivalent to the standards set by the Counsel for Accreditation of Counseling and Related Educational Programs (CACREP). I completed classes that focused on the diagnosis and treatment of mental health disorders using established criteria and counseling techniques, assessment and evaluation, group counseling, counseling theory, ethics, and research methods. I also participated in 3000 of post-graduate training and supervision under a Licensed Professional Counselor. I attend regular continuing education so that I may continue to accurately diagnose and effectively treat the continuously changing dynamics of mental health and substance use disorders.

In 2019 my practice received second place in the county's "best of the best" contest for counseling and mental health services. I have an average of 45 sessions a week. Many of my clients have sought counseling while in a desperate and hopeless place and it is extremely rewarding to see them obtain the coping skills needed to regain hope and optimism for the future. I am also a Certified Advanced Alcohol and Drug Counselor. This certification allows me to work with those that have an alcohol and drug problems and therefore positively impact the drug and alcohol epidemic in the state of Michigan.

If these proposed rule changes take effect I will be forced to close my doors and the private practice I opened because of my passion for helping others will cease to exist. With an extremely heavy heart I will be forced to refer my clients elsewhere and, due to the shortage of mental health services, many of these clients will not find the services they so desperately need. There are a number of clients that will refuse to seek counseling elsewhere because of the counseling relationship I have built with during their time in therapy.

These rule changes will also have a large economic impact. If my practice is forced to close due to these rule changes I will not be able to provide for myself and my family. The therapists who rent space in my office will also be unable to do so. Central Michigan University, along with other universities in Michigan, will be required to make changes to their programs and faculty/staff may lose their jobs. Many students

who graduated from these programs will be required to pay back student loans for education and licensure that will be deemed useless.

When I consider the impact of these rule changes on a larger scale thousands of clients will not have therapists and approximately 10,000 therapists will lose their jobs. Many people, therapists and clients alike, will lose the motivation and purpose they have worked so hard to find. Please consider HB 4325 as an alternative means to address the concerns presented by the Department of Licensing and Regulatory Affairs.

Thank you so much for your time and consideration regarding these very important matter.

Sincerely,

Rebecca Lewis, MA, LPC, CAADC, SST

September 23, 2019

ATTN: LARA

RE: Proposed LPC Changes

I am writing this letter to encourage the licensing committee to reconsider the proposed changes to counselors with an LPC credential. I am a licensed professional counselor in Trenton, MI. My credential allows me the opportunity to service 45 clients on a weekly basis. With this credential, I am able to diagnose/refer and submit for reimbursement from insurance companies.

The proposed changes would limit my ability to diagnose, and would prevent my office/staff from getting reimbursed by insurance agencies. Furthermore, the proposed changes could possibly put my company out of business as clients use their insurances for services. The changes would not only affect my clientele, but also my family. Changes could impact over 10,000 counselors statewide, and also affect the next generation of counselors.

Although requirements may be a bit outdated, HB 4325 has been introduced to address this issue. The changes will allow counselors to continue to assist patients, and counselors will be required to complete CEU's. Please support HB 4325, and allow counselors such as myself to continue to assist others.

Thank you for your time.

Sincerely,

Candice Worthy, MA, LPC

Eddie Sleeper

From: jaclyn lederman <jaclynlederman@hotmail.com>
Sent: Monday, September 30, 2019 1:18 PM
To: Eddie Sleeper
Subject: HB4325

Regarding HB4325:

As an LPC, I understand the great impact that the LARA rule changes will have on the mental health in Michigan. If the rules go into effect counselors will be unable to diagnose a client with a mental health condition and unfortunately that is the only way, other than out of pocket, that clients are able to afford counseling services. Counselors have an obligation to rule out any other medical conditions that could account for presenting conditions. Counselors have positive working relationships with the medical community to ensure that clients/patients are given a comprehensive treatment plan.

Passing HB4325 immediately will ensure that counselors can continue their work with the estimated 150,000 clients currently being served in Michigan. Passing HB4325 immediately would ensure that counselors could continue their work without interruption! Clients do not always find it easy to make themselves vulnerable which is imperative to reach underlying mental health issues. If there is a disruption to their services, clients may regress to unhealthy coping habits and lose trust in the mental health community.

Lastly, the rule changes also deem the use of counseling techniques no longer ethical for counselors as it would be out of our scope of practice. I am in the process of starting a Psycho-educational group (that was created for licensed clinicians) for survivors of childhood trauma. This group will be offered at Heartside Ministries in downtown Grand Rapids. Heartside offers many services for the chronically homeless population. Heartside is a safe place for healing and hope in Grand Rapids. This is also a nonprofit that relies heavily on volunteers. I have gained the trust of this population and am offering to do this group with no fee. If LARA succeeds in this rule change it would be unethical for me to provide this service to an already vulnerable population.

Again, I urge you to pass HB4325 immediately.

Sincerely,
Jaclyn Suderman, MA, NCC, LPC

Eddie Sleeper

From: Janel Dexter <janeldexter@icloud.com>
Sent: Monday, September 30, 2019 1:31 PM
To: Eddie Sleeper
Subject: HB4325 - Ways and Means Written Testimony

To the members of the Joint Committee on Administrative Rules,

I am writing you regarding proposed rule changes from the Michigan Department of Licensing and Regulatory Affairs (LARA).

Within their newly proposed rule changes, LARA attempts to remove the ability of Licensed Professional Counselors (LPCs) to diagnose and treat mental health clients. LARA falsely claims LPCs have never had this ability.

While LARA makes this claim, they have spent the past 30 YEARS confirming, and giving authority to LPCs to diagnose and treat clients. They claim LPCs don't receive training in diagnosis and treatment in their Grad Level university courses. A cursory check of university course requirements prove this utterly false.

LARA's motive is clearly not for the benefit of the mentally ill in Michigan. Hundreds of thousands of mentally ill clients are treated by LPCs across Michigan; and hundreds of thousands are still left without treatment. The implications of these rule changes would leave over 10,000 + LPCs without jobs and hundreds of thousands more without care. All this in the middle of an opioid, suicide, and overall mental health crisis.

LARA's motive is quite clear when reading the Michigan Psychological Association's 3rd quarter newsletter where they claim outright to be seeking aid from LARA to prevent LPCs from claiming reimbursement from insurance (i.e. BCBSM). It's money. It comes down to money.

It is critical to pass HB 4325 as mental health care of 150,000+ Michigan residents will be impacted negatively without this Bill. The implications to LPCs if they are no longer allowed to diagnose would mean 10,000+ LPCs would lose the ability to bill insurance companies and would lose the right to practice. Lastly, without successfully passing of HB 4325 the repercussions would be financially devastating on the state level as these 10,000+ Michigan LPCs as mentioned, would be suddenly without work and as well as the state would no longer receive that tax revenue from these LPCs. I am kindly asking you to support HB 4325 and pass it out of committee ASAP and WITHOUT AMENDMENTS.

As a student in my last year to become a LPC in the state of Michigan, I ask you to put a hold on LARA's proposal which is dated for 10/04/2019. This will allow time for House Bill 4325, which protects the rights of LPCs, to be sent through the House and Senate.

Thank you

Best regards

Janel Dexter

Sent from my iPad

Written Testimony: Opposing current effort by LARA

I am writing to express my concern with LARA's proposed rules changes for Licensed Professional Counselors (LPC) that have significant consequences on the counseling profession and the workforce in Michigan's public mental health system. Michigan's CMH system relies heavily on LPCs - as much as 25-30% of the workforce is made up of LPCs.

Despite the unanimous objections of the Board of Counseling Rules Committee, LARA is recommending the repeal of virtually all the rules that define an LPC's scope of practice under R338.1751. These are rules that have been recognized as part of the scope since they were first promulgated after the passage of the Licensed Professional Counselor statute in 1988. Instead the department insists these definitions should apply only to the educational preparation of counselors and not to counseling practice.

Included in this repeal is the practice of "counseling techniques" and the related ability to "diagnose and identify the problem". Without these and numerous other definitions, the counseling scope of practice is severely limited. Restricting scope in this way will most certainly reduce the availability of mental health professionals in Michigan's CMH system and at a time when there is growing demand for these services.

These changes in scope would also put Michigan's LPCs in violation of the American Counseling Association's Code of Ethics (E.5.a. Proper Diagnosis), which requires the proper diagnosis of a client's mental disorder before treatment, and could subject them to permanent expulsion from the profession. Additionally, insurance companies will likely stop reimbursing for the services of LPCs due to the significant limits on scope these rule changes would impose.

LARA is also pursuing the repeal of the rules identifying the requirements for providing counseling supervision (R338.1757), one of which is specific training in supervision. This training is a national standard for professional counseling.

Again, if this rule is rescinded, counselors who provide supervision without training would be practicing in violation of the ACA's Code of Ethics (F.2.a Supervisor Preparation). Furthermore, LPCs who received their supervision in Michigan may not be eligible for licensure in other states because their supervisor would not be qualified in the state to which the counselor is moving.

I strongly encourage LARA to wait for HB 4325 (sponsored by Rep. Miller) to pass, which would negate the need for any proposed changes. Thank you in advance for your consideration.

Samantha Jennings
Graduate Research Assistant
Oakland University Counseling Department
sjennings2@oakland.edu
586-864-8922

Eddie Sleeper

From: Kotecki, Marianne <MarianneK@WMCMHS.org>
Sent: Monday, September 30, 2019 1:47 PM
To: Eddie Sleeper
Subject: FW: Oppose LARA's Rule Change and Support HB 4325 WITHOUT AMMENDMENT

Dear Representatives of the Ways and Means Committee,

I will be directly impacted by a bill that will be placed in the Senate for a vote very soon. I wanted to take a moment to educate you on the importance of HB 4325 and dispel any misinformation you may have heard about Professional Counselors.

I am strongly opposed to the Michigan Department of Licensing and Regulatory Affairs' proposed rule change: 2019-063 LR. These proposed changes would repeal nearly the entire scope of practice for Licensed Professional Counselors (LPCs) in the state of Michigan. Without a clearly defined scope of practice, LPCs like me will be unable to play our vital role in mental health treatment in the state. HB 4325 does not expand LPC Scope of Practice, it only solidifies how Professional Counselors have been practicing for the past 3 decades in the state of Michigan.

If these proposed rule changes are adopted, my scope of practice will be limited so severely that insurance companies will likely cease reimbursing me for any services. At a time when mental health is a growing concern in the state, we should not be imposing rules that would limit the number of available providers.

If these proposed changes are enacted, thousands of LPCs in the state will be at risk of losing their jobs. Clinics that employ LPCs will no longer be able to bill insurances for services and will have to make cuts. LPCs working in private practices will likely be out of business in months.

2019-063 LR would also repeal all requirements for training and supervision of counselors in Michigan. Without these guidelines, LPCs in the state will be in violation of the American Counseling Association's Code of Ethics and could face expulsion from the profession altogether, through no fault of their own.

These proposed changes would devastate the counseling profession in Michigan and leave the hundreds of thousands of Michiganders currently receiving treatment from LPCs in the state with nowhere to turn for help. I urge the House of Representatives, Senate, and Governor to support and pass HB 4325 WITHOUT AMENDMENTS to codify my Scope of Practice to allow me to continue providing quality and much needed mental health care in the state of Michigan.

The client's wellbeing and safety are at the forefront of my concern. Please allow me to continue my dedicated work to help these individuals achieve peace in their chaotic lives.

I urgently request your support for HB 4325 WITHOUT AMENDMENTS so that the citizens of Michigan can have the availability of quality mental health practitioners like Professional Counselors, especially during a shortage of services and providers in this state.

I appreciate and respect your position and understand that you have the authority to change the direction of this bill. I hope you make the decision to give Professional Counselors of Michigan a chance to continue our practice of mental health counseling with the quality, dedication, and calling bestowed upon us to change the lives of so many hurting citizens.

Kindest Regards,

Marianne Kotecki

Marianne Kotecki, LPC
WMCMHS/Family Link
Site Team Clinician
231-233-1210

Eddie Sleeper

From: Heather Hoffer <heather_carolyn83@hotmail.com>
Sent: Monday, September 30, 2019 1:47 PM
To: Eddie Sleeper
Subject: HB 4325 and Proposed Changes by LARA

Dear Mr. Sleeper,

I am writing to you today in regards to HB 4325. I understand that you will be meeting tomorrow, 10/1/19 in regards to this proposed bill. I am asking you to pass HB 4325 out of the committee and onto the House as soon as possible. I am an Licensed Professional Counselor here in Michigan and I have grave concerns about how the proposed changes by LARA will impact the citizens of this State. There is a public hearing that is scheduled for Friday, October 4th regarding the proposed changes by LARA and I will be coming to Lansing to oppose those changes. Should the proposed changes by LARA be put into effect, thousands of clients receiving mental health services in Michigan will be impacted. As you are most likely aware, we have a mental health crisis in Michigan as it is between the surge of drug abuse and suicide rates in our State. Crippling 10,000+ counselors by stripping us of our right to diagnose and treat will only increase the problem!

Unfortunately, it appears that the Michigan Psychological Association has taken the stance and LARA has sided with them that LPC's are practicing outside of their scope of practice which is completely and utterly false. This is merely monetarily and politically motivated and frankly, an injustice to clients and patients who access mental health services. LCP's are trained in assessment, diagnosis, and treatment of mental health conditions. We are required to pass the National Counseling Exam where we are tested on our knowledge of diagnosing and evidence-based treatment models for mental health disorders. We are required to complete 48 semester hours or 72 quarter hours in counseling topics which must include: career development, consulting, counseling techniques, counseling theories, counseling philosophy, group techniques, professional ethics, research methodology, multicultural counseling, testing procedures, practicum, and an internship of no less than 600 hours supervised clinical experience in order to receive our limited license. In order to obtain our full, LPC we are required to complete to complete 3,000 hours of post-degree counseling in not less than a two year period with at least 100 hours accrued in the immediate physical presence of our supervisor.

I am asking that you pass HB 4325 out of the committee, WITHOUT amendments, as soon as possible in order to avoid worsening the mental health crisis in Michigan. I am in full support of HB 4325 and agree that an update is needed. If HB 4325 is passed then the rule changes that LARA is trying to impose will be dull and void. If 10,000+ LPC's are no longer able to diagnose and treat, there will be 150,000 if not more Michigan residents who will be terminated from treatment causing a huge burden on the rest of the professionals who treat mental health. In addition to the implications to our citizens receiving mental health services the impact of the proposed LARA changes will leave 10,000+ suddenly without work and will impact the State financially.

I appreciate your time and effort in analyzing the implications of HB 4325 both professionally and ethically for the thousands of clients and LPC's in the State of Michigan.

Regards,

Heather C. Hoffer, LPC, NCC
License #: 6401012898
(734) 625-9371
3171 S. Grove Dr.
Monroe, MI 48162

Eddie Sleeper

From: Mark Kauffman <mkauffman@riversbendpc.com>
Sent: Monday, September 30, 2019 2:29 PM
To: Eddie Sleeper
Subject: HB4325 - Ways and Means Committee Written Testimony

Good afternoon Mr. Sleeper,

I am writing to you in regards to HB 4325, for it to pass without amendments. I am aware it be presented in front of the Ways and Means committee on Wednesday, but unfortunately will not be able to attend. Below is my testimony.

I am a Licensed Professional Counselor, LPC. I ask that you pass HB 4325 without amendments. I provide services to those from all social-economic backgrounds. If the MPA gets its way, LARA will be forced to change my job description which wouldn't allow myself and over 10,000 counselors to diagnose and perform psychotherapy.

I am concerned of what will happen to all those I serve, for what they will do as we as a state are already lacking mental health services.

There is then the issue of the 10,000 plus counselors that will be out of work. I ask you to think of those who will be hurt from the changes MPA is requesting LARA to make as well the financial burden this state will face. When I say that I am referring to the 10,000 plus counselors that won't be able to support themselves and their families.

We are in a time where Social Workers, Counselors, Psychologists and Psychiatrists should be working together. It is disturbing that LP's are singling out LPC's and not thinking of the greater good, but only themselves.

Thank you for your time.

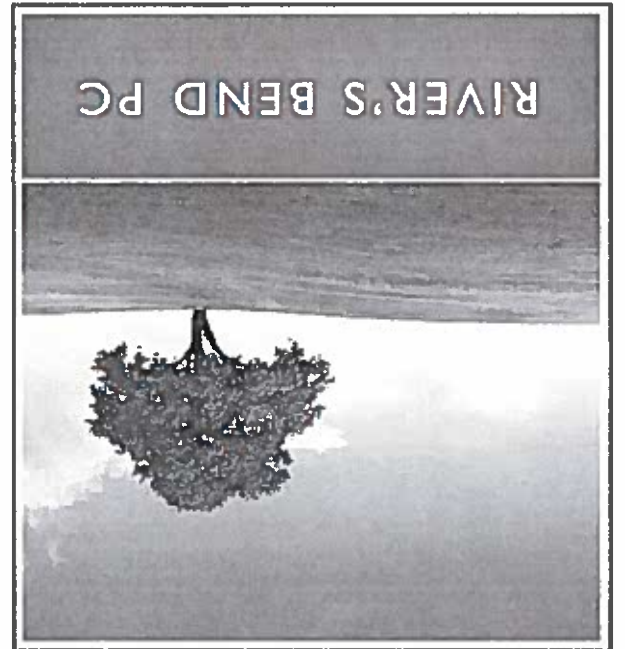
Respectfully,

Mark Kauffman, LPC, NCC, CADPC
License # 6401015161

River's Bend, P.C.
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Eddie Sleeper

From: J Kek <jkekhoua@gmail.com>
Sent: Monday, September 30, 2019 2:28 PM
Subject: HB4325 - Ways and Means Committee Written Testimony

Dear Representative,

I am contacting the Ways and Means Committee to voice my support for HB 4325 and ask that you pass it out of committee ASAP WITHOUT AMENDMENTS.

If LARA revises the rules and the HB4325 bill does not pass, the impact will render profound economic ramifications in Michigan:

- You will be cutting out a massive revenue stream.

Indeed states, "\$90,704 The average salary for a Licensed Professional Counselor is \$90,704 per year in Michigan, which is 44% above the national average." With LARA reporting over 10,000 LPC licenses in this year, that would equal over \$907 BILLION in income. By allowing LARA to revise the rules and if HB 4325 is denied, it will result in income tax REVENUE LOSS OF \$38 MILLION PER YEAR to the State of Michigan.

- This will put 10k Michigan LPCs out of business placing them, their dependents and support staff in financial ruin.

Many of us are in private practice as small business owners here in Michigan and would be forced to shut down our practices. We would not only lose our businesses and our household income, but since our degree and license would be worthless, we would not be qualified to get a financially equivalent job anywhere else. This would ultimately cause over ten thousand families to go bankrupt, foreclose on their homes and also be unable to continue paying back the government for their \$80,000+ student loans.

- Unemployment rates will skyrocket.

10,000+ LPCs will instantly be unemployed...for an EXTENDED period of time due to their nullified degree/qualifications to get another professional job. Furthermore, we are also career counselors that support unemployed or underemployed individuals to help them get back out into the workforce. Without counselors to help them, the number of citizens who will remain unemployed is incalculable.

- A ripple effect crisis will occur when more than 200,000 Michiganders will instantly be without their counselors and unable to contribute to our economy

We are in the middle of an opioid crisis, a suicide epidemic, and record-breaking rates of depression and anxiety issues. We need to be expanding access to mental health services right now, not contracting it, so that we have more high-functioning citizens positively contributing to our society.

Once again, I am asking for your support for HB 4325 and ask that you pass it out of committee ASAP WITHOUT AMENDMENTS. I will be attending your meeting this Wednesday and look forward to hearing your opinions on the matter.

Thank you for your time and consideration,

Eddie Sleeper

From: Adam Nash <adamn@healthforlifegr.com>
Sent: Monday, September 30, 2019 2:32 PM
To: Eddie Sleeper
Subject: HB4325 - Ways & Means Committee Written Testimony

Hello Mr. Sleeper,

My name is Adam Nash and I would like to send in a written testimony in support of HB4325. This bill would allow Professional Counselors to continue to practice at their CURRENT scope of practice which would allow 10,000 or more Counselors to keep their jobs and over 150,000 plus people to keep the mental health care that they need.

I urge you to pass HB3425 through the Ways and Means Committee because with the current rule changes, that LARA is proposing, counselors, like myself, would be unable to practice and would quickly become unemployed. For me, personally, my wife and I both work in private practice as Professional Counselors. We both went to Masters programs that educated us about Diagnosing and providing Psychotherapy to clients. We have worked hard for the last two plus years to grow our practice in order to be able to help the people of Michigan. If this bill is not passed we will need to move out of Michigan because of our inability to practice here in Michigan.

I believe that this bill is a hugely important bill and is not a time for partisan arguments. Losing 10,000 plus mental health providers in Michigan hurts all of Michigan by putting more stress on the mental health systems at a time when Depression is on the rise, suicide is at an all time high, and America has an ongoing opioid crisis. To not pass this bill would hurt thousands of Michiganders and cause a massive loss of money to the Michigan economy. I implore you to pass this bill through the Ways and Means Committee and on to the House of Representatives without amendments.

Adam Nash MA LPC

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(616) 676-7081 Direct
781 Kenmoor Ave. SE, Suite C
Grand Rapids MI 49546

www.healthforlifegr.com



*This email is for informational purposes only and is not a substitute for professional medical care.

Eddie Sleeper

From: L P <lapurdy3@gmail.com>
Sent: Monday, September 30, 2019 2:36 PM
To: Eddie Sleeper
Subject: HB4325 - Ways & Means Committee Written Testimony

To The Members of the Ways & Means Committee:

I am an LPC and am writing in regards to HB 4325, which I am urging you to support. It is critical that HB 4325 move through the Ways and Means Committee unamended. The changes LARA is going to be requesting October 4th are not reasonable, and will cost the livelihoods of 10,000 counselors in Michigan, have devastating consequences for the thousands of clients they see. It will be destructive to the lives and families of the LPCs, causing financial ruin for many, leaving them without jobs, closed businesses, unpaid student loans, and limited career options moving forward. HB 4325 seeks to do what LARA has been asking the Board of Counseling to do for years, which is get the counseling professions scope of practice into law, like it is for the limited licensed psychologists and the licensed Master Social Workers. The educational qualifications and training is comparable amongst all these mental health professions, with them most often, working together in the same clinics, hospitals, and private practices. So I again ask that you please allow HB 4325 to move through the Ways and Means Committee without amendments. It is vitally important to the mental health of Michiganders. I appreciate your willingness to hear my views.

Sincerely,
Laura Purdy MA, LPC, NCC
Licensed Professional Counselor
Nationally Certified Counselor

Eddie Sleeper

From: Bryan Nixon <bryan@mindfulcounselingr.com>
Sent: Monday, September 30, 2019 2:50 PM
To: Eddie Sleeper
Subject: For the Record - HB4325

Dear Mr. Sleeper,

I would like the following statement to be on the official record regarding HB4325 for this Wednesday's W&M session.

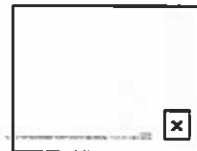
My name is Bryan Nixon and I am a Licensed Professional Counselor in Grand Rapids. As you may have already heard, it is critical that you move HB4325 out of committee ASAP and without amendments.

I own Mindful Counseling GR, a counseling practice with 19 therapists, 12 of whom are LPCs. Additionally, I employ LMSWs, LLPs, LMFTs, and 2 full time administrative staff. We serve the mental health needs of approximately 250 clients each week. These are real humans who wrestle with a wide range of mental health needs including, anxiety, depression, PTSD, addiction, trauma, suicidal ideation, etc. HB4325 will codify LPCs Scope of Practice as we have been practicing for the past 30 years. We are highly trained, master's level counselors who are specifically trained to diagnose and treat mental health problems using psychotherapy techniques.

If HB4325 is not passed and LARA moves forward with their proposed rule change there will be a mental health emergency in the state of Michigan. LPCs would no longer be able to treat our clients (150,000+ statewide). This number would overwhelm an already taxed mental health system. Additionally, 10,000+ LPCs would lose their jobs. Many of us are in private practice as small business owners. I would be forced to close my practice, forcing 250 clients to find mental health care elsewhere and forcing 21 people to be without employment. If this happens statewide, there would be a significant hit to the tax revenue that the state makes from LPCs each year.

Please do the right thing for the citizens of Michigan and move HB4325 out of committee ASAP and without amendments.

I am grateful for all of the work you do each day on our behalf.



BRYAN NIXON, MA, LPC
PSYCHOTHERAPIST

He/Him/His

A: 741 Kenmoor Ave. S.E., Suite B

Grand Rapids, MI 49546

P: 616.426.9294

mindfulcounselingr.com

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Eddie Sleeper

From:

Christine Lyon <christine@bhttherapygroup.com>

Sent:

Monday, September 30, 2019 2:54 PM

To:

Eddie Sleeper

Subject:

HB4325 - Ways & Means Committee Written Testimony

Please enter the following as written testimony for the Ways and Means Meeting to review HB 4325.

To the members of the Joint Committee on Administrative Rules,

My meeting the morning with Pete Lucido, a strong supporter of mental health and LPCs in Michigan, has inspired me to send the following testimony:

As a practicing LPC, I am writing you regarding proposed rule changes from the Michigan Department of Licensing and Regulatory Affairs (LARA).

Within their newly proposed rule changes, LARA attempts to remove the ability of Licensed Professional Counselors (LPCs) to diagnose and treat mental health clients. LARA falsely claims LPCs have never had this ability.

This is confusing to me, as I have provided a professional disclosure statement to LARA as required, stating that I assess, diagnose, and treat clients with various interventions and counseling techniques. From what I understand about the history of my profession, LARA has spent the past 30 YEARS confirming, and giving authority to LPCs to diagnose and treat clients. The proposed change to move the "diagnosis and treatment" part of our training to the education section of the rules is also confusing to me. Not only to we already receive this training as part of our National certification requirements as confirmed by LARA licensure procedure, but also to require such training would imply that we would use such training in our profession. We do. And have done so for over thirty years. The attempt to clarify through this rules change proposal simply muddies the waters further.

LARA's motive is clearly not in the best interest of the citizens of Michigan. Hundreds of thousands of mentally ill clients are treated by LPCs across Michigan; and hundreds of thousands are still left without treatment. The implications of these rule changes would leave over 10,000 + LPCs without jobs and hundreds of thousands more without care. All this in the middle of an opioid, suicide, and overall mental health crisis.

The Michigan Psychological Association, in their distributed 3rd quarter newsletter, implicates LARA, a neutral government organization charged with licensure and oversight, as "supportive" of their stated desire to limit LPC's scope of practice to exclude diagnosis and treatment. Where on earth would MPA have gotten the idea that a neutral government organization is supportive of their lobbying efforts to diminish LPC's ability to practice and bill insurance? How can this possibly be within LARA's scope of oversight?

As overseer of rule changes, I ask you to use your authority to propose a rewrite of the rules changes. This will allow time for House Bill 4325, which protects the scope of practice of LPCs, to be sent through the House and Senate. I am a successful clinician who has real impact on the lives and families that make up my full caseload of 25 clients weekly, and 80 active clients in total. I cannot imagine the consequences to those lives should they lose their counselor, nor can I imagine this happening in practice after practice, across the state. Who will provide the care if none of us can practice therapy?

I am a single mother with three teenaged college bound children. I am a contributor to the Michigan economy as a practice owner and partner. As HB4325 winds through its process, any suspension of my ability to practice counseling, temporary or otherwise, would be devastating to my ability to support my family, as well as to my current clients.

We are not asking for more. We are asking to keep what we already have.

Please delay LARA's proposed rules changes through whatever means you have, to give HB4325 a chance to pass and avoid interruption of mental health services to Michiganders across the state.

Thank you for your consideration,

Christine Lyon, LPC

Clinical Manager

BEVERLY HILLS THERAPY GROUP

31815 Southfield Road, Suite 27 Beverly Hills, MI 48025

p. 248.480.0115 f. 248.282.7114 e. christine@bhtherapygroup.com

Schedule an Appointment: 248.480.0115 or BH Therapy Group Portal

Website: bhtherapygroup.com

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Eddie Sleeper

From: Gennifer Robertson <gmanders@me.com>
Sent: Monday, September 30, 2019 3:11 PM
To: Gennifer Robertson
Subject: HB4325 - Support & Written Testimony

Hello,

I am writing to you in support of HB 4325. For HB 4325 to be Passed **WITHOUT** Amendments. This Bill seeks to do what LARA has been asking the Board of Counseling to do for years. This is to get the profession of a Licensed Professional Counselor (LPC), and its proper scope of practice enshrined permanently within the law. This has already happened for Limited License Psychologist (LLP), and Licensed Master Social Workers (LMSW), two other professions whom we work side by side with and who have received the same level of training and education to provide mental health services to those in need within our communities.

What LARA is seeing to do directly, contravenes the work that has been done with LPCs over the last 30-years. In that time, they have been receiving disclosure statements, which articulates the nature of the work we do, our transcripts, and our supervision experience, granting licenses to do the work they are now saying we cannot do. The question being asked regarding our training to diagnosis and provide therapeutic treatment for mental illness is baffling. Over the last 30-years, LARA has been reviewing transcripts that clearly articulate the training that each LPC has undergone. Within the last 15 years, LARA has also required us to receive ongoing supervision by LPCs who have undergone supervisor training, until we have met the requirements to qualify for full licensure.

The changes to the rules governing counseling proposed by LARA are not reasonable and will cost the livelihoods of 10,000 counselors in Michigan. This in turn will impact the mental health treatment and have devastating consequences for up to 300,000 clients LPCs are serving. This would be happening at a time where our communities are experiencing a mental health crisis. Where there is a shortage of mental health professionals to meet the needs of individuals seeking mental health treatment. Where there are youth, every day, sitting in the ERs deemed to be at risk of harming themselves or others, and who are unable to find an inpatient mental health hospital bed to address these needs. These same youth are being returned to their homes and communities, and receiving intensive mental health services in hopes that they can safely be maintained within their home.

I am a Licensed Professional Counselor, and have been licensed since 2005. Every day, I receive calls from individuals who are in a mental health crisis. I work closely with the juvenile probation department in our community to assist in obtaining mental health services for youth that are inappropriately lodged in the juvenile home. I assist families in crisis. De-escalate the situation, and help them help their child so they can maintain them safely in home. I respond to calls from schools where a child is "out of control" aka dysregulated due to a trauma trigger they are experiencing in the school setting. The School Social Worker, Behavioral interventions and other trained school staff are unable to help the child. Me, and LPC, is called to come in and assist.

Since 2014, I have participated in over 1,000 transdisciplinary trauma assessment along side an LLP, LLMSW, LLMFT, LPCs and Occupational Therapists conducting Neurodevelopmental Trauma Assessments for children within our Child Welfare system who have experienced significant trauma. Looking closely at how their life experiences have impacted them across all areas of their lives. Proving their treatment team with recommendations to help the youth overcome any negative effects their experiences have had on them. I have participated in Michigan's Trauma Initiative and completed TF-CBT (Trauma Focused Cognitive Behavioral Therapy) training as a clinician and a supervisor, along side trained nor qualified to do the work I do every day to improve the lives of others.

Please allow House Bill 4325 to be approved to allow myself, and many other Licensed Professional Counselors, continue to do what we do every day. To provide the necessary mental health services to those in our communities.

Sincerely,

Gennifer Manders, MA, LPC
gmanders@me.com
269-203-5388

Eddie Sleeper

From: Lisa Robinson <lrobinson@honorcommunityhealth.org>
Sent: Monday, September 30, 2019 3:11 PM
To: Eddie Sleeper
Subject: HB 4325

Dear Mr. Sleeper,

This e-mail is to communicate my strong support of HB 4325 that will be heard by the Ways and Means Committee this week. My hope is my concern for the community will be heard and that the committee will see the importance of moving this out of committee and passing it on without amendments ASAP.

My name is Lisa Robinson and I am a licensed Professional Counselor of almost ten years. This e-mail is regarding HB 4325 that was proposed by Rep Aaron Miller persevering LPC's current scope of practice that has been in place for 30 years. During my almost ten years in the field of counseling, I have almost exclusively worked with the populations that are most in need. Most of my current caseload is made up of patients that are on Medicaid, uninsured, or underinsured. I believe the proposed LARA changes would significantly impact mental health patients across the state by taking away the LPC's ability to diagnose and counsel patients which is at the core of what we do.

I have done a fair amount of research on the arguments against HB 4325 and there seems to be a fair amount of misinformation being provided. When I attended my Masters Program at Oakland University, I was required to take a course in Community Counseling. This course exclusively teaches counseling students about diagnosis utilizing the DSM, providing treatment recommendations, and case conceptualization. In addition, the program has an intensive techniques course that is required outlining core counseling methodologies and applying them to counseling practice. We are then required to do a semester of practicum followed by a 600 hour internship in a counseling facility. Lastly, we are required to take the National Counselor's Exam which has several core foundations and one of them is diagnosis and treatment methodologies. Furthermore, in order for LARA to even issue a counselor's license we are required to submit a disclosure statement of what we will be practicing. This includes diagnosis and treatment.

I have great concern of what will happen if HB 4325 is not passed into law. It would have devastating effects on the patients as if we cannot diagnose and counsel, we will most certainly be dropped from insurance panels. If that were to happen, you will likely see inpatient psychiatric admissions drastically increase along with completed suicides go up. If this bill is not passed, you will be looking at 10,000 LPCs out of a job and 150,000 patients immediately losing their therapists.

On a personal note, I went into counseling because a LPC saved my life 20 years ago when I, myself was suicidal. I did not know then but a mere 3 years ago being a LPC myself would save my life again. In August 2015, I miscarried my second child and approximately 3 months later my husband was diagnosed with a rare, aggressive form of multiple myeloma. Fourteen months later my husband died of this horrible disease and I am currently raising our now 6 1/2 year old daughter, Victoria. While losing my career would be devastating to me financially, it would more importantly devastate me to harm patients by cutting them off of mental health treatment almost immediately. This goes against the counseling code of ethics to "do no harm" to our clients. Not passing HB 4325 would certainly harm our patients. As a single, widowed mom I do not have the luxury of having a second income nor the time or ability to go back to school should this bill not pass. I ask for the sake of all the patients receiving treatment from LPCs and the livelihoods of all LPCs that you vote YES on HB 4325.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Lisa Robinson, MA, LPC, CAADC
Behavioral Health Consultant

Baldwin Center

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Eddie Sleeper

From: Heather Robert <heathermhrobert@gmail.com>
Sent: Monday, September 30, 2019 3:26 PM
To: Eddie Sleeper
Subject: HB4325 Ways & Means Committee Written Testimony

Heather Robert, LPC
43086 Riggs RD
Belleville, MI 48111
heathermhrobert@gmail.com
September 30, 2019

RE: HB4325 Ways & Means Committee Written Testimony

To Whom I May Concern:

I support HB4325. LARA proposed changes for licensed Professional Counselors that are not reasonable, will cost the livelihoods of 10,000 counselors in Michigan, have devastating consequences for up to 300,000 clients LPC's are serving and lead to other catastrophic consequences such as business closures, defaulted student loans, and home foreclosures. HB4325 will protect the scope of services that LPC's can conduct.

I am a licensed Professional Counselor (LPC) who has a private practice in which I provide counseling to individuals who have been in a motor vehicle accident and have been diagnosed with various challenges post-accident such as traumatic brain injury, post traumatic stress disorder, adjustment disorder, anxiety and/or depression to name a few. If LARA follows through with the proposed changes to LPC scope of services my clients will immediately be affected since I will no longer be able to perform my services.

I graduated with a Masters in Art's in counseling and art therapy through a CACREP approved State University, I completed the required 3,000 hours of post-graduate supervised hours, I passed the licensing NBCC test to endorse my license and was approved by LARA to practice in the state of Michigan as an LPC. During my graduate degree, I passed diagnostic and treatment courses, courses on how to conduct testing and collect data during therapy, a course in psychopathology and understanding/using the DSM, have learned various therapy techniques and completed the mandatory hours of learning how to and practicing the skill of conducting counseling sessions. In addition, I received continued education units and am a trained therapist in Eye Movement Desensitization and Reprocessing treatment. I choose the counseling program over the master's social work program due to having more courses in counseling techniques.

For 30 years LARA has been receiving our disclosure statements that state forthrightly the nature of the work we do, our transcripts, and our supervision experience forms and granting us licenses to do the work they are now proposing we can no longer do. I ask you to support HB4325, to move it out of committee as soon as possible and without amendments so I and my fellow LPC can continue to provide mental health services to people in need.

Thank you for your time and consideration,

Heather Robert, LPC, ATR

Licensed Professional Counselor and Registered Art Therapist



Eddie Sleeper

From: Brooke Aggeler <Baggeler@arbordcircle.org>
Sent: Monday, September 30, 2019 3:30 PM
To: Eddie Sleeper
Subject: HB4325 - Ways and Means Committee Written Testimony

To the Ways and Means Committee,

I am a Licensed Professional Counselor and I am writing to you to support the facilitation of HB4325. I am very concerned that the Licensing and Regulatory Affairs (influenced by APA and MPA lobbyists) will severely limit the scope of practice for myself and fellow Counselors. It is clear, based on the Michigan Psychological Association's 3rd quarter newsletter, that it is their goal to lobby against Counselors being able to diagnose and use psychotherapy techniques to treat mental health conditions in order to prevent LPCs from claiming reimbursement from insurance. Being able to diagnose in order to treat clients is a requirement by the American Counseling Association, and therefore LPCs will not be able to work within the ethics of our field, making our license and degree completely obsolete and useless.

In a field of human and health services (LLPs, LPCs, LMSWs), where the primary focus of the career path is to focus on solutions to growth, as a means for overcoming barriers, if the APA, MPA, and LARA are all mutually concerned with the competency of LPCs to do the job they have been doing for the past 30 years, it would only make sense that the focus of lobbying efforts would be on that. There are a multitude of ways this concern could be addressed: additional CEU hour requirements, additional DSM specific trainings (to which I personally have been to 2 trainings in this since the new DSM was introduced), reform to the education standards for the counseling programs, etc. By trying to lobby for invalidating the education and overall need for counselors in our community, it seems that the efforts are not focused on improving competency, but rather are geared at eliminating the counseling profession altogether for financial benefit for APA, MPA, insurance companies, etc.

By limiting a Counselor's scope of practice, it would eliminate thousands of jobs in Michigan and force those in the midst of treatment to disrupt their current therapeutic relationships and rebuild rapport with a new clinician, in field already oversaturated with need. While that is not the goal of anyone, the APA and MPA's lobbying abilities are powerful, and with LARA supporting this, individuals with mental illness in Michigan will not benefit from these changes. Hundreds of thousands of mentally ill clients are treated by LPCs across Michigan, and hundreds of thousands are still left without treatment. The implications of these rule changes would leave over 10,000 + LPCs without jobs and hundreds of thousands more without care. While in the midst of an opioid, suicide, and overall mental health crisis, limiting our number of licensed individuals working within the human and health services field does not seem to be positively impactful, and rather will have even more devastating effects on our community. This would also be financially devastating on the state level if 10,000+ Michigan LPCs were suddenly without work and the state no longer had that tax revenue.

Within their newly proposed rule changes, LARA attempts to remove the ability of Licensed Professional Counselors (LPCs) to diagnose and treat mental health clients, as LARA falsely claims LPCs have never had this ability. While LARA makes this claim, they have spent the past 30 YEARS confirming, and giving authority to LPCs to diagnose and treat clients. In fact, when applying for a license, they require a professional disclosure statement, asking each individual to include the counseling interventions they plan to use with the populations they are serving as a means for treating specified diagnoses.

They claim LPCs don't receive training in diagnosis and treatment in their Graduate Level university courses. A cursory check of university course requirements prove this false. What is concerning is APA and MPA are not recognizing the ethics or consequences of what they are lobbying for and they absolutely do not have the facts correct. I received my Master's in the Science of Counseling degree in 2012. My courses included (but were not limited to) Theories of Counseling and PSYCHOTHERAPY, DIAGNOSIS AND CASE CONCEPTUALIZATION, HUMAN DEVELOPMENT, CLINICAL COUNSELING TECHNIQUES, psychopharmacology as well as a practicum AND an internship. (I am happy to provide my transcripts upon request). After receiving my limited license, I completed 3000 hours of supervision in order to become fully licensed.

As overseer of rule changes, I ask you to pass out of committee without amendments LARA's proposal which is dated for 10/04/2019. This will allow time for House Bill 4325, which protects the rights of LPCs, to be sent through the House and Senate.

Thank you for your consideration,

Brooke Aggeler, MSC, LPC

Eddie Sleeper

From: Jarrette Wright-Booker <introspectivecounselingllc@gmail.com>
Sent: Monday, September 30, 2019 3:31 PM
To: Eddie Sleeper
Subject: COMMENTS FOR HB 4325

SUPPORT HB 4325!!!

PLEASE push this bill through before the LARA decision to repeal our scope of practice. To be clear, this bill is no expanding the scope of practice but solidifying the work we are already do. It also provides for more stringent educational and supervision requirements.

To be clear, failure to pass this bill will result in a loss of livelihood for over 10,000 LPC's who will be unable to bill insurance AND practice counseling in the state of Michigan.

It will severely limit access to quality mental health care for the over 250,000 people we already care for. It will

significantly impact the economy and ruin thousands of small business and complementary businesses and greatly

impact state tax revenue and LARA licensure revenue.

We need your support with getting the bill pushed through!

My name is Jarrette Wright-Booker. I am a Licensed Professional Counselor and Certified Advanced Addictions Counselor. I am married, the breadwinner, and mother to two boys. We own a home in Detroit, MI and had plans on purchasing additional real estate until I learned of the potential of my livelihood being jeopardized. Can you imagine your entire profession being decimated? The career you've invested time, money, sacrifice, blood, sweat and literal tears being taken away from you? Loss of my license may mean loss of my home, inability to pay private school and class tuition for my children, loss of my vehicle, inability to repay student loans, eviction from my office, negatively impacted credit that may result in bankruptcy and the difficulty of reestablishing a new career with my current skill set.

I am the sole proprietor of Introspective Counseling, LLC a private practice located in Southfield, MI dedicated to helping people women who suffer with depression, anxiety, bipolar disorder and trauma. I have been licensed now for just over a year and prior to starting my practice, I worked as a home based contractual therapist for Child Protective Services.

I graduated from the University of Detroit-Mercy (a CACREP program) with a Masters Degree in Community Counseling. My plan of study required the completion of diagnosis, assessment, evaluation, consultation and research methods courses, to name a few. I completed my practicum in the school counseling clinic, internship at the Detroit Medical Center and 3,000 hours of clinical supervised work experience with 100 hours of clinical supervision as a home based therapist in community mental health.

During my supervised work experience, I worked with people experiencing co-occurring disorders, substance use disorders, mood disorders and psychotic disorders. I was responsible for identifying symptoms, administering and interpreting assessments, reviewing psychiatric and psychological evaluations to create effective treatment plan for both the diagnosis and reunification. Currently, I am responsible for diagnosis, assessment, evaluation and treatment. I am very skilled in assessment and evaluation and coordinate care with psychiatrists and psychologists when necessary. Because of my additional credential, I am required to maintain a minimum of 20 CEU's, yearly. I maintain a reading library to keep abreast of new approaches, theories and interventions. I also subscribe to an online training platform.

I am very concerned about our future as counselors. We make up 10,000 people in Michigan's workforce and that does not include LLP's and counseling program students. The work that we do is integral to maintaining the quality of public health in the state. We also contribute to the economy through tax dollars, licensing fees and through our support of other complementary businesses such as training companies, real estate companies/building owners, and insurance companies to name a few.

Failure to pass HB4325 would mean that our already strained mental health system would become overburdened. Over 300,000 people would not have access to mental health care and would be dropped into an abyss where they'd have to start all over with someone new, but not after waiting weeks to months to get an appointment. Some people will not be able to wait that long, what will happen to them? What will happen if an entire sector of behavioral health professionals is eliminated? How will the elimination of this group of mental health clinicians affect hospitals, non-profit organizations, foster care facilities, child protective services and community mental health programs? How will it impact university programs, including students who are currently completing counseling programs? How will it impact the backlog of court related substance abuse, family therapy, gambling addiction and domestic violence referrals?

Please pass HB 4325, the livelihood of 10,000 people and mental health of 300,000 people depend on it.

Thank you,

Jarrette Wright-Booker, LPC, CAADC

Jarrette S. Wright-Booker MA, LPC, CAADC

Clinical Therapist

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Eddie Sleeper

From: shoekstra@secondstorycounseling.com
Sent: Monday, September 30, 2019 3:48 PM
To: Eddie Sleeper
Subject: HB4325-Ways & Means Committee Written Testimony

Dear sir,

I am writing in regards to proposed rule changes LARA is taking on LPC's in Michigan. I am strongly opposed to these changes and deeply concerned about this as a professional counselor(LPC) and as a citizen of Michigan.

These proposed changes would take away my ability to practice ethically according to the ACA code of ethics. This would leave me and my family in a financially strained situation whereby I could not pay back my student loans that accrued to me while earning my MA Counseling degree. There are upwards of 10,000 licensed counselors in Michigan that provide services for those who need it most. Financially this would have catastrophic affects on these families.

As a citizen of Michigan, I am deeply concerned about the broader impact these rule changes would have to the mental health of our great state. 150,000 people would suddenly be without services should the LARA rule changes be approved. Mental health of one person doesn't only impact that person, it impacts their whole family system, their work, their community and the whole state. These ripple affects can be for good. It is critical to pass HB 4325. Please consider what makes Michigan better. These people need services and LPC's need to be able to keep their jobs.

I ask that you please move this out of committee as soon as possible without amendments.

Thank you for your consideration,

Sara Hoekstra MA,LLPC
(616) 426-9034 ext. 6
shoekstra@secondstorycounseling.com

Eddie Sleeper

From: Jacqueline Gelderloem Pyle <jacquigelder@hotmail.com>
Sent: Monday, September 30, 2019 3:51 PM
To: Eddie Sleeper
Subject: HB4325 - Ways & Means Committee Written Testimony.

Dear Representative on the Ways & Means Committee:

I am concerned about the news of potential rule changes that Licensing and Regulation Affairs (LARA) is trying to make that would seriously and negatively impact mental health providers with the LPC license. This would drastically impact the livelihood of nearly 10,000 counselors in the state of Michigan, but the impact on clients who see them would be tenfold. If this change were to be made, it would cause a mental health crisis wherein many existing clients of LPC-licensed counselors would face abandonment at no longer being able to maintain long-established relationships with their counselors. This decrease in insurance-paneled counselors would dramatically and negatively affect your constituency.

I am requesting the following action from you:

PLEASE PASS HB 4325, introduced by Rep. Aaron Miller (R-Sturgis) BEFORE OCT 4TH, which would negate the need for LARA's rule changes altogether ASAP AND WITHOUT AMMENDMENTS.

Please stand up for LPCs and the people who depend on their services.

Jacqueline Pyle, LPC
Licensed Professional Counselor
269-967-2296

Jacqueline Pyle

Sent from Mail for Windows 10

Eddie Sleeper

From: Shelly <shellyakw@msn.com>
Sent: Monday, September 30, 2019 3:56 PM
To: Eddie Sleeper
Subject: HB4325

Hello,

I am writing to you asking for your support of HB4325. I have been a licensed Professional Counselor for 10 years. I can speak about the comprehensive education I have received through Western Michigan University's program and ongoing training I have received in diagnosing, DSM IV and DSM 5, trauma-focused CBT, DBT, EMDR, Motivational Interviewing, my current CADDC development plan allowing me to provide substance use disorder treatment and much more, but I would prefer to share what it is like to provide therapy to those in need of mental health services.

I have had the opportunity to work with people with mild, moderate and severe mental illness over the years. Today I work for an FQHC in Muskegon Heights, Michigan providing therapy to individuals who suffer from anxiety, depression, bipolar disorder, borderline personality disorders, complex PTSD, obsessive/compulsive disorders, sexual assault, domestic violence, chronic pain, loss and grief, complex grief, substance abuse disorders and other mental health disorders. As a trained and skilled therapist I meet each individual where they are at in their mental health journey. I provide therapeutic interventions using a multitude of therapeutic approaches to help these individuals effectively change and improve their lives.

What I can speak to is that I know that with my education, training and skill set, I make a difference in the lives of the people I serve every day. Each year I provide behavioral health therapy to approximately 300 people in our community that suffer from mental health disorders. I am proud of the treatment I provide. As people make changes in their lives for the better, gain skills to cope effectively with anxiety, depressive episodes, suicidal ideations, self-harm urges, addiction, trauma triggers, flashbacks, and/or emotional dysregulation I know that what I do is important and necessary.

I am opposing LARA's rule change that is being presented on October 4th. As an LPC therapist in Michigan I ask that you support the passing of HB4325. It is critical for the mental health care of not just the individuals I treat but for the more than 150,000 individuals in Michigan who are receiving mental health care today by fully licensed and trained LPC's.

Thank you so much for your time.

Sincerely,

Shelly A. K. Wiewiora, MA, LPC
Shellyakw@msn.com

Sent from my iPhone

Eddie Sleeper

From: Leib, Derek J <leib1dj@cmich.edu>
Sent: Monday, September 30, 2019 3:58 PM
To: Eddie Sleeper
Subject: HB4325 - Ways and Means Committee written testimony

Dear Members of the Committee,

I am writing this letter to ask and strongly urge you to please support the passing of HB 4325, without amendments. As I'm sure you know, there is a public hearing to be held by LARA this Friday, October 4th, regarding the proposed changes to the rules of Licensed Professional Counselor's scope of practice. Considering this short timeframe, there is obviously need for quick action to ensure the bill is passed, or the hearing delayed.

HB 4325 seems like "common sense" legislation that aims to preserve the current status quo, and will allow Michigan's LPCs to continue to practice as they currently are without expanding their scope of practice. It simply clarifies existing counseling practices under Michigan law and brings it up to date. Passage of this bill would preserve access to mental health services for thousands of Michigan residents without disruption.

Failure to pass the bill, however, would result in confusion and a disruption to the entire mental health care system across the state, provided LARA's proposed rules changes take effect. The ability of thousands of Michigan residents to access the mental health services they have come to rely upon would be severely impacted. Their insurance companies may not reimburse for these services. As a result, either due to lack of availability or without the means to pay for these services, many would simply go without. Additionally, thousands of LPCs themselves would see their careers and the very nature of their profession disrupted. Without a carefully-considered transition plan that addresses much of this uncertainty and confusion, there is a significant portion of the population that would be negatively affected by these proposed changes, with seemingly very little benefit to justify the disruption to the residents of Michigan, and indeed the mental well-being of the entire state.

It is understandable that rules and regulations be updated and clarified over time, and where it makes sense. But any modification of rules and regulations, and again where it makes sense to do so, must be accompanied by careful review of their potential effects, and the potential size and scope of the populations of citizens affected by these changes. Which is why I again urge the support of passing HB 4325, preserving the accessibility and stability of mental health services across the state. LPCs have been successfully and ethically practicing in this capacity for over 30 years. I believe that should continue, and sincerely hope that our representatives position Michigan as a state that encourages the success of its mental health system, and ensures its citizens maintain access to services they need and have come to rely upon.

Thank you,

Derek Leib
Registered Voter
(586) 945-7074
1320 E Chippewa St
Mt. Pleasant, MI 48858

