

MPA Testimony 2023 - Support - Senate Bill 726 - S

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Position: FAV



10480 Little Patuxent Parkway, Ste 910, Columbia, MD 21044. Office 410-992-4258. Fax: [410-992-7732](tel:410-992-7732). www.marylandpsychology.org

March 1, 2023

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Finance Committee
Maryland Senate Office Building, 3 West
Annapolis, MD 21401

RE: SB 726 – State Board of Examiners of Psychologists – Sunset Extension

Position: SUPPORT

Dear Chair Griffith, Vice-Chair Klausmeier, and Members of the Committee:

The Maryland Psychological Association, (MPA), which represents over 1,000 doctoral level psychologists throughout the state, would like to offer its strong support for Senate Bill 726 – State Board of Examiners of Psychologists – Sunset Extension. SB 726 continues the statutory and regulatory authority of the State Board of Examiners of Psychologists. The Board of Examiners of Psychology provides a critical role in ensuring the well-being of the citizens of Maryland and the oversight of the profession of psychology.

The Maryland Psychological Association asks for a **FAVORABLE** report on **Senate Bill 726**.

Thank you for considering our comments on SB 726. If we can be of any further assistance as the Senate – Finance Committee considers this bill, please do not hesitate to contact MPA's Legislative Chair, Dr. Pat Savage at mpalegislativcommittee@gmail.com.

Respectfully submitted,

Rebecca Resnick, Psy.D.
Rebecca Resnick, Psy.D.
President

R. Patrick Savage, Jr., Ph.D.
R. Patrick Savage, Jr., Ph.D.
Chair, MPA Legislative Committee

cc: Richard Bloch, Esq., Counsel for Maryland Psychological Association
Barbara Brocato & Dan Shattuck, MPA Government Affairs

7b - SB 726 - FIN - MDH- LOSWA.docx.pdf

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Position: FWA



Wes Moore, Governor · Aruna Miller, Lt. Governor · Laura Herrera Scott, M.D., M.P.H., Secretary

March 3, 2023

The Honorable Melony Griffith
Chair, Senate Finance Committee
2 West Miller Senate Office Building
Annapolis, Maryland 21401

RE: SB 726 - State Board of Examiners of Psychologists – Sunset Extension - Letter of Support with Amendments

Dear Chair Griffith and Committee Members:

The Maryland Department of Health (MDH) respectfully submits this letter of support with amendments for Senate Bill (SB) 726 - State Board of Examiners of Psychologists – Sunset Extension. SB 726 extends the termination provisions relating to the statutory and regulatory authority of the State Board of Psychologists (Board) for three (3) years, until July 1, 2026.

MDH respectfully submits an amendment to shorten the sunset date for the Board from three (3) years to two (2) years. A sunset evaluation and extension is a tool to review existing laws and regulations governing the State’s occupational and professional Boards. These reviews facilitate the careful consideration of the Board’s purpose and operations, including ensuring that licensing is protecting public health and safety and that licensing is not overly broad or burdensome.¹ Of note, Chapter 511 of the Acts of 2019 eliminated Maryland’s automatic 10 year sunset evaluations that were conducted by the Department of Legislative Services prior to extensions.² In its place, sunset evaluations are now conducted only when directed by certain entities.

MDH believes a more thorough evaluation of the Health Occupations Boards is needed at this time to assess ongoing concerns related to licensure, technology, and administrative functions. MDH believes a two (2) year sunset extension allows ample time for MDH and the Boards to examine these functions and return to the General Assembly in 2025 with an update.

If you have any questions please contact Megan Peters, Acting Director, Office of Governmental Affairs, at megan.peters@maryland.gov or (410) 260-3190.

Sincerely,

Laura Herrera Scott, M.D., M.P.H.
Secretary

¹ <https://www.ncsl.org/labor-and-employment/sunset-and-sunrise>

² <https://mgaleg.maryland.gov/mgaweb/Legislation/Details/sb0640?ys=2019RS>

Amendment 1

On page 2, line 3: Strike **2026** and insert **2025**.

7a - SB 726 - FIN - Psychology Bd - SWA.docx.pdf

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Position: FWA



Board of Examiners of Psychologists

Ves Moore, Governor · Aruna Miller, Lt. Governor · Laura Herrera Scott, M.D., M.P.H., Secretary

*Samantha Rukert, Chair – Lorraine Smith, Executive Director
1201 Patterson Avenue, Baltimore MD 21215 Phone: 410-764-4786*

2023 SESSION POSITION PAPER

BILL NO: SB 726

COMMITTEE: Finance

POSITION: SUPPORT WITH AMENDMENT

TITLE: State Board of Examiners of Psychologists – Sunset Extension

BILL ANALYSIS:

This Bill extends the termination provisions relating to the statutory and regulatory authority of the State Board of Examiners of Psychologists ("the Board") for three (3) years until July 1, 2026.

POSITION AND RATIONALE:

The Board supports SB 726 with the amendment to extend the termination provisions relating to the statutory and regulatory authority of the State Board of Examiners of Psychologists to ten (10) years until July 1, 2033.

The previous MDH administration agreed to sponsor this Bill during this legislative session but amended the Bill to extend the Board only until July 1, 2026, instead of July 1, 2033, which is customary and what the Board requested of the Department.

Mental health services have always been essential for the well-being of people and, in particular, the citizens of Maryland. However, it is now a critical service of need. Interrupting the licensing and other processes that ensures that Maryland has competent, ethical, and effective psychologists could be devastating to the state. Over many years the Board has consistently protected the public by setting standards for the practice of psychology, licensing psychologists, registering psychology associates, and receiving and resolving complaints promptly and efficiently. During the cyber-attack and at the height of COVID, the Board continued to process new licensure and renewal applications, issued temporary exceptions to practice in Maryland to psychologists licensed in other states, and investigated complaints timely and accurately.

The passing of this Bill will ensure the continuation of the Board's mandated responsibilities to carry out its mission to protect the citizens of Maryland without interruption. The Board respectfully asks that the committee amend this legislation to extend the termination provisions relating to the statutory and regulatory authority of the State Board of Examiners of Psychologists to ten years.

Amendment 1

On page 2, line 3: Strike **2026** and insert **2033**.

The Board appreciates the Committees consideration and respectfully requests a favorable outcome on SB 726 with amendment. Please do not hesitate to contact Lorraine Smith, Executive Director at, Lorraine.smith@maryland.gov or at 410-764-4786 if you have any questions.

The opinion of the Board expressed in this document does not necessarily reflect that of the Department of Health or the Administration.