

To whom it may concern,

My name is Jacob Gates and I am a Family Medicine Physician in Canton, Michigan. The purpose of this letter is to state that I OPPOSE House Bills 5184 and 5185. For those not familiar, my job role includes diagnosis, treatment, and prevention of illness. It also involves the promotion of health, including mental health. Mental health is a very important discussion that I have with my patients, and throughout my years of training I have witnessed first hand the importance of clinical social workers. I often refer my patients to clinical social workers for Cognitive Behavioral Therapy. Therapy can have a major impact on my patients mental health and, subsequently, their physical health. I have witnessed patient hesitancy agreeing to or being open to psychotherapy based on preconceived ideas. I am concerned that the removal of the licensing examination would be an additional barrier that could potentially deter patients from seeking psychotherapy for improvement of their overall mental health. In my field I am also aware of the importance of licensing examinations and would not recommend or trust mental health care from a profession that does not require a licensing examination with concerns for patient safety. Other physicians in my field may also feel similarly.

Thank you for your time and consideration,

Jacob Gates, MD