

House Committee on Corporations

2 April 2026

Re: Testimony in Support of to House Bill 8242, titled An Act Relating to Businesses and Professions – Wellness and Oversight for Psychological Resources Act.

Dear Chairperson Joseph J. Solomon and members of the House Committee on Corporations:

My name is Robert Livingston, and I am a student at Providence College studying history and political science. I am a legislative intern working with Representative Mary Ann Shallcross Smith from House District 46, who has introduced the said bill.

I support House Bill 8242, titled An Act Relating to Businesses and Professions – Wellness and Oversight for Psychological Resources Act, because...

The bill would safeguard people seeking therapy or psychotherapy services and ensure that people would receive these services from qualified, licensed, or certified professionals. People would be protected from unqualified providers, all while ensuring people have the right to choose which services they could obtain.

The bill would also prevent licensed professionals to use artificial intelligence to provide supplementary support in therapy or psychotherapy where a client's therapeutic session is recorded or transcribed, unless in certain situations or when the patient consents to the use of AI. Artificial intelligence is rapidly transforming the workforce, and it is also something that must be put to caution when using. If used excessively, it prevents us from using our own thoughts to make good decisions, and to carry out tasks. In an article from the National Conference of State Legislators by Adam Kuckuk, he cites Ying Xu, who states that "AI is actually capable of providing high-quality emotional support, but young people prefer human connections." Many people, me included, value human connections and interactions. Unless consented by the patient, it would be important to prevent licensed professionals to use AI for support in therapy or psychotherapy.

Additionally, all records kept by the licensed professional and communications between the individual seeking therapy or psychotherapy would be kept confidential and would not be disclosed, except if required under confidentiality of health care communications and information act. Privacy between the individual seeking therapy or psychotherapy and the licensed professional are very important. It allows important information that should not be disclosed to be between the individual, and the professional.

This bill concludes with effective penalties if any entity violates the policies set forth in this bill. If anyone violates the said policies, the penalties will be enforced based on the degree of harm and circumstances of the violation "pursuant to the enforcement and penalty provisions of chapter 63.2 of title 5." This means that there is not one unified punishment if an entity goes against the policies of the bill. It will instead reasonably be adjusted based on the degree that the entity violated the rules.

Because of the said positions, I urge you to vote in favor of bill 8242.

Thank you for your time and the opportunity to speak in favor of this said bill.

Sincerely,

Robert Livingston