

Kate White
Pownal
LD 1990

I am writing in support of LD 1990 and, in particular, the proposed changes related to the jurisprudence examination requirement for psychology licensure. I serve as the Chief Operating Officer for a large mental health practice in Maine that employs doctoral-level psychologists. I am also a licensed clinical psychologist.

Under current rules, applicants who do not pass the jurisprudence exam are required to wait six months before retesting. In practice, this waiting period is unnecessarily burdensome for otherwise qualified psychologists, their employers, and—most importantly—the Maine residents in need of timely mental health care.

The jurisprudence exam assesses knowledge of Maine-specific laws and ethical standards. While this knowledge is essential, a six-month delay following an unsuccessful attempt does not meaningfully enhance public protection. Instead, it delays licensure for competent clinicians who are actively studying, capable of remediation, and motivated to retest promptly. Many comparable licensing exams allow for shorter retesting intervals that maintain rigor without creating prolonged workforce disruptions.

This delay has real downstream consequences. Employers are left with unfilled clinical positions, applicants face prolonged professional and financial uncertainty, and patients experience longer wait times for care. These impacts are especially concerning given Maine's well-documented shortages in mental health providers and persistent waitlists for services.

LD 1990 offers a thoughtful update that preserves standards while removing an avoidable barrier to workforce entry. Reducing or eliminating the mandatory six-month waiting period would allow qualified psychologists to enter practice more efficiently, strengthening access to care without compromising public safety.

For these reasons, I respectfully urge the committee to support LD 1990.