

ALASKA STATE LEGISLATURE
HOUSE LABOR AND COMMERCE STANDING COMMITTEE

February 17, 2010

3:27 p.m.

MEMBERS PRESENT

Representative Kurt Olson, Chair
Representative Mark Neuman, Vice Chair
Representative Tammie Wilson
Representative Robert L. "Bob" Buch
Representative Lindsey Holmes

MEMBERS ABSENT

Representative Mike Chenault
Representative Bob Lynn

COMMITTEE CALENDAR

HOUSE BILL NO. 110

"An Act relating to the practice and licensing of psychologists."

- MOVED CSHB 110(HSS) OUT OF COMMITTEE

HOUSE BILL NO. 315

"An Act relating to public accounting; and providing for an effective date."

- BILL HEARING CANCELED

HOUSE BILL NO. 238

"An Act relating to public accounting; and providing for an effective date."

- BILL HEARING CANCELED

PREVIOUS COMMITTEE ACTION

BILL: HB 110

SHORT TITLE: PSYCHOLOGISTS' LICENSING & PRACTICE

SPONSOR(S): REPRESENTATIVE(S) HERRON

02/04/09	(H)	READ THE FIRST TIME - REFERRALS
02/04/09	(H)	HSS, L&C
03/19/09	(H)	HSS AT 3:00 PM CAPITOL 106

03/19/09	(H)	Heard & Held
03/19/09	(H)	MINUTE(HSS)
01/28/10	(H)	HSS AT 3:00 PM CAPITOL 106
01/28/10	(H)	Moved CSHB 110(HSS) Out of Committee
01/28/10	(H)	MINUTE(HSS)
01/29/10	(H)	HSS RPT CS(HSS) 6DP 1NR
01/29/10	(H)	DP: HOLMES, T.WILSON, SEATON, LYNN, CISSNA, HERRON
01/29/10	(H)	NR: KELLER
02/17/10	(H)	L&C AT 3:15 PM BARNES 124

WITNESS REGISTER

REPRESENTATIVE BOB HERRON
Alaska State Legislature
Juneau, Alaska

POSITION STATEMENT: Presented HB 110 as prime sponsor and answered questions during the discussion of HB 110.

LORIN BRADBURY, PhD., Chair
Board of Psychologists and Psychological Examiners (BPPE)
Bethel, Alaska

POSITION STATEMENT: Testified during the discussion of HB 110.

JOAN BOHMANN, PhD.
Anchorage School District;
Alaska School Psychologists Association
Anchorage, Alaska

POSITION STATEMENT: Testified in support of HB 110.

ROBERT LANE, PhD.; Member
Alaska Psychological Association
Anchorage, Alaska

POSITION STATEMENT: Testified in favor of HB 110.

PHILIP BAKER, EdD.
Alaska Psychological Association
Anchorage, Alaska

POSITION STATEMENT: Testified during the discussion of HB 110.

ACTION NARRATIVE

[3:27:56 PM](#)

CHAIR KURT OLSON called the House Labor and Commerce Standing Committee meeting to order at 3:27 p.m. Representatives Buch,

Holmes, Neuman, T. Wilson, and Olson were present at the call to order.

HB 110-PSYCHOLOGISTS' LICENSING & PRACTICE

[3:28:11 PM](#)

CHAIR OLSON announced that the only order of business would be HOUSE BILL NO. 110, "An Act relating to the practice and licensing of psychologists."

[Before the committee CSHB 110 (HSS).]

REPRESENTATIVE BOB HERRON, Alaska State Legislature, as prime sponsor of HB 110, explained that this bill relates to the practice and licensing of psychologists. When the current statute was written, the Board of Psychologists and Psychological Associate Examiners offered the qualifying exam only once every six months. The examination is now offered every three months, but the law requires applicants to wait six months to take the exam. This bill will align the two timeframes and will allow examinees who need to take or re-take the examination to do so in a timely manner.

REPRESENTATIVE HERRON explained that the bill will also clarify who is exempt from the Board of Psychologists and Psychological Examiners. The existing exemptions will remain for supervised psychology students, interns, residents in a board approved program of study, as well as other professionals, including licensed professional counselors, licensed clinical social workers, marital and family therapists. Section 2 of CSHB 110(HSS) also clarifies that school psychologists are also exempt since they fall under the purview of the Department of Education. Additionally, federal officers and employees who are performing official duties are also exempt. Thus, the only people subject to this bill are those who represent themselves to the public as psychologists. He stated that passage of this bill will not limit the work other mental health service providers who practice a variety of psychological services from practicing in their field so long as they do not publicly claim to be psychologists. This bill is supported by the Alaska Board of Psychologists and Psychological Associate Examiners, the Psychological Association and the Alaska Mental Health Board.

[3:31:07 PM](#)

REPRESENTATIVE NEUMAN asked whether this bill would affect employees of the Department of Corrections, the Department of Public Safety, or the Alaska Court System.

REPRESENTATIVE HERRON answered no.

[3:31:29 PM](#)

REPRESENTATIVE NEUMAN expressed his concern, in rural Alaska, when a local officer arrests someone and questions arise about their psychological stability, that this bill might require someone to fly a psychologist to the rural community to make a determination.

REPRESENTATIVE HERRON responded that many technical people are available on-line and he offered his belief that this bill does not affect that situation.

[3:32:32 PM](#)

The committee took an at-ease from 3:32 p.m. to 3:34 p.m.

[3:34:38 PM](#)

LORIN BRADBURY, PhD., Chair, Board of Psychologists and Psychological Examiners, stated that Representative Herron previously articulated the purpose of the bill. In response to Representative Neuman, he explained that the statutes, AS 47, refer to a police officer bringing someone in that may have psychological problems. He stated that passage of HB 110 will not require psychologists to examine the person and will not prohibit the work.

[3:35:52 PM](#)

JOAN BOHMANN, PhD, Anchorage School District; Alaska School Psychologists Association, stated that she is supportive of HB 110. She stated that although school psychologists are exempt, school psychologists are sometimes working under the auspices of the Alaska Department of Education or might be providing services in a facility that is not a school, such as a mental health facility or in the juvenile justice facility. She explained that the organizations want to be certain this will not be a problem for school psychologists not specifically working in a school.

[3:37:16 PM](#)

DR. BRADBURY answered that the language in the bill clearly shows that the psychologist would be working under the supervision of the school district so this bill would not prohibit their activities.

DR. BOHMANN thanked Dr. Bradbury for the clarification.

[3:37:42 PM](#)

ROBERT LANE, PhD., Member, Alaska Psychological Association (APA), stated that he would like to testify in favor of HB 110.

[3:38:20 PM](#)

PHILIP BAKER, EdD, Alaska Psychological Association (APA), stated that he shares legislative activities with Dr. Lane that pertain to the practice of psychology in Alaska. He emphasized that the Alaska Psychological Association supports the amendments to their licensing statutes incorporated in HB 110.

[3:39:32 PM](#)

REPRESENTATIVE HOLMES remarked that is bill was heard fairly extensively before the House Health and Social Services Standing Committee. While the committee is only hearing the CSHB 110 (HSS) version of the bill, the prior committee held several meetings last year and this year on this bill. Three members on this committee also serve on the House Health and Social Services Standing Committee, she added.

[3:40:12 PM](#)

CHAIR OLSON, after first determining no one else wished to testify, closed public testimony on HB 110.

[3:40:19 PM](#)

REPRESENTATIVE NEUMAN asked to clarify that if someone wants to practice psychology in Alaska, the person must meet current standards set forth by the Board of Psychologist and Psychological Associates.

REPRESENTATIVE HERRON answered if the person does not fall under one of the exemptions provided for in the statutes, that a person cannot come to Alaska and become a psychologist without board approval.

3:41:39 PM

REPRESENTATIVE NEUMAN moved to report CSHB 110 (HSS) out of committee with individual recommendations and the accompanying fiscal notes. There being no objection, CSHB 110(HSS) was reported from the House Labor and Commerce Standing committee.

3:42:02 PM

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business before the committee, the House Labor and Commerce Standing Committee meeting was adjourned at 3:42 p.m.