Hawaii Senate to Vote on Legislation to Allow Psychologists to Prescribe Medication

Urge Your Senators to Vote NO on S.B. 597

The Hawaii Senate is currently considering legislation to grant psychologists prescription privileges without medical training. If passed, S.B. 597 would create a 5-year pilot project to allow psychologists to prescribe psychotropic medications to patients with mental illness at a federally qualified health center. This legislation risks the safety of patients in Hawaii, particularly children and adolescents.

S.B 597 has passed both the Senate Committee on Health and the Committee on Commerce and Consumer Protection and is now up for vote in the Senate. The Senate will vote on S.B. 597 as early as today, March 8th. Follow the steps below to contact your Senators and urge them to vote NO.

- Click here to find contact information for your state Senators.
- Call TODAY and use the talking points below to shape your message:
  - I am a child and adolescent psychiatric physician living/practicing in [NAME OF TOWN/CITY].
  - I am calling to urge you to vote NO on S.B. 597, which would allow psychologists to prescribe powerful psychotropic medication without medical training.
  - Psychologists are a valuable and critical part of our state’s mental health system. However, they are NOT medical doctors and do not have the necessary training or expertise to prescribe such powerful medications, especially to children.
  - When dealing with children and adolescents, prescribing psychotropic medication is very complicated and carries great risk. Children are not little adults and their bodies metabolize medications differently. Prescribing psychotropic medications for them requires the judgment of a physician, with training and qualifications in the use of these medications in this age group.
  - As written, S.B. 597 has no regard for the complexities and risks of prescribing to children, putting them at great risk if the legislation is passed.
  - As a physician, I can tell you that S.B. 597 would not improve access to high quality mental health care, and it will only compromise the safety of patients in Hawaii, particularly children and adolescents.