

TESTIMONY

To: Senate Committee on Public Health and Welfare

From: Walter Hill, MS, LCP, Executive Director

Date: March 15, 2023

RE: HB 2340, Proponent, Section (b) (1); Expedited Licensure (Written Testimony Only)

Senator Gossage and Members of the Committee, my name is Walter Hill. I am the Executive Director of High Plains Mental Health Center, serving over 6000 Kansas residents each year in Northwest Kansas. I have worked in community mental health in Kansas since 1978 and have served as Executive Director for twenty years here at High Plains.

The workforce shortage in behavioral health is pressing, immediate and consequential to the Kansas public including its safety and welfare. We respect and recognize the obligations of the Behavioral Sciences Regulatory Board to protect the public, and believe a core part of that protection is to do all that is feasible and reasonable to license qualified applicants for professions overseen by BSRB. Our experience is one of significant delays in licensure decisions, which impact patient care and recruitment of an adequate staff. Behavioral health recruitment is more and more competitive, the need for services growing and delays in licensure and other credentialing often means services can not be provided to those in need of such services.

We would offer encouragement and support for the following from HB 2340:

(b) (1) The behavioral sciences regulatory board shall adopt rules and regulations to establish an expedited application process for any license, registration, permit or certificate issued by the board. Upon request on the application to expedite the processing of such application and payment of the fee, the board shall complete the review of the application and issue a decision thereon within 15 business days.

Respectfully Submitted,



Walter Hill

CC: Representative Barbra Wasinger, Senator Rick Billinger, High Plains MHC Board