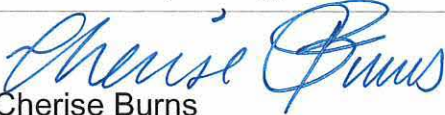


MEMORANDUM

DATE	March 1, 2017
TO	Board of Psychology
FROM	 Cherise Burns Central Services Manager
SUBJECT	Agenda Item #5 – Overview of 2017 Legislative Visits with the Chairs and Vice-Chairs of the Senate Business, Professions and Economic Development Committee and Assembly Business and Professions Committees

Background:

As part of the Board of Psychology's (Board's) policy and advocacy role, the Board scheduled meetings with the Chairs and Vice Chairs of the Senate Business, Professions, and Economic Development Committee and Assembly Business and Professions Committee to discuss the Board's legislative proposals for the 2017 Legislative Session and its concerns relating to bills from the 2016 Legislative Session. Dr. Phillips and Dr. Erickson were able to represent the Board at these meetings with Board staff on Wednesday, February 8, 2017.

At these meetings, the Board discussed its 2017 legislative proposals, including AB 89 (Levine) on Suicide Risk Assessment and Intervention Coursework/Training and the proposed omnibus changes to who will pay the registration fee for psychological assistants. The Board also discussed the following policy concerns that were raised by bills in the 2016 Legislative session:

- AB 796 (Chapter 493, Statutes of 2016) – the Board expressed its concerns over the lack of safeguards and standards in place to ensure a basic level of competence for those providing behavioral health treatments for individuals with Autism Spectrum Disorder and Pervasive Developmental Disorder. The Board encouraged the respective houses' Business and Professions Committees to continue to work on addressing the issue of regulation and oversight of these providers in order to protect these vulnerable consumers.
- AB 2086 (Cooley, 2016) – the Board expressed its disappointment with the Governor's veto of the bill and detailed its concerns over the continued exclusion of neuropsychologists from being appointed as a qualified medical evaluator (QME) in neuropsychology in the workers' compensation system, and the delays in care and systemic inefficiencies that their exclusion can create.
- AB 2017 (McCarty, 2016) – the Board expressed its disappointment in the Governor's veto of the bill and encouraged the Legislators to continue pushing for increased funding for college mental health programs in the 2017-18 legislative session.

- AB 2507 (Gordon, 2016) – the Board discussed current issues with telehealth reimbursement policies for psychological services that limit the use of telehealth by psychologists. The Board encouraged the respective houses' Business and Professions Committees to evaluate statutes defining telehealth services and requirements for reimbursement and coverage for both Medi-Cal and private health insurance to better promote equal access to care regardless of geographic location or ability to pay out of pocket for necessary services.

The Legislators and/or their staff were very receptive and engaged in the policy discussions regarding the above issues, with particular attention from the Assembly Members regarding suicide risk assessment and intervention training and telehealth policies and their potential impact on rural communities and Veterans.

Board staff believes these meetings were very productive and suggest the Board participate in similar meetings at the beginning of next year's legislative session.

Action Requested:

No action is required; this item is for informational purposes only.