

I have a private psychotherapy practice as a licensed psychologist associate, and have for many years. I just today learned of this plan to sunset this type of license, and am surprised I was not notified of these current plans by the licensing board. I am strongly opposed to this plan, despite the fact that few applicants are seeking master's level licensing from the board. Over 20 years ago, as a young counselor, I took the written exam given to become a nationally certified counselor (a much easier exam than the one for psychologist and psychologist associates), and planned to become a licensed professional counselor. I was unable to do that because the counseling board said my master's degree needed to be in counseling, not psychology, to apply for that license. If the psychologist associate license did not exist, I would not have been able to pursue a career assisting literally 100s of clients over the years, through my psychotherapy practice. If you abolish this license option, no one earning a master's degree in psychology will be allowed to elect to complete years of residency and supervised practice, two oral exams and a written exam, to prove themselves competent to practice psychology at the master's level: You will be making a master's degree in psychology worthless for anyone unless they possibly want to teach at a community college. I know that not many are applying for this level of licensure these days, likely because it is a long and difficult road to travel, yet I think it should remain an option. At a time when mental health services are needed more than ever as we all work to get through this pandemic, eliminating one path to become a licensed mental health professional makes no sense.