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Senator Cocchiarialla and members of the Senate Business, Labor, and Economic Affairs Committee. I apologize for not being here in person today but I had a scheduling conflict that could not be changed.

For the record my name is Marti Wangen and I'm the Executive Director of the Montana Psychological Association. In Montana, licensed psychologists are doctorate level professionals.

We rise in opposition to Senate Bill 434 and hope that the committee will vote no.

We also opposed this bill in 2005 and I've included quotes from several members that sent information to the Senate Public Health Committee at that time:

Dr. Guy Bateman from St. Ignatius

*"Generally speaking, I do not see any need for yet another specialty certification for treating "specific problems" in the mental health field. We already have at least three levels of licensure for primary mental health professionals in Montana (more, if you include physicians, psychiatric nurses, addictions counselors, etc.), and that should be sufficient. I believe that if someone wants to be a "marriage and family therapist" they should become licensed as a psychologist, a clinical social worker, or an LCPC, and then go to work. If a person's training and experience are inadequate for them to be licensed as a psychologist, LCSW, or LCPC, why institute yet another (lower? different?) level of training? My understanding is that most MFT programs train people as social workers. I say, let them become licensed as social workers. If someone doesn't have the requisite training or experience to become licensed under our current code and regulations, let them obtain it."*

Dr. Vicki Van Cleave from Havre

*"I oppose the MFT bill as well. In Colorado the MFTs are licensed as LCPCs and can apply their training to that license arena. They do not usually have the training sufficient to satisfy MSW standards."*

If this committee feels that they must pass this bill, we hope that you will address some items that we brought to the Marriage and Family Therapist's attention on January 25.

Section 1 (2) Reciprocity language is too vague. There needs to be a list of criteria that are acceptable, such as a national exam, basis of training, etc.

Section 3 (6) Expand the definition of a qualified supervisor.

Section 5 (1) and (3) Expand definitions, define intern, define standards required for being a temporarily licensed person.

Section 6 (c)(2) If a person has more, or equal, training than a Marriage and Family Therapist they should be able to advertise that they are a Marriage and Family Therapist. It will be confusing to consumers if some providers advertise as licensed while others do not.

The Marriage and Family therapists have worked on several changes to this bill and we deeply appreciate that. However, we still oppose the bill.

Please vote no on SB 434.