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June 2, 2009

James H. Bray, Ph.D., President
American Psychological Association
750 First Street, N.E.
Washington, DC 20002-4241

Dear Doctor Bray:

I am writing as the National Association of School Psychologists (NASP) delegate from Puerto Rico and on behalf of the proposed School Psychology Program to be established at The University of Puerto Rico at Mayagüez to oppose the Model Licensure Act (MLA) that removes the exemption for non-doctoral level school psychologists to use the title "school psychologist". Such action will have detrimental effects to the emerging field of school psychology in Puerto Rico.

In Puerto Rico, the field of school psychology is relatively young. There are not enough doctoral level school psychologists on the Island to comply with MLA. In 2005 there were 79 licensed school psychologists most of them at the masters level. To require a doctoral degree to comply with APA's MLA it is not consistent with the Puerto Rican reality as many psychologists on the Island do not hold a doctorate. The Puerto Rico Department of Health grants licensing to psychologists holding a masters level degree.

Although a doctoral level program is being developed at my university, it will take several years for it to be in full function and to produce the needed number of doctoral level school psychologists to fulfill the shortage of these professionals-on the Island. MLA would provoke an even higher shortage of school psychologists needed to meet the needs of the students in our public school system.

I strongly request that the APA retain the current exemption for School Psychologists in the MLA.

Cordially,

Bernadette M. Delgado, Ph. D.
NASP PR Delegate
Professor of Psychology

cc Ms. Bufka, MLA Chairperson