



**THE MASSACHUSETTS PSYCHIATRY SOCIETY'S POSITION ON HOUSE BILL NO. 203; *AN ACT TO PROTECT PSYCHOTHERAPY PATIENTS***

The Massachusetts Psychiatry Society [MPS] is a professional organization representing over 1600 Psychiatrists in Massachusetts and is also a District Branch of the American Psychiatric Association. The MPS supports House Bill No. 203 for the following reasons:

This Bill is the result of many months of meetings between representatives of the Massachusetts Boards of Registration in Psychology, Social Work, Allied Mental Health Professionals and the Massachusetts Psychological Association. The need for this legislation came about as a result of numerous cases of unlicensed individuals representing themselves to the public as “psychotherapists” [a term that is currently not regulated] who either had little or no training in the behavioral health profession or, had had their behavioral health license revoked for unprofessional behavior [whether in psychiatry, psychology, social work or other related mental health regulated areas. In addition to the public being subjected to un-trained and inexperienced “psychotherapist” they are also subjected to formerly licensed treaters who as result of serious behavior toward patients, have surrendered or had their licenses revoked. Subjecting the public to would-be “psychotherapists” denies those individuals who may be victimized of any means of redress and further denies the government any ability to protect the public at large. Licensed therapists are regulated by licensing agencies that, in addition to licensing, regulate unethical behavior for the protection of the public.

The MPS strongly supports House 203 and strongly urges its passage.