

**HOUSE . . . . . No. 271**

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**The Commonwealth of Massachusetts**

PRESENTED BY:

***Tackey Chan***

*To the Honorable Senate and House of Representatives of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts in General Court assembled:*

The undersigned legislators and/or citizens respectfully petition for the adoption of the accompanying bill:

An Act relative to the licensure of behavior analysts.

PETITION OF:

NAME:	DISTRICT/ADDRESS:	DATE ADDED:
<i>Tackey Chan</i>	<i>2nd Norfolk</i>	<i>1/18/2023</i>
<i>Sal N. DiDomenico</i>	<i>Middlesex and Suffolk</i>	<i>1/26/2023</i>

**HOUSE . . . . . No. 271**

By Representative Chan of Quincy, a petition (accompanied by bill, House, No. 271) of Tackey Chan and Sal N. DiDomenico relative to the licensure of behavior analysts. Consumer Protection and Professional Licensure.

[SIMILAR MATTER FILED IN PREVIOUS SESSION  
SEE SENATE, NO. 2568 OF 2021-2022.]

**The Commonwealth of Massachusetts**

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**In the One Hundred and Ninety-Third General Court  
(2023-2024)**  
\_\_\_\_\_

An Act relative to the licensure of behavior analysts.

*Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives in General Court assembled, and by the authority of the same, as follows:*

1 SECTION 1. Section 88 of chapter 13 of the General Laws, as appearing in the 2020  
2 Official Edition, is hereby amended by striking out the figure “13”, in line 4, and inserting in  
3 place thereof the following figure:- 11

4 SECTION 2. Section 89 of said chapter 13 of the General Laws is hereby amended by  
5 striking out subsection (A), and inserting in place thereof the following:-

6 (A) Eight members shall be licensed practicing mental health and human services  
7 professionals, two of whom shall be marriage and family therapists, two of whom shall be  
8 rehabilitation counselors, two of whom shall be clinical mental health counselors, two of whom  
9 shall be educational psychologists; and each shall have been, for at least five years immediately

10 preceding appointment, actively engaged as a practitioner rendering professional services in that  
11 field, or in the education and training of graduate students or interns in the field, or in appropriate  
12 human developmental research, or in other areas substantially equivalent thereto, and shall have  
13 spent the majority of the professional time in such activity during the two years preceding the  
14 appointment in the commonwealth. One of the 8 shall also be a member of a union licensable  
15 under sections 163 to 172, inclusive, of chapter 112; and

16 SECTION 3. Said chapter 13 of the General Laws is hereby further amended by adding  
17 the following 3 sections:-

18 Section 110. (a) There shall be within the division of professional licensure a board of  
19 registration of behavior analysts. The board shall consist of 9 members to be appointed by the  
20 governor, 2 of whom shall be Licensed Behavior Analysts licensed under this section who hold  
21 doctoral degrees, 4 of whom shall be Licensed Behavior Analysts licensed under this section  
22 who hold master's degrees, 1 of whom shall be a Licensed Assistant Behavior Analyst licensed  
23 under this section who holds a bachelor's degree, and 2 members of the general public, subject to  
24 section 9B. Members of the board shall be residents of the commonwealth.

25 (b) Each member of the board shall serve for a term of 3 years and until a successor has  
26 been appointed and qualified. A vacancy in the membership of the board shall be filled for the  
27 unexpired term in the manner provided for the original appointment. No member shall serve  
28 more than 2 full consecutive terms. A member appointed for less than a full term may serve 2  
29 full terms in addition to that part of a full term. A former member shall be eligible for  
30 appointment after a lapse of 1 year.

31 (c) The governor may remove a member of the board for cause, but no board member  
32 shall be removed without first being informed in writing at least 30 days in advance of the  
33 reasons for such removal and of the member's right to a public or private hearing and to have  
34 counsel present at the hearing.

35 Section 111. The board shall hold at least 2 meetings annually and will determine an  
36 appropriate schedule of meetings that meets the needs of licensees. At its first regular meeting in  
37 each year the board shall elect from its own members by majority vote a chair. A majority of the  
38 board shall constitute a quorum. The members of the board shall serve without compensation but  
39 shall be reimbursed for actual expenses reasonably incurred in the performance of their board  
40 duties. The board may hire such staff as it deems necessary to carry out its activities.

41 Section 112. (a) The board of registration of behavior analysts may: (i) pass upon the  
42 qualifications of an application for a license under sections 275 to 287, inclusive, of chapter 112  
43 and shall issue a license to an applicant who is determined to be qualified to practice as a  
44 licensed behavior analyst or licensed assistant behavior analyst; (ii) adopt rules and regulations  
45 governing the licensure of behavior analysts and assistant behavior analysts; (iii) establish  
46 eligibility and renewal requirements; (iv) receive, review and approve or disapprove an  
47 application for a reciprocal license for an applicant who is licensed or certified as a behavior  
48 analyst in another state and who has demonstrated qualifications that equal or exceed those  
49 required under sections 275 to 287, inclusive, of said chapter 112; (v) fine, censure, revoke,  
50 suspend or deny a license and place on probation, reprimand or otherwise discipline a licensee  
51 for a violation of the code of ethics or the rules and regulations of the board under said sections  
52 275 to 287, inclusive, of said chapter 112; (vi) summarily suspend the license of a licensee who  
53 poses an imminent danger to the public; provided, however, that a hearing shall be afforded to

54 the licensee within 10 day after any such action by the board to determine whether such  
55 summary action is warranted; and (vii) perform any other functions and duties as may be  
56 required to carry out this section.

57 (b) The board shall make available to the public a list of licensed behavior analysts and  
58 licensed assistant behavior analysts.

59 (c) The members of the board, its officers and employees shall be indemnified by the  
60 commonwealth for all actions taken as part of their responsibilities described in this section.

61 SECTION 4. Section 163 of chapter 112 of the General Laws is hereby amended by  
62 striking out the definitions, “Licensed applied behavior analyst” and “Licensed assistant applied  
63 behavior analyst”, and inserting in place thereof the following definitions:-

64 "Licensed assistant behavior analyst", an individual who, by training, experience and  
65 examination meets the requirements for licensing by the board of registration of behavior  
66 analysts and is duly licensed to engage in the practice of applied behavior analysis under the  
67 supervision of a licensed behavior analyst under sections 275 through 287, inclusive.

68 “Licensed behavior analyst”, an individual who, by training, experience and examination  
69 meets the requirements for licensing by the board of registration of behavior analysts and is duly  
70 licensed to engage in the practice of applied behavior analysis in the commonwealth under  
71 sections 275 through 287, inclusive.

72 SECTION 5. Section 165 of chapter 112 of the General Laws is hereby amended by  
73 striking out the following words in the title of the section:- “applied behavior analysts”.

74 SECTION 6. Said Section 165 of chapter 112 of the General Laws is hereby further  
75 amended by striking out the eighth through fifteenth paragraphs in their entirety.

76 SECTION 7. Chapter 112 of the General Laws is hereby amended by adding the  
77 following 13 sections:-

78 Section 275. As used in sections 275 to 287, inclusive, the following words shall, unless  
79 the context clearly requires otherwise, have the following meanings:

80 “Board”, the board of registration of behavior analysts.

81 “Certifying entity”, the Behavior Analyst Certification Board, Inc. (BACB), or another  
82 entity whose programs to credential practitioners of applied behavioral analysis are accredited by  
83 the National Commission on Certifying Agencies (NCCA) or American National Standards  
84 Institute (ANSI) and approved by the board. “Licensed assistant behavior analyst”, an individual  
85 who, by training, experience and examination meets the requirements for licensing by the board  
86 and is duly licensed to engage in the practice of applied behavior analysis under the supervision  
87 of a licensed behavior analyst.

88 “Licensed behavior analyst”, an individual who, by training, experience and examination  
89 meets the requirements for licensing by the board and is duly licensed to engage in the practice  
90 of applied behavior analysis in the commonwealth.

91 “Practice of applied behavior analysis”, the design, implementation and evaluation of  
92 systematic instructional and environmental modifications, using behavioral stimuli and  
93 consequences, to produce socially significant improvements in human behavior, including the  
94 direct observation and measurement of behavior and the environment, the empirical

95 identification of functional relations between behavior and environmental factors, known as  
96 functional assessment and analysis, and the introduction of interventions based on scientific  
97 research and which utilize contextual factors, antecedent stimuli, positive reinforcement and  
98 other consequences to develop new behaviors, increase or decrease existing behaviors and elicit  
99 behaviors under specific environmental conditions that are delivered to individuals and groups of  
100 individuals; provided, however, that the "practice of applied behavior analysis" shall not include  
101 psychological testing, neuropsychology, diagnosis of mental health or developmental conditions,  
102 psychotherapy, cognitive therapy, sex therapy, psychoanalysis, psychopharmacological  
103 recommendations, hypnotherapy or academic teaching by college or university faculty.

104 "Recognized educational institution", a degree-granting college or university which is  
105 accredited by (i) a regional accreditation body recognized by the United States Department of  
106 Education and (ii) a certifying entity.

107 Section 276. The board may issue a license to an applicant as a behavior analyst provided  
108 that the applicant:

109 (a) is of good moral character;

110 (b) has not engaged or is not engaging in any practice or conduct that would be grounds  
111 for refusing to issue a license under section 286; and

112 (c) has current certification at the appropriate level verified with the certifying entity by  
113 the board; and any other requirements and qualifications as deemed necessary by the board

114 Section 277. The board may issue a license to an applicant as an assistant behavior  
115 analyst provided that the applicant:

116 (a) is of good moral character;

117 (b) has not engaged or is not engaging in any practice or conduct that would be grounds  
118 for refusing to issue a license under section 286;

119 (c) has current certification at the appropriate level verified with the certifying entity by  
120 the board; and

121 (d) can provide the board upon request with evidence of current and ongoing supervision  
122 by a licensed behavior analyst who is approved as a supervisor by the certifying entity; and any  
123 other requirements and qualifications as deemed necessary by the board.

124 Section 278. Each person desiring to obtain a license as a behavior analyst or as an  
125 assistant behavior analyst shall make application to the board upon such form and in such  
126 manner as the board shall prescribe and shall furnish evidence satisfactory to the board that the  
127 person is of good moral character including, but not limited to, the fact that such applicant has  
128 not been convicted of a felony; provided, however, that for the purposes of this section, a  
129 conviction shall include a judgment, an admission of guilt or a plea of nolo contendere to any  
130 such felony charges or a conviction of an offense under the laws of another jurisdiction which, if  
131 committed in the commonwealth, would be a felony unless:

132 (i) at least 10 years have elapsed from the date of the conviction; and

133 (ii) the applicant satisfactorily demonstrates to the board that the applicant has made  
134 significant progress in personal rehabilitation since the conviction so that licensure of the  
135 applicant would not be expected to create a substantial risk of harm to the health and safety of  
136 the applicant's clients or the public or a substantial risk of further criminal violations.



137           The board shall have access to criminal offender record information to review such  
138 felony or misdemeanor convictions as are necessary to carry out this section.

139           Section 279. Notwithstanding sections 276 and 277, the board may issue a license to an  
140 applicant who presents evidence that such applicant has been licensed or certified as a behavior  
141 analyst or assistant behavior analyst by a similar board of another jurisdiction the standards of  
142 which are at least the same as those required in the commonwealth.

143           Section 280. A fee shall be paid to the board for the original license. A license to practice  
144 as a licensed behavior analyst or a licensed assistant behavior analyst shall be valid for 2 years  
145 and must be renewed biennially. Any application for renewal of a license that has expired shall  
146 require the payment of a re-registration fee.

147           On or before September 13 of the year preceding the expiration of a license, the board  
148 shall forward to the holder of the license a form of application for renewal thereof. Upon the  
149 receipt of the completed form and the renewal fee on or before November 13, the board shall  
150 verify with the certifying entity that the applicant is certified at the appropriate level and is not  
151 the subject of any active investigation or disciplinary action by the certifying entity. If such  
152 verification is attained, the board shall issue a new license for the year commencing January 1.

153           Section 281. All fees required by sections 275 to 287, inclusive, shall be determined  
154 annually by the secretary of administration and finance under section 3B of chapter 7. All  
155 licensing and application fees and civil administrative penalties collected under said sections 275  
156 to 287, inclusive, shall be deposited into the Division of Professional Licensure Trust Fund  
157 established in section 35V of chapter 10.

158           Section 282. Nothing in sections 275 to 287, inclusive, shall be construed to prevent  
159 qualified members of other professions or occupations including, but not limited to, physicians,  
160 psychologists, teachers, members of the clergy, authorized Christian Science practitioners,  
161 attorneys-at-law, social workers, guidance counselors, clinical counselors, adjustment  
162 counselors, speech pathologists, audiologists or rehabilitation counselors from practicing applied  
163 behavior analysis if it is consistent with the legislated scope of practice and accepted ethical  
164 standards of their respective professions and the individual professional’s training and  
165 competence; provided, however, that no such Christian Science practitioner, attorneys-at-law,  
166 social worker, guidance counselor, clinical counselor, adjustment counselor, speech pathologist,  
167 audiologist or rehabilitation counselor shall use any title or description stating or implying that  
168 such person is a licensed behavior analyst or licensed assistant behavior analyst without holding  
169 said license.

170           Section 283. A person licensed under sections 275 to 287, inclusive, shall comply with  
171 the standards of ethical practice as adopted by the board.

172           Section 284. A person not licensed to practice applied behavior analysis who holds  
173 himself out to be a licensed behavior analyst or licensed assistant behavior analyst or who uses  
174 the title “licensed behavior analyst” or “licensed assistant behavior analyst” or engages in the  
175 practice of applied behavior analysis shall be subject to the penalties set forth in section 65A.

176           Section 285. The penalties set forth in section 284 shall not apply to faculty or students of  
177 applied behavior analysis currently enrolled in a recognized educational institution which meets  
178 educational standards determined by the board or to interns or persons preparing for the practice  
179 of applied behavior analysis under qualified supervision in any such program; provided, that they

180 are designated by such titles as “behavior analyst intern”, “behavior analyst trainee” or other title  
181 clearly indicating such training status.

182 Section 286. The board shall investigate all complaints relating to the proper practice of  
183 applied behavior analysis by a person licensed under sections 275 to 287, inclusive.

184 The board, after a hearing held under chapter 30A, may revoke, suspend or cancel the  
185 license, or reprimand, censure or otherwise discipline a licensed behavior analyst or licensed  
186 assistant behavior analyst upon proof satisfactory to a majority of the board that the licensee:

187 (i) fraudulently procured the license;

188 (ii) is guilty of an offense under any law of the commonwealth relating to the practice of  
189 applied behavior analysis or a rule or regulation adopted under those laws;

190 (iii) engaged in conduct that calls into question their competence to practice applied  
191 behavior analysis including, but not limited to, gross misconduct in the practice of applied  
192 behavior analysis or of practicing applied behavior analysis fraudulently, or beyond its  
193 authorized scope, or with gross incompetence, or with gross negligence on a particular occasion  
194 or negligence on repeated occasions;

195 (iv) practiced applied behavior analysis while the ability to practice was impaired by  
196 alcohol, drugs, physical disability or mental instability;

197 (v) has been habitually drunk or being or having been within a reasonable period of time  
198 addicted to, dependent on or a habitual user of narcotics, barbiturates, amphetamines,  
199 hallucinogens or other drugs having similar effects;

200 (vi) knowingly permitted, aided or abetted an unlicensed individual to perform activities  
201 requiring a license for purposes of fraud, deception or personal gain;

202 (vii) has been convicted of a criminal offense which reasonably calls into question the  
203 licensee's ability to practice applied behavior analysis;

204 (viii) violated any rule or regulation of the board governing the practice of applied  
205 behavior analysis; or

206 (ix) violated any professional disciplinary or ethical standard established by the board.

207 No person who files a complaint or who reports or provides information under this  
208 section or assists the board at its request in any manner in discharging its duties and functions  
209 shall be liable in a cause of action arising out of the receiving of such information or assistance if  
210 the person making the complaint or reporting or providing the information or assistance does so  
211 in good faith and without malice.

212 If the licensee is found not to have violated this section, the board shall forthwith order a  
213 dismissal of the charges.

214 Written notice of a contemplated revocation or suspension of a license or the cause  
215 therefor, in sufficient particularity, and the date of a hearing thereon, shall be sent by registered  
216 or certified mail to the licensee at the licensee's last known address at least 15 days before the  
217 date of the hearing. The licensee against whom a charge is filed shall have a right to appear  
218 before the board in person or by counsel, or both, may produce witnesses, introduce evidence  
219 and question witnesses. No license shall be revoked or suspended without such hearing, but the  
220 nonappearance of the licensee, after notice, shall not prevent such revocation or suspension. All

221 matters upon which a contemplated revocation or suspension is based shall be introduced in  
222 evidence at the proceeding. The licensee shall be notified in writing of the board's decision. The  
223 board may make such rules and regulations as it deems proper for the filing of charges and the  
224 conduct of hearings.

225         After issuing an order of revocation or suspension, the board may file a petition in equity  
226 in the superior court in a county in which the respondent resides or transacts business, or in  
227 Suffolk County, to ensure appropriate injunctive relief to expedite and secure the enforcement of  
228 its order, pending the final determination.

229         A decision by the board under this section shall be subject to review in superior court  
230 under chapter 30A.

231         Section 287. After three years from the date of revocation, an application for  
232 reinstatement may be made to the board and the board may, upon the affirmative vote of a  
233 majority of its members, grant such reinstatement.

234         SECTION 8. Notwithstanding section 110 of chapter 13 of the General Laws, the initial  
235 members of the board of registration of behavior analysts shall consist of 9 members to be  
236 appointed by the governor, 2 of whom shall be doctoral-level, Board-Certified Behavior Analysts  
237 designated as such by the Behavior Analyst Certification Board, 4 of whom shall be Board-  
238 Certified Behavior Analysts designated as such by the Behavior Analyst Certification Board who  
239 hold master's degrees, 1 of whom shall be a Board-certified Assistant Behavior Analyst  
240 designated as such by the Behavior Analyst Certification Board who holds a bachelor's degree,  
241 and 2 members of the general public, subject to section 9B of chapter 13. Of the said initial

242 members appointed to the board, 3 shall serve for terms of 3 years, 3 shall serve for terms of 2  
243 years and 3 shall serve for a term of 1 year.

244 SECTION 9. Individuals licensed in good standing as applied behavior analysts or  
245 assistant applied behavior analysts within the commonwealth upon the effective date of this Act  
246 shall be grandfathered, and not required to resubmit applications for licensure until the time as  
247 their license is due for renewal.