
ANNE A. MORTON, PH.D.

**Licensed Psychologist
8340 Meadow Road, Suite 134
Dallas, TX 75231
214-521-8591
April 25, 2018**

APR 25 2018

Dear Members of the Texas Sunset Commission:

My name is Dr. Anne Morton. I'm from Dallas, TX, where I've been practicing for the past 30 years and am currently the Chair of the TPA PAC. My State Senator is Don Huffines, and my Representative is Rafael Anchia.

I am very opposed to consolidation of our Board, Texas State Board of Examiners of Psychologists (TSBEP), in any form. The public is already confused regarding mental health professions—this will just muddy the waters even more. For example, there was an article recently in the *Dallas Morning News* entitled "The State Has Failed Its Citizens. Damning New Report Says Lax Rules for Therapists, Counselors Put Texans at Risk." Twelve paragraphs into the article, we read, "The independent board that licenses psychologists is operating well." This article misleads the public by essentially "lumping" all boards together, initially implying that the board regulating Psychology was also a problem.

In addition, I had friends contact me after they saw the article questioning why the Board regulating Psychology, which was working well, according to the Report, would even be considered to merge with boards that weren't working well. Their comments were that it didn't make any sense.

It's working, it's not broken, don't fix it. Complaints are taken care of in a timely fashion and both the 2016 and 2018 Sunset Reports found that TSBEP ran smoothly and efficiently. So why take a Board that is functioning well and risk that by consolidating with boards with multiple problems?

To combine professions into one regulatory board or to delegate evaluating candidates for licensure and considering whether a licensing complaint has merit to administrative staff, deprives the public of the protection of a board fully expert in how to license and regulate the complex profession of Psychology.

A one size fits all approach will not work and will just further confuse the public. In addition, the other professions are far narrower in scope than the full practice of Psychology, with all its many sub-specialties. Also, psychologists, along with psychiatrists, are, by law, the only professionals who can conduct evaluations for competency, Social Security Disability, and for peace officers, among other things. Psychology has functioned well with its own independent agency for many years and has flourished as a profession dedicated to serving the mental health needs of all Texans.
