

From: [Robert Romig](#)
To: [Janet Wood](#); [Julie Davis](#); [Jennifer Jones](#); [Ken Levine](#); [Krystal Duran](#)
Subject: FW: Response to Vice Chair Taylor's question re: Other State Independent Psychology Boards
Date: Monday, December 12, 2016 9:52:27 AM

Robert Romig
Staff Attorney
Sunset Advisory Commission
512-936-1725
robert.romig@sunset.texas.gov

This email is the property of the Sunset Advisory Commission and may contain material that is confidential and/or exempt from disclosure under state law. If you have received this message in error please notify us by replying to the message, then deleting it.

From: Michael Winters [mailto:mw@drmwinters.com]
Sent: Friday, December 09, 2016 4:56 PM
To: Larry Gonzales; Van Taylor; Cindy Burkett; Dan Flynn; Richard Raymond; Senfronia Thompson; Juan Hinojosa; Robert Nichols; Charles Schwertner; Kirk Watson; righard.gee@senate.texas.gov
Cc: Robert Romig
Subject: Response to Vice Chair Taylor's question re: Other State Independent Psychology Boards

Dear Members of the Board:

Thank you for your tireless efforts to understand the concerns of psychology and all the boards you oversee - after having witnessed the work you do personally - I have much more appreciation for the difficult work that you do and the decisions you make for the welfare of Texans.

During my Testimony yesterday I claimed that even Wyoming, the least populous state in the U.S. has an independent Psychology Board. I further stated that Wyoming had a Mental Health board for other licensees, but an independent psychology board. Vice Chair Senator Taylor asked the Sunset Commission Staff if my statement was accurate. A staff member (I did not catch her name) responded that it was not correct.

This is the data upon which I was drawing my conclusions - this is publicly available information.

Wyoming DOES have an independent Psychology Board - her his the website address for the Wyoming Board: <https://sites.google.com/a/wyo.gov/psychology/board>
Wyoming also DOES have a Mental Health Licensing Board which "is empowered to provide for the licensure and regulation of professional counselors, marriage and family therapists, addictions therapists and social workers practicing in Wyoming." Here is the website for the Mental Health Licensing Board: <https://sites.google.com/a/wyo.gov/wyoming-mental-health-professions-licensing-board/home>

In claiming that my testimony was not accurate, the sunset staff was in error.

While Ideally The Texas State Board of Examiners of Psychology will remain its own agency with an independent board, what it essential to protect the public and the profession is that the board remain independent.

Thank you for your attention.

Sincerely,

Michael Winters, PhD

**Testimony of Michael Winters, PhD Licensed Psychologist License # 24931
Sunset Advisory Commission RE: State Board of Examiners of Psychologists
December 8, 2016**

Mr. Chairman and Members of the Commission:

My name is Michael Winters – I am a psychologist from Houston and have been licensed in Texas since 1993. I came to Houston from Memphis, Tennessee to take a position as Staff Psychologist at the Rice University Counseling Center. Eventually I was named the Director of the Rice Counseling Center. I retired from Rice to go into full time private practice of psychology 5 years ago. I treat adults and adolescents with depression, anxiety and other significant distress and couples having relationship difficulties.

I would like to address three issues: 1) the value of the oral examination, 2) the need for a post-doctoral supervision year, and 3) the need for an independent board of psychology.

Psychology is a highly personal profession. The written exams demonstrate a candidates general knowledge of psychology and of Texas law – but only the oral exam requires the examinee to look other psychologists in the eye and demonstrate their professional knowledge and demeanor. We owe it to the citizens to Texas to guarantee that psychologists are not just intellectually able, but interpersonally able as well. A metaphor to driving is appropriate here – to get a driver's license first there is a written test of rules of the road, but we also require a driving test to see how the potential driver actually manages in a real life situation. It would be cheaper to only have the written test – but it would put more people at risk.

Second: The postdoctoral supervision year is needed to insure that psychologists are fully trained and ready to engage in independent practice. The current system in Texas allows for a Doctoral graduate to practice under supervision. So services can be provided to the public, while still providing additional guidance to the potential psychologist. The post-doctoral year is the standard recognized by the Association of State and Provincial Psychology Boards, and the American Psychological Association. It would be a backward step in insuring public safety to eliminate the post-doctoral year of training.

Finally, and most importantly – an independent board is vital to the profession of psychology. Large states: California, New York, Florida and Pennsylvania all have independent psychology boards and our immediate neighbors: Louisiana, Arkansas, Oklahoma, and New Mexico all have independent boards of psychology. Even Wyoming – the least populous state in the US has an independent board of psychology. In the state of Texas our Psychology board has been efficient and effective in protecting the public. The independent board is uniquely qualified to manage the diversity of specialties in psychology.

Thank you for your time and attention.