

Talking Points for HB 1501

WHAT:

The [House Public Health Committee](#) will take up [HB 1501](#) on Wednesday, March 13, 2019. HB 1501 is THE Sunset bill that TCA, TAMFT and NASW-TX have been working for two sessions to enact. HB 1501 (Nevarez) will create the Texas Behavioral Executive Council, continue the regulatory boards for psychologists, marriage and family therapists, professional counselors and social workers while administratively moving them to one agency specifically dedicated to the regulation of mental health professionals in Texas.

ACTION:

Call and send emails to each member of the [House Public Health Committee](#) and ask them to support HB 1501. We also need as many people as possible to sign-in to support HB 1501 at the Capitol on Wednesday. If you can come and testify in support that is helpful as well. Contact jan@txca.org if interested.

WHY:

We expect the Texas Psychological Association to turn out in droves to oppose HB 1501. They feel that, even though they represent the smallest number of licensed mental health professionals in Texas, their stand-alone agency should be protected. The Texas State Board of Examiners of Psychologists support HB 1501, as do the associations representing Licensed Specialists in School Psychology and Licensed Psychological Associates. Professional counselors, social workers and marriage and family therapists MUST speak with a strong and unified voice to pass HB 1501.

TALKING POINTS:

Speak from you heart. Share your personal experiences. Support the efficiencies that will be gained from this consolidation.

- *I support the recommendation that the boards regulating LPCs, LMFTs, Social Workers and Psychologists be housed at the new Texas Behavioral Executive Council as this will create a more efficient and effective structure for all professionals who deliver mental health services in Texas.*
- *The Texas Behavioral Health Executive Council is essentially an administrative agency – not a licensing board. It will achieve efficiencies and consistency where appropriate such as in administrative activities related to applications and investigations.*
- *The Texas Behavioral Health Executive Council will not create one combined board for all mental health professionals. Each of the four licensing boards will retain their integrity and rule-making authority for each distinct discipline.*
- *I support creation of the Behavioral Health Executive Council but request that the professional members appointed to BHEC by each licensing board have voting privileges on BHEC.*
- *Under the Behavioral Health Executive Council, each board will still be appointed by the Governor as currently set forth in the Occupations Code. Each boards' rule-making authority will remain intact and licenses will be issued by each Board – not by BHEC.*
- *The Behavioral Executive Council will not be authorized to establish rules. They will review rules but will only be able to reject or send rules back to each board if the rules violate current statutes, or create anti-competitive, monopolistic or anti-trust scenarios.*
- *Maintaining the status quo or creating two separate administrative agencies for the four mental health licensing boards is NOT the most efficient use of taxpayer dollars. The state's interests are best served by forming ONE agency as recommended in the Sunset Commission Staff Report.*
- *Holding a doctorate is not unique to psychologists. Many other mental health providers also hold this prestigious degree. This is no reason to have a stand-alone agency for psychologists. In fact, many psychologists are duly licensed – another reason they should be housed at BHEC.*