

LICENSING BOARD “REFORM” IMAGINED BENEFITS VS. REAL CONSEQUENCES



Professional licensing boards keep the public safe. Boards are composed of volunteers from the profession who work for the public at no cost to the public. They have deep subject matter expertise and are the most qualified to set professional standards – such as education, experience, and examination requirements. The work of boards doesn’t end with issuing a license: boards ensure continuing education so professionals stay current, enforce codes of ethics, and take disciplinary actions on behalf of the public. The public recognizes the value of this work: **more than 2/3 of voters trust licensing boards to protect their safety and welfare.**

What’s the Issue? Despite their value to professionals and the public, some misguided proposals would weaken licensing boards by consolidating boards for various professions, altering the composition of the boards which would reduce expertise, or otherwise limiting their ability to function effectively. These are policy measures with **imagined benefits** and **real consequences**.

1

IMAGINED BENEFIT: **Consolidating boards will make licensing more efficient.**

REAL CONSEQUENCE: **Consolidating boards will create delays for aspiring professionals.**

Merging boards results in lengthier processes, delays, and frustration for aspiring professionals. A consolidated board is slower to make decisions, not faster. Reaching a consensus on complex licensure matters and statutes is more challenging when multiple professions are forced to agree on decisions.

2

IMAGINED BENEFIT: **Changing board composition will increase public input.**

REAL CONSEQUENCE: **Changing board composition will replace and weaken subject matter expertise.**

Increasing public representation is a worthy goal but it cannot come at the cost of eliminating critical expertise. Board composition proposals would force subject matter experts off the boards, not add additional seats for new public members. Without adequate subject matter expertise on the boards, critical profession-specific details could be overlooked, posing real risks to the public.

3

IMAGINED BENEFIT: **Minimizing licensing boards conserves public dollars.**

REAL CONSEQUENCE: **Minimizing licensing boards weakens a public service that costs taxpayers nothing.**

Licensing boards work for the public at no cost to the public. They are financially self-sustaining and are funded by the professions – not taxpayers. Minimizing the role of the boards and compromising their ability to function effectively offers no benefit to the public while increasing the risk of harm.

TL;DR: State lawmakers should pause and reconsider the facts. For many so-called “board reform” proposals, the imagined benefits are just that – imaginary, while the negative consequences are all too real. Undermining licensing boards defeats the sole purpose of licensing: to keep the public safe.

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