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Oregon Senate Committee on Rules

Confirmation Questions for Oregon Board of Psychologist Examiners

Senators:

Due to an unfortunate experience of a friend of mine, I've had to take a close look at the Oregon Board of Psychologist Examiners. Capsule summary: It's a good thing that the terms of five of the nine members expire this year.

I have prepared a few questions that I'd like to ask nominees, if I were on your committee.

- 1. How did you decide to apply for a position on the OBPE? How did you hear about the opening?** [Oregon's psychologist community reflects a broad range of approaches and expertise, but the OBPE tries to recruit only those who think as they do. To limit competition, they refuse to announce upcoming board openings in their newsletter, on their Web site, or on their mailing list. This leaves the psychology profession largely unrepresented.]
- 2. What would be an appropriate penalty for a first-time offender, for example, a licensee who used the abbreviation "PsyA" for "Psychologist Associate"?** [The Board routinely assesses savage penalties against people they dislike. For the infraction described above, they assessed a \$10,000 fine and a one-year suspension for this a couple of years ago.]
- 3. At what point, in an investigation, is it appropriate to urge someone to shut down their practice?** [The current policy is to attempt this during the initial phone call, before the investigation has truly begun. See <http://unlicensed-practitioner.com/what-does-bullying-from-the-psychology-board-sound-like/>]
- 4. Do you feel good about adopting the positions of the American Psychological Association wholesale?** [The current Board rejects the idea that "We do things differently in Oregon" and is pretty much captive to the APA.]
- 5. To what extent will your decisions about licensing be based on research on therapeutic effectiveness?** [The psychology profession does a great deal of research into therapeutic effectiveness, but the results of this research have little impact on regulations. This may have something to do with the lack of compelling evidence that a PhD psychologist is a better therapist than a "lesser professional."]
- 6. As the newest member of the Board, if you don't agree with the unanimous opinion of the other, more experienced members, do you nevertheless have the moral courage to vote against them? Every time?**