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On Behalf Of:
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The Board's responsibility is to protect the public, and thus the reason for being transparent regarding ethical and legal violations. The public/clients need a mechanism from which they can find out if a pre-licensed or licensed professional has violated an ethical principle or law. It is common and expected, across the states, that violations will be easily accessible to the public. This is actually part of the deterrent for bad behavior. And this information can be used in graduate classes of professional law and ethics so that students (the next generation of professionals) are aware of the behaviors that can harm clients and their own career. It's also important to note that unfounded complaints are not listed on these data banks. The current system of identifying professionals who have received discipline is, unfortunately, substandard and biased. In essence, if your last name begins with an "A", you will always be listed first for anyone who wants to find out about professionals who have received discipline. My proposal would be to have a searchable system so that clients could input the names of their therapist/counselor to find out if they have received discipline. I think the data base should also be searchable based upon type of violation and the seriousness of the discipline. There are minor infractions and major infractions that lead to very different disciplinary actions. I'm not opposed to some minor infractions being unsearchable to the public, but they should be available to disciplinary committees on the Board. Those infractions may actually point to a pattern of behavior that needs to be available to disciplinary committees so that they can determine whether it's relevant to current complaints. My view is that the whole point of the discipline process is to help therapists/counselors receive remediation so they don't harm their clients or their own career. Therefore, the disciplinary system needs to be as transparent as possible so that both clients and therapists/counselors are aware of the process and outcomes.