

Good morning Speaker Frierson and commission members, my name is Jake Wiskerchen. I am the current chair of the Board of Examiners for Marriage and Family Therapists and Clinical Professional Counselors, and I am here on my board's behalf.

Today we have a reg before you for adoption that is the culmination of a little more than two years' worth of effort, the past 11 months of which were spent authoring, workshopping, amending, drafting, re-drafting, and finalizing. This is my first time participating in such a process and apparently the board president is not supposed to be the one who spends all those bleary-eyed late nights in front of his computer screen while neglecting both his small business and his small children. Or so I am told. Regardless I am happy to be here, at this point, hopefully never to do it again.

Our Board has, as you are undoubtedly aware, toiled in the throes of dysfunction for many years. The 46 pages you have before you in the form of R094-18A represent necessary updates, tweaks, and dust-offs to bring our profession current and in alignment with national standards so that Nevada no longer has to dwell in the cellar of behavioral health access and care. Much of our dead-last ranking can be attributed to faulty licensing board processes. With these changes to NAC - along with what I hope will be some statutory changes next spring - I anticipate not only pulling out of the bottom but even, dare I say, rising to the top.

My board has many people to thank along the way, which is why I am taking the mic now and I hope that they are either listening, as I know at least two are, or will hear about it later.

Government employees have a long and storied reputation of being pedantic foot-draggers who lack in customer service skill. However, my reality during this process could not be further from that perception. Being mindful of time, I will run through a few people who have been consistently patient with my board and/or went out of their way to help once they heard our cry.

The first is Rocky Cooper and his team with the audit division. When I first assumed the chairship we were an absolute disaster and the guidance we received from you and your folks absolutely illuminated a path to increased transparency, function, and accountability. You didn't have to be as gracious as you were, but you chose to anyway because that is just the nature of your character. Thank you.

In a similar vein, Mark Richards and Warren Lowman at the governor's finance office were equally gracious in their understanding and generous with their input and tutelage. Thanks to those gentlemen as well.

Next is Diana Estey at State IT. Because for many months we had but a single functioning staff person in our office in Vegas, and a president doubling as executive director, posting agendas was a major challenge. Diana and her team worked after hours with us and patiently assisted through computer crashes, email server failure, and barely meeting deadlines at the last minute. You saved our profession many times. Second to last - and certainly not least - is our series of deputy attorneys general who served as our legal counsel. The revolving door turned out to be seamless in its guidance, direction, and advice, starting with Brett Kandt, followed by Rosalie Bordelove, and culminating with Henna Rasul, although Sarah Bradley found herself sprinkled in along the way. Their flexibility and understanding, coupled with their impressive knowledge, has truly helped us revolutionize the way that we will operate in the future.

And finally, from someone who had no reason to assist in the way that he did, from the legal division here at LCB: Michael Morton. After three public workshops and one hearing on this reg spanning 10 months, when it came to the end, I needed some serious help. Mike practically held my hand through the forms, filing, and amendments, which I needed because by the time we were ready for the hearing, I was burnt.

Mike says he was "just doing his job" but that humility belies a work ethic and a spirit of cooperation and collaboration that, in my experience,

pervades most state employees. The negative impression that most people retain of the so-called behind-the-scenes government worker is, in my experience, completely false. Perhaps some people use that phrase to shirk accountability or duck real effort, but not in my experience. Not over the past two years. Without these people “just doing their jobs,” my board would not be here today and Nevada’s behavioral health care broadly would continue to suffer.

So, to Mike and everyone else I contacted - including those I neglected to mention here, keep it up. Your work matters. To me, to my colleagues, and to the three million citizens of Nevada. You are nothing short of spectacular and as a taxpayer, you make me proud.