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March 2026

Board of Directors

Association of Professional Behavior Analysts (APBA)

Dear Members of the APBA Board,

I write as a credentialed behavior analyst in independent practice — the exact constituency APBA was founded to represent — to ask a question APBA's own board should be asking itself: is APBA still what it was founded to be?

APBA was established in 2007 to give individual credentialed practitioners a professional voice independent of the organizations that employ them. APBA and associated leaders played a significant role in helping providers navigate the emerging insurance reimbursement infrastructure for ABA services. Jon Bailey and the founding board were researchers and clinician-scientists with no financial stake in any provider organization. That independence was not incidental to APBA's mission. It was the mission.

What the Current Picture Shows

APBA has co-published guidelines with CASP — a 501(c)(6) trade association governed entirely by executives of large, multi-state provider companies. A current APBA board member simultaneously serves on CASP's Documentation SIG and the ACQ Standards Committee. A past APBA board president co-chairs CASP's Client Outcomes SIG and serves as an ACQ Standards Committee subject matter expert. APBA sits alongside CASP at the ABA Coding Coalition table where billing code decisions affecting every practitioner in this field are made.

At APBA's 2026 annual convention, the organization gave its Jerry Shook Award — named after Jerry Shook, founder of the BACB and member of APBA's own founding board — to Mariel Fernandez, CASP's Vice President of Government Affairs, who joined CASP directly from BlueSprig Pediatrics, a KKR-backed private equity corporation among the largest ABA provider companies in the country.

Taken together, these facts describe an organization that has moved — without any explicit vote of its membership — into deep institutional alignment with the trade association and corporate interests its founders created it to be independent from.

The Fork

Two paths are available. The first is genuine recommitment to independence: removing board members from CASP's standards committees, establishing clear policy independence from CASP on credentialing questions, and being willing to take public

positions that conflict with CASP's lobbying interests when practitioners need APBA to do so.

The second path leads somewhere APBA's founders would not recognize — an organization functioning as CASP's professional legitimacy arm. A professional membership association providing the credentialed-practitioner veneer that a trade association cannot provide for itself.

APBA is, at this moment, the only organization structurally positioned to speak for individual credentialed practitioners independently of the financial interests now dominating the field's governance. If APBA does not fill that role, it goes unfilled. The practitioners who founded APBA built something important. The practitioners who need it today are asking whether it still exists.

A detailed position statement documenting these concerns is available at abaaccountabilityproject.org.

Respectfully submitted,

[Your Name]

[Credentials]

[Organization]

[Contact Information]