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APC members’ responses to the Board’s decision to withdraw from the merger discussion

The recent letter from Wendy Cadge and George Fitchett to the APC Board regarding its decision to withdraw from the merger talks with ACPE included a place for people to share their contact information to receive further information and make a comment.

* 385 people responded to the interest form within a few days days of it being made public
* Of these, 219 (57 %) indicated they were APC members
* Of these APC members, 84 (38%) wrote comments

In their comments, the APC members:

* thanked us for the letter and said they supported the concerns expressed in the letter
  + several expressed interest in co-signing the letter
* many wrote that they supported the merger
  + many said they were shocked and disappointed by the Boards’ decision to withdraw from the merger talks
  + they asked the APC Board to be transparent and provide reasons for their decision
  + a number wrote that the APC should poll its members to determine their support for the merger
  + several members wrote that they were dropping their membership or considering dropping it because of the Board’s decision

Here are a sample of the comments the APC members wrote:

*I want to merge; I want to vote; I felt blind-sighted by the decision*

*I fully agree with your statement and would be glad to add my name to the document.*

*I’m not planning to renew my membership specifically due to the failed merger.*

*Thank you for the letter in response to APC's withdrawal from merger conversations. I am disheartened by the boards decision not to go ahead with the merger and felt silenced by their response to this letter, uninterested in what I, as a member, might think. Please keep me informed.*

*[I am a ] member of both ACPE & APC and was shocked at the sudden withdrawal of APC from the process. Happy to do anything I can to try and get the conversation started again!*

*I was disappointed to hear of the 'stop' decision as it seemed to come 'out of the blue'. I continue to support the merger and expect us to get past the fiduciary concerns.*

*I was dismayed at the sudden drop of merger talks by APC as I had been looking forward to a stronger, unified organization to advocate for professional chaplaincy.*

*I agree wholeheartedly with your letter. I am a current state representative for APC and I have not known what to do with the lack of transparency and my disappointment. Thank you for taking this stand.*

*I am in the process of board certification, scheduled for my interview this February. I am curious if you have considered drafting a petition that board certified members of APC could sign in support of this merger?*

*I am a retired life member of APC. My membership in ACPE and APC goes back fifty years and I have participated in several ways with both groups. You are asking many thoughtful and direct questions that need to be answered to determine why the act of shunning ACPE was implemented at this time.*

*As a new chaplaincy researcher, I was counting on the merger to advance EBP [evidence-based practice] practice in chaplaincy. I am utterly disappointed in the unexplained decision by the APC board, and therefore, will not pursue a BCC certification at this time.*

*As a recent M.Div. graduate, I was hopeful about this merge as it seems to be a more effective way for students to understand the board certification process. Additionally, a merger and simpler process would encourage more divinity student to join the profession as they feel called to do so.*

*I fully agree with the letter. I am deeply disappointed with the reasoning of APC. There is no clear reasoning, and the APC membership has been taken out of the process.*

*I have been concerned about how and why the merger failed and would like to hear response from APC leadership.*

*I strongly support the merger and I am extremely disappointed with the decision to withdraw from the process.*

*I was disturbed by the abrupt withdrawal and have concerns about the direction of the organization.*

*I would have signed to this letter if it was known to me. Where do i find the opportunity to do so?*

*Please add my name to the list of APC members in favor of re-engaging with the ACPE and continuing the work of planning for a merger. Please proceed as planned and have the membership decide if we merge, not a board only decision. As a member, I am disappointed that my voice in the decision was not considered via vote of the membership. I am in favor of the merge and believe it is the best option for advancing our discipline of spiritual care.*