

From: [Sunset Advisory Commission](#)
To: [Elizabeth Jones](#)
Subject: FW: Public Input Form for Agencies Under Review (Private/Before Publication)
Date: Tuesday, June 21, 2022 8:07:58 AM

From: Texas Sunset Advisory Commission <sunset@sunset.texas.gov>
Sent: Monday, June 20, 2022 6:16 PM
To: Sunset Advisory Commission <Sunset.AdvisoryCommission@sunset.texas.gov>
Subject: Public Input Form for Agencies Under Review (Private/Before Publication)

Submitted on Mon, 06/20/2022 - 17:12

Submitted by: Visitor

Submitted values are:

Choose the agency that you would like to provide input about
[Texas Commission on Environmental Quality](#)

Public Comments

1

First Name

Janet

Last Name

Mattern

Title

citizen

Organization you are affiliated with

self

Email

City

Fort Worth

State

Texas

Your Comments or Concerns

My Concerns are expressed in the attached file.

Your Proposed Solution

My Proposed Solutions are provided in the attached file.

Attachment

[Sunset Commission letter_June2022.docx](#) (141.32 KB)

My Comments Will Be Made Public

Yes

June 20, 2022

Robert Romig, Senior Policy Analyst
Texas Sunset Advisory Commission
PO Box 13066^[SEP]
Austin, Texas 78711

Via email to Robert.Romig@sunset.texas.gov

^[SEP]cc: Sen. Charles Schwertner, Chair, Rep. Justin Holland, Vice-Chair, Rep. Craig Goldman

Re: Comments on the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality

Dear Mr. Romig and the Texas Legislature Sunset Commission:

Recognizing that the Texas Sunset Commission is reviewing the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality (TCEQ) please accept my written testimony for consideration. My Name is Janet Mattern. I live in Fort Worth, Tarrant County (TX HD97 and SD10). Tarrant County has just been identified as the Texas County with the greatest airborne pollution risk to children in our state, due to emission of pollutants from gas and oil industry and the proximity of this activity to children in schools, daycares, homes and apartments. There are over 6600 gas wells located in Tarrant County, and more planned. In addition, we are one of the fastest growing counties in the US, with the number cars on our roads increasing every day.

Having a safe environment, clean air, water and land is a civil right that should not be taken away from any resident in Texas. Our environment must be protected to ensure public safety for our current children and future generations of Texans. Having a clean environment should not be a partisan problem. All Texans, regardless of whether you are Democrat, Republican, Libertarian or apolitical, should be able to breath clean air and drink clean water. Our children, and grandchildren should not have to fight political parties, big oil donors, and gas well giants that profit off of Texas natural resources. Unlike Public Education, environmental quality impacts every Texan. We cannot send our kids to a private school so they can avoid breathing dirty air or drinking contaminated water. We must work together to protect our limited natural resources.

Environmental Quality and the need to improve our environmental quality for the sake of our children and grandchildren is a challenge that can be addressed and corrected by TEXANS. As a proud TEXAN, who love my state and know that there is nowhere else that I would rather live; I'm challenging my Texas Legislature to roll-up your sleeves and fight for our families and future generations of Texans to ensure our state's environmental issues are identified, addressed, rectified and to ensure prevention of environmental contamination is our state's focus, rather than having to spend extra money to cleanup the hazardous waste from past years of neglect and

lack of regulatory enforcement. I challenge you to serve your state and her people and do what is necessary to improve our environment

In reviewing the Sunset Commission report on TCEQ from ten years ago, I read the same issues that we have today. I am very concerned that if the Texas Legislature fails to take action and make significant legislative changes now, in ten years time, we will again generate a similar report and self-evaluation. You have an opportunity not to push for change and to protect our state natural resources and our children's futures. I task the Sunset Commission to "PROVE ME WRONG!" Prove to our state, that you are concerned about public safety and that you have the courage and will to fight to ensure that all Texans have a right to clean air, water and land.

The oil and gas industry have never seen a regulation that they like. Who is state government supposed to serve? Are you to serve the oil and gas lobby or the people who elect you to office? The same people whose welfare you put in danger every time the oil and gas companies get away with not following regulations due to TCEQ's lack of enforcement staff. This allows this industry to further pollute our beautiful state. It's the Texas legislature's job to ensure public safety, and this can only be done by regulating industry and providing agencies like TCEQ with the staffing and authority to enforce state and federal regulations. Our state is worth it, and so are our people.

I propose consideration of the following changes:

TCEQ Mission statement: TCEQ's mission would be stronger and more effective if its sole responsibility were "to protect our state's public health and natural resources." The phrase "consistent with sustainable economic ^[L]_[SEP] development" should be deleted from TCEQ's mission statement. Protecting the environment should be TCEQ's only mission.

Need to build partnerships: The TCEQ must work with [Environmental Protection Agency] EPA to achieve its objectives. We are wasting valuable Texas resources by pursuing lawsuits with the federal government. If oil companies want to fight the EPA in court, let them. Our state must protect the environment and our limited natural resources.

Look at the big picture: TCEQ must look at the complete picture on the impact to public safety to include all industrial and vehicular pollution in an area (depending on the area and the industry involved, it could require assessing pollutants emitted in a one mile or even up to 20 mile radius) before granting industrial permits. Stop looking at just the one company in a silo that is requesting the permit. And depending on which way the wind blows, the pollution can be far worse for communities downwind than in the origin community.

Environmental justice: TCEQ must work to reduce disproportionately permitting polluting industries in communities of color and low-income.

Transparency: TCEQ must provide greater public access to information and notification of meetings, operations and more prompt reporting of observed industrial accidents, exposures, and past activities that had potential to negatively impact the environment and thereby the public.

Strong enforcement: The best policies and regulations are meaningless if they are not enforced. TCEQ must have clear authority and responsibility to enforce regulations in a manner that will ensure environmental justice, clean and safe water, air, and land. Protecting the State's public health and natural resources cannot just be in the mission statement, it must be a measurable objective by which the TCEQ is graded.

Respectfully,

Janet Mattern
6662 Saint Andrews Rd.
Fort Worth, TX 76132