

From: [Sunset Advisory Commission](#)
To: [Janet Wood](#)
Subject: FW: Public Input Form for Agencies Under Review (Public/After Publication)
Date: Wednesday, April 11, 2018 10:33:45 AM

-----Original Message-----

From: sundrupal@capitol.local [<mailto:sundrupal@capitol.local>]
Sent: Wednesday, April 11, 2018 9:50 AM
To: Sunset Advisory Commission
Subject: Public Input Form for Agencies Under Review (Public/After Publication)

Agency: TEXAS STATE BOARD EXAMINERS PROFESSIONAL COUNSELORS

First Name: Brandon

Last Name: Awbrey

Title:

Organization you are affiliated with:

Email:

City: Abilene

State: Texas

Your Comments About the Staff Report, Including Recommendations Supported or Opposed:

I agree that something has to be done to adequately support the allied mental health professions. As a counselor educator many of my students applying for provisional licensing are waiting months to be approved to go to work. It is a close call whether they will have to start paying student loans back after graduation or be allowed to work as a counselor first. This is not a great selling point to draw talented individuals to the profession when the same skills can be applied in other fields of endeavor without undue financial hardship. Texas is potentially losing talented mental health providers when it can scarcely afford to.

This is not the fault of the great people providing administrative services to our field. They are forced into antiquated ways of processing paperwork, fielding questions or complaints, not to mention they are inadequately supported financially. Professionals pay a licensing fee which does not directly support the activities of the board. I recently bought a fishing license online from TPWD and was able to go out that afternoon and enjoy time with my daughters. The temporary license was distributed electronically, my information had been stored in a database for easy renewal or confirmation, and though the website said it would take up to 30 days for my official paperwork to arrive it was in my mailbox in less than 3 business days. The technology does exist to ease the backlog of licensing and license upgrade issues, and free resources up for complaint investigations. A portion of the licensing fee that counselors pay should be dedicated to the administration of the licensing process. If money can be dedicated from hunting and fishing licenses it should not be difficult to require that same courtesy by statute.

"Justice delayed is justice denied" for those with ethical complaints against a clinician. Our citizens have a right to swift resolution in complaint cases, and our professionals deserve not to have to wait months to begin working in a career they have spent 6-7 years preparing for.

Any Alternative or New Recommendations on This Agency: I fully support the combining of resources to form a consolidated mental health agency exactly as proposed by the last Sunset Review. I do not support oversight of the

board that is exclusively public members, as that is not the model employed by any other healthcare board in the state. While it is important to have public members of the board and public oversight, it is imperative that professionals who understand the nature of the work serve in conjunction with public members. While the boards themselves have work to do to align rules and regulations with national standards and streamline processes of their own, the findings of the last Sunset Review are still as relevant and the needs identified have not diminished.

My Comment Will Be Made Public: I agree