

From: [Sunset Advisory Commission](#)
To: [Brittany Calame](#)
Subject: FW: Public Input Form for Agencies Under Review (Public/After Publication)
Date: Friday, August 24, 2018 12:25:04 PM

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

From: sunset@sunset.texas.gov <sunset@sunset.texas.gov> On Behalf Of Texas Sunset Commission
Sent: Friday, August 24, 2018 11:28 AM
To: Sunset Advisory Commission <Sunset@sunset.texas.gov>
Subject: Public Input Form for Agencies Under Review (Public/After Publication)

Agency: TEXAS BOARD PROFESSIONAL GEOSCIENTISTS TBPG

First Name: Jason

Last Name: Burwell

Title: Operations Geologist

Organization you are affiliated with:

Email:

City: Spring

State: Texas

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

I am a geologist who has recently moved to Houston. I have a B.S. and an M.S. in geoscience. The P.G. Certification is theoretically beneficial, but, in practice, is flawed. It is my understanding that the two main points of the certification are to 1) prove a geologist's knowledge for a geology-related position dealing with "non-exempt" public practices, and 2) keep the geologist's knowledge up to modern standards.

The issue with with number #1 is that rather than tackling specific topics for regulated positions, the test is more designed as a general, fundamental knowledge test in geoscience. Topics range from structure, petrology, geomorphology, tectonics, stratigraphy, paleontology, hydrology, soil, and economic/mining geology (an industry exempted from P.G. licensure). Didn't I prove my general knowledge of all of these geologic subjects when getting my degrees in geoscience? As all are topics required to earn a geology degree. The PG licensure essentially means that I need to pay to prove that I received an education in geoscience. Again, isn't that what my degrees are for? On-the-job training in a regulated industry for a specific position is more beneficial than a test that questions your broad geologic understanding.

Additionally, the exemptions for work requiring a license are broad, extending to the mining, oil and gas industries, and research by the state or federal government, non-profit, or for-profit organization.

The problem I have with #2 is that most people who have a P.G. in Texas were grandfathered into the program and never taken the expensive and time consuming exams. Their jobs have been done with grandfathered licensure and with no safety complaints regarding the public practice of geology. What does that say about the usefulness of those exams? In addition, once you take the exam, you have to pay a \$200 fee a year to keep the license valid, with the possibility of the board requiring a license holder to "participate in continuing professional education." This actually breaks down to 15 hours of "continuing education activities" which include attending conference and society meetings which may or may not have any bearing on your practice or industry. Broadly, geologic conferences and societies are beneficial and provide value. However, attending a conference is not necessarily indicative of updating

your geologic knowledge to modern practices. Thank you for taking my comments into consideration.

Any Alternative or New Recommendations on This Agency: None.

My Comment Will Be Made Public: I agree