



August 15, 2018

Ken Levine
Director, Sunset Advisory Commission
P.O. Box 13066
Austin, Texas 78711

Dear Mr. Levine:

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on those portions of the Texas Funeral Services Commission's (TFSC) Sunset staff report that pertain to the Department of State Health Services (DSHS). We appreciate the hard work and thoughtfulness your staff put into reviewing each state agency, to help ensure Texas government operates as efficiently and effectively as possible.

Thank you for your staff's willingness to consider DSHS comments during the report's drafting process. The report contains reference to DSHS in two portions of the report: Issue 1, Gaps in enforcing sanitation requirements, and Issue 1, Access to needed death records information. DSHS agrees with the Sunset staff assessments that these interactions with TFSC can and should be improved. DSHS also supports the intent of DSHS-related Recommendation 1.1, although DSHS does not believe statute change is necessary to carry out the recommendation. The Department would prefer to begin addressing these issues immediately in cooperation with TFSC.

DSHS looks forward to working with TFSC to improve the two agencies' partnership. If you have any further questions, please contact Rachael Hendrickson, Director of Government Affairs. She may be reached at (512) 776-3765 or at rachael.hendrickson@dshs.texas.gov.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "John Hellerstedt". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

John Hellerstedt, M.D.