

From: [Sunset Advisory Commission](#)
To: [Janet Wood](#)
Subject: FW: Public Input Form for Agencies Under Review (Public/After Publication)
Date: Wednesday, April 11, 2018 7:45:20 AM

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

From: sundrupal@capitol.local [<mailto:sundrupal@capitol.local>]
Sent: Tuesday, April 10, 2018 11:15 PM
To: Sunset Advisory Commission
Subject: Public Input Form for Agencies Under Review (Public/After Publication)

Agency: TEXAS STATE BOARD EXAMINERS PROFESSIONAL COUNSELORS

First Name: Elise

Last Name: Douglas

Title: LPC

Organization you are affiliated with: Texas Counseling Association, Northeast Texas Counseling Association

Email:

City: Cooper

State: Texas

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

The Texas State Board of Examiners of Professional Counselors and the other behavioral health licensing boards are badly needed not only to help protect the public, but also to protect mental health professionals and their licenses. However, the current system needs some modifications and some streamlining. It is on life support with the current structure instead of functioning in a healthy manner. Student counselors are waiting weeks and months for their temporary licenses in order to begin their internships. One local colleague finished all of her requirements for a regular license, then waited six (6) months for that license to be approved so she could begin applying to insurance companies to be a provider. Her life was in limbo for those six months.

The idea of the combining all of the mental health boards in the Behavioral Health Executive Council may be an excellent way to solve some of the State's problems. The work of the different boards could be streamlined with regard to paperwork, investigations, complaint resolution and licensing. However, the BHEC needs to include one public and one professional member from each member board in order to maintain a balance on the Council. The professional members can bring great insight into what it is like to practice as a mental health professional in the State of Texas. These individuals can also communicate back to their professions in clear language the challenges and progress of the Council.

I am opposed to leaving the system as it currently exists with all separate mental health boards housed in HHSC because it simply is not working. It is not protecting anyone, the public or the professionals, because it is so bogged down and understaffed. If Texas is to move forward and stay on the cutting edge of providing quality mental health services, something needs to be done--and soon. The Behavioral Health Executive Council offers the best opportunity to move into the future with better services for all.

Thank you for your attention to my comments. Elise Douglas, MS, LPC, NCC
Cooper, Texas

Any Alternative or New Recommendations on This Agency: Please implement the idea of the Behavioral Health Executive Council as it will provide better oversight and move all of the licensing boards forward instead of being mired in HHSC.

My Comment Will Be Made Public: I agree