

# THSA



TEXAS HEALTH SERVICES AUTHORITY

October 17, 2014

Ken Levine  
Director  
Texas Sunset Advisory Commission  
P.O. Box 13066  
Austin, Texas 78711-3066

Dear Mr. Levine:

In regard to the Commission's October 3 letter requesting the Texas Health Services Authority's (THSA's) position on the issues presented in the Sunset Staff Report, the THSA submits the following response:

## **Agency Response to Recommendation 15.1**

The THSA takes no stance on this recommendation. The THSA appreciates the confidence that Sunset staff has shown by recommending that the THSA may continue without government oversight. As noted in the Commission's staff report, the THSA could continue performing its core functions without the need of a state statute.

Below is a list of policy issues the Sunset Advisory Commission may want to consider in adopting Recommendation 15.1:

- **New and evolving market.** Health information exchange is a new and evolving market that facilitates the secure exchange of health information. There may be a state interest monitoring the evolution of this new market.
- **\$30 million investment.** Since 2010, Texas invested nearly \$30 million dollars in stimulus funds to support the expansion of health information exchange in Texas. There may be a state interest in monitoring this investment.
- **Government participation.** DSHS and HHSC plan to leverage HIETexas as a method for connecting with providers. There may be a state interest in maintaining oversight of the exchange of information through these connections.
- **Public Accountability.** Health information exchange involves the exchange of patients' sensitive health information. The state may have an interest in monitoring the exchange of this sensitive information.

- **Rural Texas.** As a public-private entity, the THSA is charged with supporting health information exchange activity statewide, including areas of the state, such as rural Texas, where HIT/HIE adoption has been lower than in other areas. The THSA plans to continue supporting all areas of the state, but there may be a state interest in ensuring that this is done.

I look forward to providing further testimony at the Commission's public hearing scheduled for November 12 and 13. In the meantime, please do not hesitate to contact me with any further questions or comments.

Best regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Tony Gilman', with a stylized flourish extending to the right.

Tony Gilman  
Chief Executive Officer