

Alliance of Community Assistance
 Ministries, Inc. (ACAM)
 Amerigroup
 Association for Family and
 Community Integrity, Inc.
 Behavioral Health Alliance of Texas
 Bering Omega Community Services
 Care for Elders
 Career and Recovery Resources, Inc.
 Catholic Charities of the Archdiocese
 of Galveston-Houston
 CHILDREN AT RISK
 Children's Defense Fund
 Coalition for the Homeless of
 Houston/Harris Co., Inc.
 Coalition of Behavioral Health Services
 Collaborative for Children
 Communities In Schools
 Community Family Centers
 Community Health Choice, Inc.
 Covenant House of Texas
 DePelchin Children's Center
 Depression & BiPolar Support Alliance
 Greater Houston (DBSA)
 Easter Seals of Greater Houston, Inc.
 Episcopal Health Charities
 Family Services of Greater Houston
 Fort Bend Regional Council on
 Substance Abuse, Inc.
 GEO Care, LLC
 Good Neighbor Healthcare Center
 Greater Houston Healthconnect
 Harris County Healthcare Alliance
 Healthcare for the Homeless-Houston
 Houston Area Association for the Education
 of Young Children
 Houston Area Community Services
 Houston Area Women's Center
 Houston Center for Literacy (formerly Houston
 READ Commission)
 Houston Food Bank
 Houston Methodist Hospital
 IntraCare Behavioral Health
 Jewish Family Service
 League of Women Voters Houston
 Legacy Community Health, Services Inc.
 Lesbian Health Initiative
 March of Dimes
 Memorial Assistance Ministries (MAM)
 Memorial Hermann Healthcare System
 Mental Health America
 of Greater Houston
 NAMI Gulf Coast
 NAMI Greater Houston
 National Association of Social Workers-Houston
 Neighborhood Centers, Inc.
 New Hope Housing, Inc.
 Northwest Assistance Ministries
 Phoenix Houses of Texas, Inc.
 Planned Parenthood Gulf Coast
 Presbyterian Children's Homes and Services
 Santa Maria Hostel, Inc.
 SEARCH Homeless Services
 Spaulding for Children
 Spring Branch Community Health Center
 Springfield College School of Human Services
 St. Joseph House
 Texas Children's Hospital
 Texas Health Institute
 Texas Hunger Initiative
 The Arc of Greater Houston
 The Council on Alcohol & Drugs Houston
 The Immunization Partnership
 The Living Bank
 The Network of Behavioral
 Health Providers
 The Rose
 The Walk for Mental Health Awareness-Houston
 The Women's Home
 United Way of Greater Houston
 Vita-Living, Inc.
 Wesley Community Center
 Worklife Institute
 YMCA of Greater Houston

One Voice Texas

A Collaborative for Health & Human Services



TO: Sunset Commission Members

Jane Nelson, Chair
 Brian Birdwell
 Donna Campbell
 Juan "Chuy" Hinojosa
 Charles Schwertner, M.D.
 Dawn Buckingham, M.D.

Four Price, Vice Chair
 Cindy Burkett
 Harold V. Dutton, Jr.
 Larry Gonzales
 Richard Peña Raymond
 Tom Luce

FROM: Laurie Glaze, LMSW
Executive Director

RE: Response to Sunset Staff Report with Hearing Materials – Health and Human Services Commission and System Issues, November 2014

DATE: 21 November 2014

One Voice Texas and its individual members have actively participated in the Sunset Review process throughout 2014 including hosting information forums between stakeholders and Sunset Staff, responding to surveys, submitting written recommendations to Sunset staff, and meeting individually with Sunset staff. We are very appreciative to the Sunset staff and members of the Sunset Commission for their diligence and efforts to better understand and make recommendations on a very complex system.

In its report on the Health and Human Services Commission (HHSC), Sunset staff recommend consolidation and centralization of some services that, under House Bill 2292 (2003), were intended to eliminate redundancy in an effort to save money and increase overall efficiency. While some of this has been accomplished, much is still incomplete.

In its response to the Sunset staff report on HHSC, One Voice Texas supports the following actions:

- Creation of electronic records systems that enables community providers to accurately relay services provided to clients and includes specific data needed for reporting provider outcomes;
- Data collection among all agencies that is coordinated and regularly reviewed to determine purpose, internal utilization, coordination with contract providers, value of data, and continued need;
- Improved sharing of relevant information regarding clients who receive services from multiple public systems;
- Creation of standardized contracting, regulatory, reporting, and billing systems. Community providers report numerous difficulties including multiple points of contact, delayed announcements of applications, limited feedback on deliverables, cumbersome renewal processes, contradictory information from contracting and regulatory sides, modification of contract terms, and lapses in funding. All of these challenges create inefficiencies for community providers and limit the ability of both providers and the state agencies to identify consumers who may be involved with multiple systems;

- Strengthening the ability of the public to report concerns about policy and practice by increasing the authority and detailing the function of the ombudsman office in HHSC through consolidation of ombudsman offices;
- The 1998 Sunset Commission recommendation to consolidate all prevention functions within one department has never been realized and prevention services across state agencies remain fragmented in ways that lead to inefficient funding structures and fragmented services and gaps caused by agencies not communicating about joint issues. Prevention should be seen as an issue of child and family well-being versus an effort that can be divided into categories of child abuse prevention, juvenile delinquency prevention, etc. However, it is concerning that more prevention functions would be moved into an existing Prevention and Early Intervention Division that has struggled to maintain adequate funding and expertise to meet its objectives;
- Continuation of advisory councils that are intended to be the local voices to the state agencies and are extremely beneficial to consumers, community stakeholders, etc. As with other efforts to bring efficiencies and eliminate redundancy, these advisory councils need to coordinate and undergo regular reviews to determine purpose, utilization, coordination with community stakeholders, value of council information, and continued need.

Lastly, we ask that the Sunset Commission and the 84th Texas Legislature continue to always be mindful of the critical need for strategic planning that includes expertise from inside the agencies but also independent organizational expertise that can guide the process and serve to ensure Texas invests its money wisely.

Again, on behalf of the 100+ member organizations and Board of Directors of One Voice Texas, we thank you for all that you are doing to strengthen the health and human services delivery system.

Contact Information:

Laurie Glaze

713.333.2232

lglaze@onevoicetexas.org