

From: [Sunset Advisory Commission](#)
To: [Dawn Roberson](#)
Subject: FW: Form submission from: Public Input Form for Agencies Under Review (Public/After Publication)
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From: sundrupal@capitol.local [<mailto:sundrupal@capitol.local>]
Sent: Tuesday, June 24, 2014 4:11 PM
To: Sunset Advisory Commission
Subject: Form submission from: Public Input Form for Agencies Under Review (Public/After Publication)

Submitted on Tuesday, June 24, 2014 - 16:11

Agency: UNIVERSITY INTERSCHOLASTIC LEAGUE UIL

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

The Taylor Hooton Foundation is widely recognized as the national leader on the subject of anabolic steroid use by the youth of the US, Canada and Latin America. So, it is with great interest an article in the Dallas Morning News this morning reporting on the recommendation that your commission is making to "sunset" steroid testing of high school students. The article stated:

Limited Funding and Changing Attitudes Have Reduced the Need For and Effectiveness of the State's Steroid Testing Program The state's steroid testing program began in 2008 with the goal of reducing illegal steroid use through random testing of high school student athletes and educating students, parents, and coaches about the dangers of steroid use. Texas is now one of only three states to test for steroids, spending \$9.3 million over the life of the program while averaging positive test results of less than one-third of 1 percent.

Since the program began, changing attitudes in Texas and nationally toward steroid use have resulted in reduced use among teens. Additionally, the Legislature has reduced funding for the program each biennium, resulting in fewer tests being conducted and diminishing the program's deterrent effect. Discontinuing the steroid testing program, but maintaining the educational component would ensure coaches and students remain aware of the dangers of steroids while saving the State \$1 million over the next biennium. Individual school districts would continue to be allowed to implement their own drug testing programs at the local level if needed.

I have a few questions to address to this commission and may want to testify in opposition to this Sunset recommendation:

1. "Changing attitudes in Texas and nationally toward steroid use have resulted in reduced use among teens:: exactly what led the commission to the conclusion that youth

steroid usage is down? That conclusion is diametrically opposite to the results of recent studies. For example, the most current study that is available is from the University of Minnesota and their numbers indicate that admitted usage rates for middle school and high school boys is at 5.9%. Usage rates for girls is 4.6%. Those number do NOT reflect a decrease in usage rates among teens. Please share with me the study(s) that have been done in Texas that show that steroid usage among middle and high school students has declined.

2. "Maintaining the educational component would ensure coaches and students remain aware of the dangers of steroids": to what educational component are you referring? To date, we have not seen any evidence of an effective education program targeted at the youth of the State of Texas.

3. You reported that less than one third of one percent tested positive. I'm not surprised - the program was implemented poorly and it was predictable to any knowledgeable observer that few, if any young people, would ever test positive the way the program was constructed. While Texas has tested large number of students, those tests have been weak and VERY easy to defeat. We are making a fundamental and serious mistake reading into the testing numbers anything related to usage rates.

With whom can I speak to discuss these and other questions that we have regarding the youth steroid testing program?

I look forward to hearing back from you.

Any Alternative or New Recommendations on This Agency: Instead of terminating the testing program, consideration should be given to improving the program to make it more effective. Also, if the program is terminated, then time and effort should be invested in improving the education component such that students are effectively deterred from using anabolic steroids and other appearance and performance enhancing drugs. Our organization is ready, willing, and able to assist in this endeavor. (We have offered in the past but feel like we've been ignored.)

My Comment Will Be Made Public: I agree