

From: [Sunset Advisory Commission](#)
To: [Cecelia Hartley](#)
Subject: FW: Form submission from: Public Input Form for Agencies Under Review (Public/After Publication)
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-----Original Message-----

From: sundrupal@capitol.local [<mailto:sundrupal@capitol.local>]
Sent: Friday, October 17, 2014 1:02 AM
To: Sunset Advisory Commission
Subject: Form submission from: Public Input Form for Agencies Under Review (Public/After Publication)

Submitted on Friday, October 17, 2014 - 01:02

Agency: HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES COMMISSION HHSC

First Name: Chris

Last Name: Kyker

Title: Speaker Emeritus

Organization you are affiliated with: Texas Silver-Haired Legislature

Email:

City: Abilene

State: Texas

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

Opposed to Issue 1, Recommendation 1.1 Consolidate the five HHS system agencies into one agency called HHSC with divisions established along functional lines.

This recommendation retains functions of DADS, DARS, DSHS and DFPS, but not their identity, independent governance or public access. Without a GPS pathfinder, a private citizen would have difficulty trying to locate a functional service within an army of 45,000 staff.

Although the remainder of the section identifies numerous medical and social service programs and administrative initiatives, there is no designation of the State Unit on Aging, required to receive federal funding from the Older Americans Act. [OAA Title III. Sec 305 (a)] "The aging" is identified in the example organization chart as one of seven subsections of Medical and Social Services. There is no provision for administrative responsibilities of the State Unit on Aging, as authorized in the Older Americans Act.

Issue 1 recommendation states that "silo" syndrome would be diminished by consolidating the departments.

Drawing that conclusion is questionable for the following reasons:

1. Federal funding is allocated for specific allowable services, named in the authorization statute with specific qualifications to receive funds for eligible individuals or entities.
2. LBB identifies line item expenditures categories for state functions.
3. Rules & regulations promulgated by state agencies focus on specific services/benefits for specific individuals or entities.
4. Advocacy entities are organized to focus on a mission to benefit one population group or cause.
5. Professional and academic credentials focus on specific professions or field of expertise.

6. Volunteers tend to limit their services to specific programs or projects, frequently in silos, because of their personal interests, abilities, and commitment to public service.

7. Loyalty, tradition, purpose, empathy, culture, identity are natural characteristics of an individual or an agency.

The benefit of retaining the departments far outweighs the anticipated benefits of cost-savings. The end result of a large bureaucracy may create an atmosphere that challenges loyalty and morale of staff and the clients they serve and in time diminishes support.

Rather than destroy silos, we need to build on the loyalty generated by the

silos to make things better for all Texans. By using the

Intergovernmental Cooperation Act, HHSC could establish agreements with DADS, DARS, DSHS and DFPS to provide certain administrative functions to alleviate duplication and become more efficient. Furthermore, HHSC could develop a comprehensive and coordinated IT system with the departments to assure consistency, reliability, access of records and eligibility of clients. No wrong door could also be accomplished with an IT system to link departments.

§ Medical and Social Services

The staff review states: "As the transition legislative oversight committee and the executive commissioner organize activities within this broad division, attention should be placed at ensuring that all populations, such as persons with intellectual and developmental disabilities or behavioral health issues, as well as blind or aging populations, do not lose the visibility or attention they need."

Services for people with disabilities and the aging is one of seven programs within this block of the sample organizational chart.

The proposed Medical and Social Services division reflects little attention to the population served by the Older Americans Act. Texas' aging population has an enormous impact on just about every aspect of the Texas economy and the service delivery at all levels of society. The current population of Texans 60 years of age and older is 4.6 million or 16.7% of the total population. By 2020, the projection is 5.7 million (18.5%) and by 2040, 9.7 million (21.4 %). (DADS LAR request, FY2016-2017, administrator's statement.) That disparity is projected to grow. To preserve the identity of the aging is logical and prudent and most likely to produce the most cost-effective way for the state to define and fulfill its goals for and obligations to its senior citizens.

Any Alternative or New Recommendations on This Agency:

Options to preserve the identity of aging:

1. Add another subdivision to Medical and Social Services to be named: State Unit on Aging as explained in first paragraph of Recommendation 1.1 above; and rename the proposed subdivision to: Services for People with Disabilities.
2. OR, establish the Texas Department on Aging (TDoA) and enter into an Intergovernmental Cooperation Agreement with HHSC for Computer Services and Out-Sourced Services

My Comment Will Be Made Public: I agree