

**From:** [Sunset Advisory Commission](#)  
**To:** [Trisha Linebarger](#)  
**Subject:** FW: Public Input Form for Agencies Under Review (Public/After Publication)  
**Date:** Tuesday, May 22, 2018 1:07:05 PM

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

From: sundrupal@capitol.local [<mailto:sundrupal@capitol.local>]  
Sent: Tuesday, May 22, 2018 12:34 PM  
To: Sunset Advisory Commission <Sunset@sunset.texas.gov>  
Subject: Public Input Form for Agencies Under Review (Public/After Publication)

Agency: DEPARTMENT PUBLIC SAFETY DPS

First Name: Martha

Last Name: Latta

Title: Owner

Organization you are affiliated with: RideSafeBigBend

Email:

City: Alpine

State: Texas

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

It seems the main take-away from the Commission's report is questioning whether or not the State should be funding a motorcycle safety training program. That the State shouldn't be funding it was decided long ago when the legislature set an additional fee to be collected on new and renewing motorcycle driving licenses to be held in an account that would fund the program. That account currently has 16 million dollars in it. Why hasn't this money been used for it's stated purpose?

I am the owner of a business that contracts with the Texas DPS to provide motorcycle safety training. We have been operating in Alpine, Texas since 2001. Our students come from all over the region: El Paso, Midland-Odessa, Pecos, Fort Stockton, Fort Davis, Marfa, Marathon, Terlingua, Presidio, Big Bend National Park, Alpine, and even some from Central Texas who make the training weekend part of a mini-vacation. We have 9 state-owned motorcycles which we maintain. My husband is the sole instructor, so each class is limited to 8 students. Most classes average 5 students. We have an agreement with the Alpine School District to use the parking lot at the high school for our training range. We offer the class once per month, resulting in about 10 classes per year. The cost per student is \$200. Out of this fee we pay insurance, fuel and repairs to the motorcycles, classroom supplies, online course fee per student, and an annual donation to the AISD for the use of their facilities. In addition to the minimum 16 hours to teach the course, there are easily another 6-8 hours spent doing administrative and maintenance work prior to and post class. If you do the math, you can see that this business venture is not done for the money, but rather as a public service for an activity (motorcycle riding) about which we are passionate. There is no way we would be able to afford to purchase 9 training motorcycles, helmets, range cones, etc. based on what we currently charge, which we see as what the local market will bear and the State's mandate of the maximum fee we can charge. If the Commission's recommendations are adopted by the legislature, RideSafeBigBend will be put out of business. Far West Texas is an area of the State that already is considered an "underserved region" for many State services, and the demise of the service we provide would exacerbate the current situation. I'm not sure if the Commission considered this ramification of their proposals.

Any Alternative or New Recommendations on This Agency:

If the Texas DPS is no longer interested in administering the Motorcycle Safety Unit, rather than re-homing it with the TDLR, why not approach TXDOT?

TXDOT is already concerned with motorcycle safety issues and is currently promoting "Look Twice Texas" ads on facebook and other media. If the current MSU staff were retained and simply reassigned to a different division, AND the dedicated funds were used to fund the program, this should be a reasonable solution.

As Kirk Watson and Pancho Nevarez (our region's State Rep. by the way!) are both avid motorcyclists and serve on the Sunset Commission, I wonder how much weight their opinions had regarding this issue with the other Commission members? I hope they argued for the continuance of the Motorcycle Safety Unit and the valuable service it provides in training motorcycle riders to be safe and responsible operators.

My Comment Will Be Made Public: I agree