

**From:** [sundrupal@capitol.local](mailto:sundrupal@capitol.local) on behalf of [Texas Sunset Commission](#)  
**To:** [Sunset Advisory Commission](#)  
**Subject:** Public Input Form for Agencies Under Review (Public/After Publication)  
**Date:** Tuesday, May 22, 2018 11:12:49 AM

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Agency: DEPARTMENT PUBLIC SAFETY DPS

First Name: Mike

Last Name: Latta

Title: owner,coach, motorcyclist

Organization you are affiliated with: Ride Safe Big Bend

Email:

City: Alpine

State: Texas

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

I have been a training site owner /coach for over 20 years, a 50-year motorcyclist who has been committed to safe and responsible motorcycling. The report asserts that the program financially benefits the trainers with materials that cost the public. Actually, motorcyclists support the program by the fee structure that the legislature designed. The fact that a site may have a State-furnished motorcycle allows a potential rider to learn to ride or opt out of the experience before committing to the purchase of a motorcycle. With an average of 1.8 cars/trucks per household in Texas, access to a four-wheel vehicle is much greater for someone learning to drive (if comparing the course to drivers-ed) than a motorcycle.

The report was based on the year 2017, which by comparison to the last 25 years was an exception. The program was in the process of a major curriculum change. Having been through this process before I would say it was done in a highly professional manner. To maintain the quality of the program all coaches and sites should be instructing in the same way. The time and attention paid to the transition was necessary to assure that the whole system met the same high standard. The goal is not to provide a product to our customer, such as a haircut. The goal is to provide an educational experience that helps the student be aware of the hazards and reduce them, know that they are responsible for their ongoing safety and stay alive and alert as a rider. Without consistent quality in the training of the coaches and the quality of the program in total there is always the potential for a lapse that could lead to the injury or death of a student as a new rider.

The question of should the Department be providing instruction to the coaches is not relevant. To train a potential rider is not something to be done with a variety of options. The Motorcycle Safety Foundation training suite is nationally accepted and successful. The training of coaches is centered on the MSF techniques. To use other programs or to allow a mix presents the potential for confusion, misrepresented information, the inability to meet license requirements and possible safety concerns.

Any Alternative or New Recommendations on This Agency:

As stated before the report misrepresents how the program is funded and how and when the program was reviewed.

Is there room for change, YES. Should the MSU be with the DPS, NO.

If the program is under the TDLR can it still provide the quality needed to help our new riders stay safe?

All of these are questions that should be asked by the commission. The fact that the program furnishes materials for the training sites is over-emphasized in that the legislature had previously provided a means to fund this. In the review of the provided motorcycles, the age of the units should have been looked into. Some sites are using machines that are 10-15 years old and are having to maintain these in order to meet the need of classes every 3-5 days.

The MSU could operate within the TDLR with the present staff. The staff should still provide coach training and either provide oversight, or contract for site and coach quality reviews. Another option might be the Texas Department of Transportation, as one of their focus areas is safety, and they are currently promoting the "Look Out for Us, Our Lives are Riding On it" campaign. It is imperative that the program be consistent and meets the highest standards of quality. The use of a third party review source has the potential of that party not being aware of the coaching and training standards.

The one glaring item in the report is the consistent theme of waste and poor control of the program. I cannot say this enough, I have personally paid for this program in my license fees and I will continue to be happy to. The real injustice is the Legislature's lack of self-control in retaining funds that are by law to provide for the Motorcycle Safety Program. I have seen time and time again funds that have been ear-marked for specific programs be skimmed and redirected to some other non-funded item. I am very concerned that there is \$16m in banked funding and the commission could actually question how are materials be bought and distributed, please look at the way the law is written and why.

I believe in the Motorcycle Safety Program. As a 20 year coach in a small town know that every day I may see one of my students from a past class. The goal is that I can continue to see them! If you coach in a metropolitan area this may not occur and you don't have that connection. I want to continue to provide the best way for someone to enjoy the very best training we can provide and return safely.

Thank you

My Comment Will Be Made Public: I agree