

**From:** [Sunset Advisory Commission](#)  
**To:** [Cecelia Hartley](#)  
**Subject:** FW: Form submission from: Public Input Form for Agencies Under Review (Public/After Publication)  
**Date:** Tuesday, November 18, 2014 5:22:47 PM

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

From: sundrupal@capitol.local [<mailto:sundrupal@capitol.local>]  
Sent: Tuesday, November 18, 2014 4:30 PM  
To: Sunset Advisory Commission  
Subject: Form submission from: Public Input Form for Agencies Under Review (Public/After Publication)

Submitted on Tuesday, November 18, 2014 - 16:29

Agency: TEXAS COUNCIL PURCHASING PEOPLE DISABILITIES TCPD

First Name: Tanya

Last Name: Lavelle

Title: Senior Manager of Advocacy

Organization you are affiliated with: Easter Seals Central Texas

Email: tlavelle@eastersealstx.org

City: Austin

State: Texas

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

For over 76 years, Easter Seals Central Texas has provided quality, person-centered services to adults and children with disabilities. We provide a variety of services across the lifespan including early childhood intervention services, medical rehabilitation, employment assistance, affordable housing and jobs. As the Sunset Advisory Commission prepares to make decisions regarding the future of the Texas Council on Purchasing from People with Disabilities, we feel that the most important thing is to maintain the integrity of the State Use Program. Easter Seals Central Texas is a Community Rehabilitation Program (CRP), and we work within the State Use Program to offer jobs to individuals with disabilities.

At Easter Seals we operate the Paid Job Training (PJT) program for individuals with disabilities that is supported by the State Use Program. We work with local and regional governments to execute landscaping contracts through TIBH. Participants in our PJT program are classified as full-time Easter Seals Central Texas trainees, are paid minimum wage or above and receive a benefits package. Our PJT program not only provides employment to individuals with disabilities, but also a full array of wraparound services that allows people to thrive independently in the community. We offer 24/7 access to mental health counseling by an LPC, healthy meals, computer and financial literacy classes, and assistance locating other community services like housing.

Our PJT program is a critical stepping stone for individuals with disabilities as they become self-sufficient. Many Easter Seals Central Texas employees got their start in our PJT program, and are now integral members of the Easter Seals Central Texas staff. One of our former PJT program trainees got his start with us 20 years ago and is now oversees the entire PJT program as its director. Another former trainee who began with PJT now manages our largest PJT contract.

Our PJT program truly changes lives and fosters economic growth in our community: it is made possible by the State Use Program. Any changes made to the structure or oversight of the Texas Council on Purchasing from People with Disabilities should be made only to further the mission and goals of the State Use Program, and to ensure that individuals with disabilities can work and participate meaningfully in their communities.

Any Alternative or New Recommendations on This Agency: Not at this time.

My Comment Will Be Made Public: I agree