

From: [Sunset Advisory Commission](#)
To: [Brittany Calame](#)
Subject: FW: Public Input Form for Agencies Under Review (Public/After Publication)
Date: Thursday, August 16, 2018 5:02:58 PM

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

From: sunset@sunset.texas.gov <sunset@sunset.texas.gov> On Behalf Of Texas Sunset Commission
Sent: Thursday, August 16, 2018 4:29 PM
To: Sunset Advisory Commission <Sunset@sunset.texas.gov>
Subject: Public Input Form for Agencies Under Review (Public/After Publication)

Agency: TEXAS BOARD PROFESSIONAL GEOSCIENTISTS TBPG

First Name: Beronica

Last Name: Lee-Brand

Title: Senior Geologist, P.G.

Organization you are affiliated with: INTERA, Inc.

Email:

City: Austin

State: Texas

Your Comments About the Staff Report, Including Recommendations Supported or

Opposed: I disagree with the Texas Sunset Advisory Commission staff recommendation to abolish the Texas Board of Professional Geoscientists and licensed P.G.s. As a licensed P.G. in the States of Texas (who passed the examination and was not grandfathered in) and Louisiana, working in the environmental geoscience field for 19 years, I have interpreted field screening data and laboratory analytical data for assessing soil, groundwater, surface water and air media. This data was used to determine if the media was contaminated/affected with organic, inorganic or particulate contaminants and the data was further assessed to determine the human risk exposures related to those findings based on my interpretations. These findings, provided by me to the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality

(TCEQ) as a licensed P.G. were utilized to make critical decisions on which several removal actions or remediation efforts have been conducted for the protection of the public. In the TCEQ Remediation Division Regulatory Notice dated August 20, 2004, the TCEQ requires that for reports and technical information that was generated through geoscience services or work be provided by or conducted under the direct supervision of a licensed geoscientist. This notice was provided to assure the TCEQ that they are receiving defensible data for decision making that protects the public and the environment. Without this assurance, the public and environment is at risk.

Environmental risk assessments conducted without a knowledgeable geoscientist who understands the complexity of subsurface migration pathways, contaminant behavior and exposure pathways cannot produce defensible data.

These types of assessments will produce bad data brought on by bad science.

Bad science will hurt our environment and all those that live in it, swim in it and breathe it. With so much progress made on cleaning up our environment, and Texas at the forefront of closing Superfund sites and redeveloping Brownfield sites, it is a shame that a committee may have the ability to erase the scientific hand that is guiding the assessments, clean-ups and hence the enforcement actions. Another way to evaluate the Texas Board of Professional Geoscientists would be to recognize the absence of any major environmental catastrophe in Texas over the last 17 years based upon defendable data relied upon because of the work of licensed P.G.s. One would hate to have this point be proven right by eliminating the Texas Board of Professional Geoscientists and then later identify a large community exposure to contaminants of concern due to lack of scientifically reliable data generated and interpreted

by licensed professionals. I myself have been a project manager and on-site geologist for several removal actions on residential properties where you cannot smell or see the contaminant and you do not have a known source, but the Texas Department of State Health Services has verified adverse health-affects caused by on-site soils. No enforcement actions were implemented, just a referral to the TCEQ and an emergency work authorization issued to a licensed environmental firm to proceed with a removal action with well-planned goals and objectives established in a well-defined sampling plan with well-defined confirmation sampling methodology and full site restoration so that those families can re-occupy their homes and feel safe living on their property once again. The measurable impact on public protection can easily be found in the removal action completion reports that have been prepared and sealed by many licensed Texas Professional Geoscientists. Pull those reports and ask those TCEQ project managers what they relied on to “close” a site or allow the residents to re-occupy those sites. The data is there to support the need for the Texas Board of Professional Geoscientists and the Texas Geoscience Practice Act.

Any Alternative or New Recommendations on This Agency: My recommendation is to keep the Texas Board of Professional Geoscientists and P.G. licensure process. It is the only ethical decision the committee can conclude.

My Comment Will Be Made Public: I agree