

From: [Elizabeth Jones](#)
To: [Trisha Linebarger](#)
Subject: FW: Public Input Form for Agencies Under Review (Public/After Publication)
Date: Thursday, July 9, 2020 3:49:40 PM

From: sunset@sunset.texas.gov On Behalf Of Texas Sunset Commission
Sent: Thursday, July 9, 2020 3:20:31 PM (UTC-06:00) Central Time (US & Canada)
To: Sunset Advisory Commission
Subject: Public Input Form for Agencies Under Review (Public/After Publication)

Agency: TEXAS ANIMAL HEALTH COMMISSION

First Name: Roy

Last Name: Leslie

Title: Landowner

Organization you are affiliated with: None

Email:

City: Comfort

State: Texas

Your Comments About the Staff Report, Including Recommendations Supported or Opposed: My comments below are in response to a recommendation by the Texas Deer Assc. to end the regulatory partnership between TAHC and TPWD in regard to breeder white-tailed deer.

Any Alternative or New Recommendations on This Agency:

Public Comments

Sunset Advisory Commission

Texas Animal Health Commission Commentary

I am a Texas landowner who has had a limited association with the Texas Animal Health Commission. I have testified in Austin on a number of bills affecting TAHC and Texas Parks & Wildlife Department, and have TAHC and TPWD certification to pull chronic wasting samples on Texas cervids.

All my dealings with TAHC have been positive, and I admire and respect their efforts to control the spread of chronic wasting disease within our native white-tailed deer population, both in the field and in the halls of the Texas Capitol.

With my positive experiences, I would normally not feel the need to respond under the Sunset Review. However, after reading the formal comments and additional recommendations of the Texas Deer Association, I'm obligated to make my position known.

The Texas Deer Association has tried for years to wrest regulatory control of deer in breeder feedlots from TPWD to the Texas Animal Health Commission.

They have failed legislatively because this is a singularly bad idea. They are trying again under the Sunset provisions to alter a very successful partnership that acts as a model for the other 25 states doing their best to contain CWD.

From comments either formally or informally, no one but deer breeders want to alter this arrangement. From countless hours of public testimony in the hearing rooms of the Capitol, it is apparent that the Texas Deer

Association is on the wrong side of veterinary science and wildlife biology. The existing partnership in controlling CWD must not be thrown out.

As explained above, this is an old debate. Below is my public testimony before a House subcommittee against HB 1591, a bill proposed by Representative Springer in the 86th session that would relieve TPWD of their duties in regulating deer breeder operation and place it with TAHC. True then. True now.

Thank you
Roy Leslie

HB #1591 - Testimony TPWD to TAHC, E20-2036, 2019

My name is Roy Leslie & I am against the bill. I represent no one but myself, my extended family, and the thousands of true “stakeholders” that are seldom invited to the table.

I’m a low-fenced, no lease landowner in far NW Kendall County. Part of a hundred thirty year Texas Heritage Ranch, and 2014 co-winner of the Lone Star Land Steward Award.

No one likes this bill; except the deer feedlot operators. I’ve been reading contracts for 47 years, and my read is it relegates TPWD to a secondary corroborative role behind Texas Animal Health Commission.

TPWD does not like the bill as written, and Animal Health Commission has its hands full with protecting the massive Texas cattle industry from fever ticks. It has neither the funds, the personnel, nor the desire to take on the sole responsibility of protecting a native wildlife specie.

The existing close partnership between TPWD and TAHC is a model for other CWD positive states. The agencies complement each other, and the stakeholders I represent are proud and lucky to have these two working to protect our native white-tailed deer. There is no credible reason to change the arrangement.

Why are you asked to consider this bill? Because breeder feedlot operators have for years been trying their best to reclassify our publicly owned deer as livestock. That would transfer oversight to TAHC. Breeders don’t want to be regulated. They want an overseer whose primary mission is to promote their unsustainable industry.

Let me quote from the first three bullets of the Animal Health Commission’s mission statement:

“to protect the animal industry”

“to increase the marketability of Texas livestock commodities”

“to promote and ensure animal health and productivity”

Now let me quote the first line of Parks & Wildlife’s mission:

“To manage and conserve the natural and cultural resources of Texas”

Breeders want a partner who will protect, market, and promote their struggling business model, not an agency that will hold their feet to the fire in managing and conserving our natural resources.

The question is, will we fall for it?

Roy Leslie

My Comment Will Be Made Public: I agree