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Senator Donna Campbell
P.O. Box 12068
Capital Station
Austin, Texas 78711

5 November 2014

Ref: Sunset Advisory Commission Staff Report, Oct 2014

Dear Senator Campbell,

I'm writing to support the Texas Council on Purchasing from People with Disabilities and the State Use Program. I have been associated with them for the last 12 years, initially as a Board Member of Vaughn House, and then running our non-profit. I came to know and appreciate the great work of the Council to help Community Rehabilitation Providers like ourselves. And one of our founders, who retired from the Texas Rehabilitation Commission, worked directly with the Council to initiate our workforce program via the State Use Program.

When I read the Staff Report recommending abolishing the Texas Council and transferring its function to the Comptroller, I was frankly stunned. I cannot understand how anyone with little to no familiarity with the challenges of employing people with disabilities could possibly better represent the intent of the State Use statute and the best interests of the clients we serve.

Please look at the make-up and track record of the current Council. It is filled with people of long-standing selected for their breath of experience working with State agencies and with the challenges of employing people with disabilities. And compared to similar programs in other States, this Council has been instrumental to the Texas State Use Program ranking at or near the top in every category of measurement.

We are basically an "employer-of-last-resort" because of the nature of our client's disabilities. They would not have the degree of independence and self-worth they currently enjoy without the support of the Texas Council and dedicated professionals at TIBH. If some administrative functions need to be updated or additional oversight added, please help the Council acquire them. But please don't turn all the duties of the Council over to an Agency not better qualified to properly direct the intent of the State Use Program. The system is not broken, although it may need some more effective tools.

Thank you for your consideration of our support for the Texas Council on Purchasing from People with Disabilities. Please let us know if we can assist in any way.

Sincerely,

John McNabb
Executive Director

CC: Sunset Advisory Commission members