

From: [Sunset Advisory Commission](#)
To: [Janet Wood](#)
Subject: FW: Public Input Form for Agencies Under Review (Public/After Publication)
Date: Wednesday, December 5, 2018 11:03:05 AM

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

From: sunset@sunset.texas.gov <sunset@sunset.texas.gov> On Behalf Of Texas Sunset Commission
Sent: Wednesday, December 5, 2018 11:02 AM
To: Sunset Advisory Commission <Sunset@sunset.texas.gov>
Subject: Public Input Form for Agencies Under Review (Public/After Publication)

Agency: TEXAS BOARD PROFESSIONAL LAND SURVEYING

First Name: Wade

Last Name: Mertz

Title: Project Manager - Registered Professional Land Surveyor #4082

Organization you are affiliated with:

Email:

City: Christoval

State: Texas

Your Comments About the Staff Report, Including Recommendations Supported or Opposed: I completely see a need for new testing procedures to license future Surveyors.

Any Alternative or New Recommendations on This Agency:

I have been involved in the surveying profession for over 45 years. I have been licensed since 1982. During my career, I have seen field work go from the theodolite and chain to GPS equipment and the office work go from DMD sheets and drafting tables to CAD with integrated software and plotters. It has been an amazing change and I have had to learn to keep up with the times or fall behind in this profession.

I have been instrumental in helping at least a half dozen other surveyors become registered in Texas. During the testing process for these individuals to become an RPLS, a recurring trend has developed with the grading of the RPLS exam. In almost every case where an individual did not pass all or part of the exam, they received a grade of 69 (other surveyors may have seen this as well). When I took the exam, a large portion of the RPLS exam was done in an essay format. This format allowed the examiners a lot of leeway in how they graded the exam. In the current format, my understanding is that the exam is all multiple choice questions, which, in my opinion, should not allow for ANY leeway in grading. My understanding is that the current exam is reviewed by a Cut-off Score committee that gets to decide what a passing score on each exam should be. That may have been a plausible method when I took the exam but it certainly doesn't work with the current exam format.

When I took the exam in 1981, we were allowed a pencil, paper and a calculator that was only hand programmable. Thirty-seven years later, applicants for the exam are allowed a pencil, paper and a calculator that is only hand programmable.

These methods, in the current surveying environment, are archaic and outdated. I don't know of a single surveyor that doesn't use some type of CAD program with integrated surveying software to handle 99% of his daily duties. In my opinion, the current testing procedures need a complete overhaul. The entire RPLS exam should be done via computer. This is a new age and it calls for a surveyor to be highly competent in CAD to perform his duties to the public. To my knowledge, there is not even a single CAD question on the current exam. We don't need registered surveyors that know how to use a calculator to close a traverse. We need highly competent, computer savvy

individuals that have been trained (AND TESTED) using the most up to date surveying methods and equipment available.

I know the TBPLS is currently under review from the Sunset Commission. I have read both the Sunset Report and the TBPLS response. I see no mention in either report of a possible change to the current exam that would bring it into line with modern technology. In my opinion, the outdated method of randomly grading exams as well as the exam itself need a complete overhaul in order to provide the public with a competent and well trained RPLS.

My Comment Will Be Made Public: I agree