

From: [Sunset Advisory Commission](#)
To: [Brittany Calame](#)
Subject: FW: Public Input Form for Agencies Under Review (Public/After Publication)
Date: Thursday, April 26, 2018 2:34:11 PM

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

From: sundrupal@capitol.local [<mailto:sundrupal@capitol.local>]
Sent: Thursday, April 26, 2018 2:07 PM
To: Sunset Advisory Commission
Subject: Public Input Form for Agencies Under Review (Public/After Publication)

Agency: TEXAS VETERANS COMMISSION TVC

First Name: Zach

Last Name: Migura

Title: Director / Veterans County Service Officer- Dallas County

Organization you are affiliated with: Veterans County Service Officers Association of Texas (VCSOAT); Past President 2013 - 2017, Legislator-at-Large 2017- Present

Email:

City: Dallas

State: Texas

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

I oppose issue # 2, Recommendation #3- Remove military requirements for veteran county service officers to expand the pool of potential accredited claims counselors for Texas veterans.

The breakdown of Veterans in rural counties could make this requirement difficult but many Veterans want to continue serving after their military service by supporting Veterans and their families in their communities. Building trust can be difficult and many Veterans take issue discussing personal issues and conditions from military service with someone that has never served in the military.

# of Counties	With Veteran Populations of Less Than
8	50
13	100
50	250
80	500
114	1000
159	2000
179	3000
202	5000
215	7500
223	10000
233	15000
239	20000
243	30000
247	50000

Any Alternative or New Recommendations on This Agency:

Key Item overlooked by the Sunset Commission from TVC's Self Evaluation Report (SER): Funding for Veteran County Service Offices In TVC's SER: Item IX: "Major Issues" on Page 70, TVC listed "Funding for Veteran County Service Offices" as a MAJOR ISSUE

Since the 50th Texas Legislature in 1947 created the two-tiered system of what is now the TVC and Veterans County Service Offices (VCSOs), counties have NEVER received state funds to assist with county operating expenses for our offices. For this reason, I don't see how Sunset could state that VCSOs are a state resource, we are a county resource. Veterans County Service Officers are often the best holistic point of contact throughout Texas to identify and resolve issues within the Veteran community. It has been mentioned by others in the public comment section that VCSOs do much more than just file VA claims. VCSOs often help long before and after federal and state benefits have been explored and applied for. TVC made the recommendation on page 70 that "the state should invest \$12.7 million to directly fund veteran county service offices...".

A very simple equation to directly financially support veterans county service offices would be to use TVC's financial recommendation and the most current VA Expenditure Report to determine financial allocations to each county. The VA Expenditure Report lists the number of Veterans in each county.

VA's FY 16 Expenditure Report for the total Veteran population of Texas (1,594,564) divided by the \$12.7 million recommendation from TVC: $\$12,700,000 / 1,594,564 \text{ Veterans} = \7.96 per Veteran

Multiply the \$7.96 times the number of Veterans in each county and cut the check to each County Treasurer to only be use by the Veterans County Service Office. This will help with operating expenses, training expenses or things that the Veterans County Service Office deems most important which can take some of the burden off of TVC.

In rural areas where Veteran populations are sparse, counties could join together to combine resources and best serve their collective counties.

VCSOs do a large portion of work for the Texas Veteran community and are a major collaborator with TVC. Supporting the veterans county service offices would make TVC a better organization. We are often trained and VA accredited with several Veterans Service Organizations. Unfortunately, not all counties have the resources to properly support a veterans county service office. It would be ideal to be somewhat financially supported by the state so that better relationships at all levels of government could be established. We continue to see the programs of TVC expand yet there is no source of state funding to support veterans county service offices. This complete lack of support to statewide county offices and infrastructure is detrimental to current and future generations of Texas Veterans and their families.

My Comment Will Be Made Public: I agree