

From: [Sunset Advisory Commission](#)
To: [Cecelia Hartley](#)
Subject: FW: Form submission from: Public Input Form for Agencies Under Review (Public/After Publication)
Date: Friday, November 07, 2014 2:38:40 PM

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

From: sundrupal@capitol.local [<mailto:sundrupal@capitol.local>]
Sent: Friday, November 07, 2014 12:36 PM
To: Sunset Advisory Commission
Subject: Form submission from: Public Input Form for Agencies Under Review (Public/After Publication)

Submitted on Friday, November 7, 2014 - 12:36

Agency: HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES COMMISSION HHSC

First Name: David

Last Name: Myers

Title: Chairperson, Government Relations Committee

Organization you are affiliated with: Texas Association of the Deaf (TAD)

Email:

City: Austin

State: Texas

Your Comments About the Staff Report, Including Recommendations Supported or Opposed: In response to the Staff Report, HHSC, our concerns are with Issue 1. In 2003 the legendary Texas Commission for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing was consolidated, becoming the Division for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing Services (DHHS) in the Department of Health and Human Services. Within DARS, the DHHS was tiny in comparison to the other divisions, and was the only one that was not a recipient of federal funds. In 2005 through an administrative move, DHHS was merged with the Division of Rehabilitative Services, becoming the Office for Deaf and Hard of Hearing Services, and allowing for continuity of the staff and programs with focus on services for the deaf and hard of hearing citizens. This enabled DHHS to begin receiving federal funds which proved to be highly beneficial, and to lessen the stigma of the agency's limited capabilities to provide outreach services statewide. In essence, consolidation that was followed by further administrative action, that the TAD supported, has been highly effective for the benefit of the deaf and hard of hearing citizens of Texas. We recommend that if further consolidation is undertaken that the staff and programs of DHHS remain intact as a unit and in a placement that will enable continuation of federal funding. In regard to the issue of fragmentation of programs, we want to point out that a major function of the DHHS Resource Specialist program is to assist persons who are deaf or hard of hearing to get needed services, which frequently involves referral to other agencies. For the deaf and hard of hearing population, effective communication is essential for effective provision of services. Significant is that Resource Specialists follow up on their referrals to provide assistance as needed, especially for enabling and ensuring effective communication. TAD supports action to continue to build on and strengthen our programs of services to our deaf and hard of hearing citizens, including the BEI interpreter certification program and the Specialized Telecommunications Assistance Program (STAP) and we will oppose any plan to break up the unit.

Any Alternative or New Recommendations on This Agency: None.

My Comment Will Be Made Public: I agree