



## AMERICANS *for* TAX REFORM

May 27, 2016

Mr. Ken Levine  
Executive Director  
Texas Sunset Advisory Commission  
P.O. Box 13066  
Austin, Texas 78711

Dear Mr. Levine,

On behalf of Americans for Tax Reform and our supporters across Texas, I write today to commend the Texas Sunset Advisory Commission Staff Report covering the Texas State Board of Dental Examiners (TSBDE). The Staff Report astutely describes the inappropriate efforts by the TSBDE to impede competition in the dental industry and infringe on dentists' freedom to contract and choose business support services that work best for them.

The TSBDE pursued onerous and unnecessary regulations last year targeting dentists who contract out non-clinical work to management organizations referred to as Dental Support Organizations (DSOs). As the Staff Report makes clear, the anti-competitive rule pursued by the TSBDE was an inappropriate use of time and a distraction from what should be the TSBDE's focus – patient safety.

Contracting out non-clinical work allows dentists to spend more time focusing on patient care and offer more flexible office hours to customers. Additionally, contracting with DSOs reduces startup costs for new dentists and has helped many caregivers invest in state-of-the-art technology, thereby improving the safety and quality of dental care. Today, thousands of dentists contract with DSOs for non-clinical support services like facilities maintenance, supplies procurement, and other administrative needs. The Staff Report is to be commended for pointing out that the push to impose anti-competitive and protectionist regulations on dentists who utilize business support services was an unproductive use of the TSBDE's time and was an action beyond the scope of its statutory authority.

The TSBDE's anti-competitive rulemaking efforts targeting dentists who contract with DSOs, had it been implemented, would have harmed Texans by reducing access to care and increasing costs. The Staff Report correctly points out that this protectionist crusade was a distraction from what is supposed to be the TSBDE's focus: patient care and safety.

Unnecessary and meddlesome regulations impose a hidden tax on individuals, families, and employers. In fact, the annual cost of federal regulations is now \$1.9 trillion, which exceeds all federal income tax collections, both individual and corporate. The last thing Texans need are more unnecessary, anti-competitive, and

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costly regulations imposed at the state level, which is what the TSBDE tried to do last year. I thank the Sunset Advisory Commission for providing a clear explanation as to what the TSBDE's real mission is with this Staff Report, and I hope the Staff Report's advice will be heeded by the TSBDE.

I thank you and your colleagues for all the important work the Sunset Advisory Commission does. If you have any questions or if ATR can be of assistance, please contact Patrick Gleason, ATR's director of state affairs, at (202) 785-0266 or [pgleason@atr.org](mailto:pgleason@atr.org).

Sincerely,



Grover Norquist  
President  
Americans for Tax Reform