

**From:** [Sunset Advisory Commission](#)  
**To:** [Cecelia Hartley](#)  
**Subject:** FW: Keep the TSBEP  
**Date:** Thursday, December 08, 2016 7:49:42 AM

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**From:** Pickens III, William  
**Sent:** Wednesday, December 07, 2016 6:54 PM  
**To:** Sunset Advisory Commission  
**Subject:** Keep the TSBEP

To the Honorable Texas Sunset Commission,

I am writing to request your support in maintaining the Texas State Board of Examiners of Professional Counselors (TSBEP), which has served as the authorized regulatory body overseeing licensed professional counselors since 1981. There are more than 3,000 licensed professionals providing mental health services to Texans- children, adolescents, adults, couples, and families. The oversight of such specific, highly skilled professionals is best left to other professionals who also possess that expertise

TSBEP is more than self-sustaining as almost one and one-half million dollars are collected annually with about \$500,000 budgeted for actual TSBEP costs, and almost one million dollars swept for the General Fund at the end of each fiscal year. Please do not support the critical findings and harsh recommendations from the Sunset staff review; professional oversight of qualified, highly trained LPCs are best regulated under the present system with autonomy and discretion remaining with the appointed board composed of professional and public members.

Please do not move the mental health licensing boards to the Texas Department of Licensing and Regulation (TDLR.) Even TDLR acknowledges that they are not ready to take on regulation of mental health professionals.

Please retain the independent authority of the Texas State Board of Examiners of Professional Counselors to regulate Licensed Professional Counselors in Texas. Only a professional board has the knowledge and experience to establish reasonable, appropriate and rigorous licensing standards and to enforce ethical standards that protect the public.

Licensed Professional Counselors deliver unique services that utilize interpersonal, cognitive-behavioral, psychodynamic and affective methods to achieve mental, emotional, physical, social, moral, educational, career and spiritual development and adjustment throughout the lifespan.

Currently, the Texas State Board of Examiners of Professional Counselors receives less than 1/3 of the licensing fees paid by Licensed Professional Counselors. The challenges reported by Sunset Commission staff could be easily resolved with even just 50 percent of the fees allocated to administration.

Please support the innovative Texas Department of Mental Health Professions. This is the entity being proposed by TCA and the other mental health professional associations. It is a cost-efficient alternative that will ensure the autonomy of our boards and protection of the

public, as well as the efficient and effective use of fees paid by Licensed Professional Counselors.

Sincerely,  
Trey Pickens

Trey Pickens  
Counseling Graduate Student