

From: [Sunset Advisory Commission](#)
To: [Trisha Linebarger](#)
Subject: FW: Public Input Form for Agencies Under Review (Public/After Publication)
Date: Tuesday, May 29, 2018 3:21:08 PM

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

From: sundrupal@capitol.local [<mailto:sundrupal@capitol.local>]
Sent: Tuesday, May 29, 2018 2:47 PM
To: Sunset Advisory Commission <Sunset@sunset.texas.gov>
Subject: Public Input Form for Agencies Under Review (Public/After Publication)

Agency: DEPARTMENT PUBLIC SAFETY DPS

First Name: Robert

Last Name: Richman

Title:

Organization you are affiliated with:

Email:

City: Wimberley

State: Texas

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

Dear Sunset Commission Members,

I would like to express my concerns with the Commission's most recent report regarding the Texas Department of Public Safety's Motorcycle Safety Program. I am an avid motorcyclist with decades of riding experience and an extensive background in traffic safety and motorcycle safety instruction.

Respectfully, I believe the Commission's report to be shortsighted with regard to providing an accurate picture of the current Motorcycle Safety Program, its funding and rationale behind its duties and functions.

Texas has the second largest number of registered motorcycles on its roads in the Nation. In 2016, Texas was the 3rd deadliest state for motorcyclists with 483 motorcyclists dying in motor vehicle crashes; accounting for 13% of the overall fatalities in the State of Texas. There is no doubt the State has a continued and vested interest in providing motorcycle safety training.

The Motorcycle Education Fund Account (Texas Transportation Code § 662.011) was created to defray the costs of training motorcyclists in the State by requiring \$5 from each Class M endorsement to be used to fund and administer the costs of this program. The Commission's report failed to provide a 5 year analysis of the program's expenditures which would have revealed a more accurate picture of the program's actual annual fiscal impact to tax payers. With \$16.8 million dollars currently in the fund and with an estimated annual revenue of \$1.5 to \$1.8 million dollars from renewals and new license fees, the program is capable of being self-sufficient in its current configuration. This being said, this fund was intended to help provide training materials and resources to administer the course consistent with what is currently being implemented and/or subsidized.

With respect to what the program currently funds and why it's necessary, I think it's important to point out that outside of a major metropolitan area, motorcycle safety training providers are almost impossible to find. This is especially true in rural, more economically depressed areas of the state. Since state law requires riders to

successfully complete the Basic Rider Course in order to be receive their Class M endorsement, the lack of available training may encourage motorcyclists to forego formal training and ride illegally. Just like with a car, the lack of training can be fatal. The training provided by Motorcycle Safety Program's mobile unit helps bridge this gap. Similarly, providing additional state funded motorcycles, helmets and training locations to sponsors also helps provide a much needed resource where it would not normally be available. When it comes to training materials such as Basic Rider Course handbooks, range painting and pens; it is necessary for the continuity, consistency and accuracy of testing that these continue to be provided.

I disagree with the Commission's suggestion to discontinue providing motorcycle safety training for instructors (RiderCoaches). Motorcycling is a high-risk skill which requires highly trained subject matter experts to train and develop instructors. It's imperative to the safety of future motorcyclists in Texas that its instructors are provided with clear, consistent and updated curriculum and training. It's my belief that much like the Handgun Licensing Program, which continues to be maintained by DPS and which also continues to train and certify its instructors, the Motorcycle Safety Program, under DPS should continue to develop, maintain, and approve curriculum and continue to certify and regulate RiderCoaches and training facilities. Additionally, I believe the Motorcycle Safety Program should further expand its instructor training to provide advanced level training and certifications to RiderCoaches.

In summary, I truly believe that the Commission should take serious pause to further study the report's findings and to enlist the help of subject matter experts and other stake holders to help guide them in their decision making while moving forward (i.e. Texas Transportation Institute Motorcycle Safety Coalition, Coalition of Clubs and Independents, Motorcycle Safety Foundation, American Motorcycle Foundation, Law Enforcement, TXDOT, sponsors and manufacturers, etc.). The Texas Motorcycle Safety Program was recognized by the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration as a model program in 2014 for a reason. Simply stated, training helps save lives and I believe dismantling the program as suggested in the report will erase 35 years of hard work dedicated to motorcycle safety and further increase fatal motorcycle crashes throughout the State of Texas.

Respectfully Submitted,
Mr. Robert Richman
Wimberley, Texas

Any Alternative or New Recommendations on This Agency:

-The Motorcycle Safety Program should remain with DPS and be allowed to be properly funded using the Motorcycle Safety Fund -Further study should be conducted regarding the overall fiscal impact of the program (i.e. 5 years analysis) -A committee consisting of motorcyclists and motorcycle safety experts and stake holders should be consulted before moving forward with any legislative actions

My Comment Will Be Made Public: I agree