

From: [Sunset Advisory Commission](#)
To: [Trisha Linebarger](#)
Subject: FW: Public Input Form for Agencies Under Review (Public/After Publication)
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-----Original Message-----

From: sundrupal@capitol.local [<mailto:sundrupal@capitol.local>]
Sent: Tuesday, May 15, 2018 6:20 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: Jim

Last Name: Sprouse

Title: Security Manager

Organization you are affiliated with: Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary

Email:

City: Fort Worth

State: Texas

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

Dear Brian Birdwell and Sunset Staff:

This letter is coming to you as a response to my reading of the Sunset Advisory Commission's initial staff report regarding the Department of Public Safety for 2018-2019. First of all, I want to say thank you. It is more than obvious that a great deal of effort, thought, and hard work has gone into the review and assessment of the DPS.

I am the security manager (currently licensed as such by the PSB) for Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary (SWBTS) in Fort Worth, TX. We are under a Private Letter of Authority license (P00444), and we currently employ over twenty (20) security officers on our campus, both armed and unarmed.

Since I am employed in this capacity, the Private Security component of your assessment is very important to me and the campus for which I work. However, none of the comments stated in this letter represent the views of SWBTS. They are only my comments as a security manager, and they do not in any way reflect any position taken by SWBTS as an organization.

You have definitely highlighted some key problem areas that I have also noticed from my vantage point in the private security industry. I agree with Sunset's assessment that "the department's current approach to overseeing the private security industry delves too deeply into purely business affairs without a clear nexus to public safety (1)." I have wondered myself why it is necessary that my organization, as a private, non-profit business, must be licensed so that it can protect its own people and property, and why I also have to be licensed as a manager in addition to the company license. We pay about \$500 a year for these unneeded licensing fees and renewals.

It does not surprise me to see that Sunset's research discovered that the "DPS relies on an unmanageable patchwork of databases to track its 10 regulatory programs, and struggles to provide consistent, accurate numbers about its regulatory activities (2)." I have often gotten different answers to the same questions when I have called to ask about

a license that was in process.

My hope is that by making the PSB into an advisory committee, the “convoluted, inefficient” processes of the PSB can be truncated to a large extent (30).

I would like to respond to some of the recommendations in particular, namely:

3.2 Deregulate 10 registrations for individuals and entities that do not directly provide private security services (35).

This recommendation states that “governmental subdivisions and private businesses with internal security departments would no longer register with the department”, yet security officers that work for these entities would still be licensed (35).

I wholeheartedly agree with this recommendation, and I also agree that the requirement for such entities to have a licensed security manager should also be removed. As long as the officers themselves must go through the licensing process, then security services can be appropriately regulated.

The only concern would be that the path to licensure would have to be made very clear and simple. Currently, security managers do most of the work of getting officers licensed because they have learned over time how to navigate the tumultuous waters PSB licensing. If the process can be streamlined, I see no reason to object by saying that licensed security managers are required. I say this as a licensed security manager myself. I would love to spend my time on other more important matters, such as officer training, rather than making sure that I guide all new officers through the licensing process and keep up with renewals.

3.4 - Remove requirements for regulated individuals to be affiliated with companies. (36)

This recommendation would remove the requirement for individual licensed officers to be tied to licensed companies. I take this to mean that a licensed officer could do any of the following if these recommendations were to go into effect:

- A. A full-time officer could work for a public school, and while the officer must be licensed, the school could employ the officer without the school itself needing to have a license, nor would the school have to license a security manager.
- B. A part-time licensed security officer could be hired as an employee for a licensed security contractor, but the officer could still procure more part-time work at another security company as an independent contractor on a temporary basis or as an employee on a part-time basis if he or she so chooses.
- C. A licensed security officer could operate as an independent contractor that takes temporary security jobs from various contractors and companies as he or she so desires. For instance, this officer could provide security for large events from time to time.

I also agree with this recommendation. On our campus we often host large events (up to 3,500 people). Many other schools use our facilities to host their graduations. We provide the security for these events. Often, we do not have the human resources to cover such events from among the ranks of our full-time and part-time officers that are employed by us. We are forced to use police officers for \$40 or more an hour in order to cover the extra need for security. If we could use temporary security officers who are operating on an independent contractor basis, then this would help us and independent officers immensely.

I hope that these recommendations go through. I believe that your recommendations will aid Texas businesses and streamline the needed governmental oversight in the private security industry and others.

Thank you for your time and consideration,

Sgt. Jim Sprouse
Security Operations Manager &
Executive Assistant to the Chief of Police at Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary

Any Alternative or New Recommendations on This Agency:

One question that I have is this: Would any of these recommendations also do away with the insurance requirements for licensed companies? Currently, we are required to meet certain minimums, but if we were not regulated, then it seems that this would simply be up to us an organization to be wise and procure general liability insurance.

If I may express one last concern that you might address: What would make up for the shortfall of \$601,300 as a result of the loss of licensing fees and other income that would be lost? Would this cause the licensing fees for security contracting business and individuals to go up? If so, this could create a new barrier to business. If I may, I would recommend adjusting to the loss by streamlining and simplifying the overall licensing process; not by increasing licensing fees.

My Comment Will Be Made Public: I agree