

**Texas Physical Therapy Association  
Testimony for the Texas Sunset Commission  
Public Hearing  
December 8, 2016  
On the:  
Healthcare Licensing Consolidation Project**

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"Mr. Chairman and members of the Sunset Commission, my name is Dana Tew and I appreciate the opportunity to share my comments and thoughts about the proposed Health Care Licensing Consolidation Project" I appreciate your expertise and am very thankful for your time in serving in this capacity. I am a physical therapist practicing in Houston. I am rehab manager and assist with oversight of nearly 120 physical and occupational therapists in the Houston area. I am also program director for a orthopedic physical therapy residency and sole proprietor a post-professional certification program. Today I am representing myself, my colleagues, as well as my staff and students; many of whom have already contacted the commission via emails and phone calls.

I am here today to speak in opposition to the proposed health care licensing consolidation project.

I have been following the sunset process and it's my understanding after the Sunset staff spent months reviewing and interviewing the PT/OT licensing boards, and the agency staff. They concluded; "that the Executive Council of Physical Therapy and Occupational Therapy should be retained as an independent state agency for the next 12 years." That conclusion was published as the Sunset staff recommendation and reaffirmed on more than one occasion. This consolidation recommendation appears to have come 'late in the game' and well after the initial public comment period had been concluded. To my knowledge, neither the PT licensing board, nor the professional association were asked for or provided an opportunity for input during the development of the " Consolidation Project"---this is not the transparent and inclusive process that it could and should have been.

I understand that the TDLR consolidation governance plan would create some form of advisory board structure for the targeted agencies. The assumption that the TDLR staff whose regulatory experience includes working with tow truck operators and auto salvage parts dealers does not provide me, or my approximately 40,000 colleagues, or my patients, a sense of comfort, confidence, or security. Protecting the public's health, safety, and welfare is our highest priority. It is critical that the individuals making decisions about regulatory and professional issues are the most knowledgeable ones for the job and are able to ensure highest quality care for the public served by the profession of physical therapy. The TDLR consolidation plan does not offer such expertise.

I have read the comments filed by TDLR in their response to this public hearing. While they have backed off on the suggested consolidation date for Physical Therapists until 2026, the timing of this recommendation at this time lacks public support and is unnecessary. Therefore, I would simply make this observation...whose crystal ball is clear enough to predict what is likely to happen next year, let alone 10 years, Why not stick with the initial Sunset staff recommendation that is rooted in public protection, knowledge, and best practice, and this well-run, cost efficient state agency to complete its full Sunset cycle of 12 years? As we approach the end of that review period based on the information available at that time we can best assess what's needed and whether this consolidation strategy has applicability and benefit to the state. In my opinion that case has not been made effectively at this time.