

From: sundrupal@capitol.local on behalf of [Texas Sunset Commission](#)
To: [Sunset Advisory Commission](#)
Subject: Public Input Form for Agencies Under Review (Public/After Publication)
Date: Wednesday, November 16, 2016 11:25:25 AM

Agency: STATE BOARD VETERINARY MEDICAL EXAMINERS

First Name: Faith

Last Name: Valasek

Title: Foster home

Organization you are affiliated with: Austin Pets Alive, Inc.

Email:

City: Austin

State: Texas

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

Ken Levine

Director

Texas Sunset Advisory Commission

P.O. Box 13066

Austin, Texas 78711

sunset@sunset.texas.gov

November 16, 2016

Re: Response to the Sunset Advisory Commission Staff Report on the Texas
State Board of Veterinary Medical Examiners

Dear Mr. Levine,

I am submitting this testimony on behalf of myself as a foster for Austin Pets Alive, Inc. ("APA!") I am concerned with the recommendation presented in issue 5 to request legislative committees to take action to clearly define the scope and limits of the statutory owner exemption in the Veterinary Licensing Act. I witnessed the turmoil and tension that the vet board caused in 2014-2015 surrounding this very issue and am very concerned for the animals that I am able to help by fostering for APA! I am hopeful that this Commission will work to prevent any future obstacles for shelter animals to be helped by those that care for their well being.

I am going to introduce you to just three of my most recent fosters. I take the injured and sick babies that are needing our help and I nurture them back from their illnesses and injuries and get them ready to move on to families

that will love them for the rest of their lives.

Ariel is a 7 year old miniature poodle that came to us from the city shelter, Austin Animal Center. She was presumed to have been hit by a car. She suffered from neurological deficits, had a right pubic fracture, and a right distal femoral head fracture. The shelter recommended that she be euthanized because killing the shelter pets is a "standard" that most vets are comfortable with. APA! did not kill her though. I was charged with bringing her home as a foster and the first night she ate food and drank water. She also began pain meds and neurological meds. Within 48 hours a major improvement was observed. She was kept on strict crate rest, provided medications, and three weeks later follow up x-rays were taken showing that everything was healing well. Less than 2 months after her medical intake to our shelter and my home she was adopted by a loving family and has 2 human sisters and was completely healed up. She is able to walk on all 4 legs and has no neurological deficits observed. Euthanasia was not required.

Henry is a 5 year old chihuahua that came to us from the city shelter. He was presumed to have been hit by a car. He suffered from pelvic fractures on both the left and right side of his pelvis. The shelter was going to euthanize due to the severity of the fractures but is required to offer these guys to APA. Again, APA took him in and I brought him home as a foster and placed him on strict crate rest. He was not fond of human touch but we discovered cute things about him, such as he loved fruit smoothies and I could put his pain meds and antibiotics in the smoothies and he would take them. Henry recovered for two months and was then given another x-ray which showed both sides of the pelvis being fully healed. He walks on all 4 legs with no residual pain. He continues to love fruit smoothies and also chooses to eat his vegetables. Henry has been adopted by a very loving family with another dog, a cat, and a 3 year old human brother.

Sheila is a 3.5 month old chihuahua/pug mix that was also presumed to have been hit by a car and was found lying in a ditch. She was suffering from a broken left tibia, a right shattered femoral head, and had extensive ant bites to her eyes and body. It was recommended that she be transferred to APA! and a recommendation for an amputation of the left leg was given. Sheila was placed in a splint and was placed on crate rest. Sheila also began antibiotics to her eyes. A follow up x-ray was done a week later and the tibia was showing small improvements so a hard splint was placed and she began to walk around some. Within 3 weeks Sheila was unstoppable. She began walking and running constantly and her eyes were healing. 5 weeks after her injury Sheila had x-rays that showed normal healing and no need for further surgeries to either her leg or her hip. Sheila is now a normal puppy running all over my house with no side effects from any of her injuries. She loves all cats, dogs, kids, and life.

These three animals are animals that a private practice vet would have recommended costly and invasive care for but a shelter vet was able to see that they were worth giving a chance. We are not causing harm to animals as that vet would suggest. We are offering nonstandard care to give them a chance. Standards would absolutely prevent these lives from being saved because we could never afford to do surgery on all of these and that would force us to kill them if we couldn't. Each of my fosters received routine

check ups, x-rays to ensure proper healing, medications for their injuries, and at no time was their quality of care less than stellar and their quality of life was considered all through their recovery. I urge this Commission to not allow the turmoil that occurred last session to occur again this session as the vet board continues it pursuit of governmental overreach.

Respectfully Submitted,

Faith Valasek

Any Alternative or New Recommendations on This Agency:

I urge this Commission to not allow the turmoil that occurred last session to occur again this session as the vet board continues it pursuit of governmental overreach.

My Comment Will Be Made Public: I agree