

From: [Sunset Advisory Commission](#)
To: [Janet Wood](#)
Subject: FW: Form submission from: Public Input Form for Agencies Under Review (Public/After Publication)
Date: Sunday, June 08, 2014 6:35:20 PM

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

From: sundrupal@capitol.local [<mailto:sundrupal@capitol.local>]
Sent: Friday, June 06, 2014 6:12 PM
To: Sunset Advisory Commission
Subject: Form submission from: Public Input Form for Agencies Under Review (Public/After Publication)

Submitted on Friday, June 6, 2014 - 18:11

Agency: DEPARTMENT STATE HEALTH SERVICES DSHS

First Name: Linda

Last Name: Autry

Title: Assistant Professor

Organization you are affiliated with: University of Houston-Victoria

City: Victoria

State: Texas

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

My colleagues and I are vehemently opposed to the Sunset Review Board's recommendation 3.2 for the Texas State Board of Examiners of Professional Counselors and Marriage and Family Therapists licensing boards to be reconstituted as advisory committees of the Texas Department of Licensing and Regulation. It will be challenging and ultimately disastrous, for a variety of reasons, if this recommendation is passed.

As a counselor educator, I hold in the back of my mind a significant responsibility to educate counselors who are qualified, effective, and ethical practitioners. In some part, I feel responsible for their future clients, so I work hard to educate students through a rigorous program that is CACREP accredited. Students graduating from a CACREP accredited program are well-trained in mental health issues, have an understanding of ethical and legal requirements of competent practice, and are prepared to work in a variety of mental health settings. Imagine my concern to learn that my efforts might be undermined by a lack of education as none of the other occupations currently licensed by TDLR are required to even hold a bachelor's degree. My concern is that the TDLR, at some point, would not see the importance of holding future practitioners to a high level of education such as a master's degree and obtaining the current post degree clinical training and supervision.

We must have a licensing board in place (as we do now with the TSBEP) that understands the needs of the mental health field in Texas. My concern is that doing away with TSBEP would impact mental health care in Texas in ways that we cannot fathom at this time. We CANNOT dilute the educational or licensure requirements of mental health clinicians, in any way, if we are to ensure trained, ethical practitioners who are held accountable and serve the mental health needs of Texas.

Any Alternative or New Recommendations on This Agency: Please keep TSBEPIC intact in order to serve the mental health needs of Texas with clinicians that are trained competent professionals with higher education degrees and licensure requirements.

My Comment Will Be Made Public: I agree