

From: [Sunset Advisory Commission](#)
To: [Janet Wood](#)
Subject: FW: Attn: Dawn Buckingham, M.D., Public Member
Date: Thursday, June 19, 2014 8:21:47 AM

From: Beverly A Burke
Sent: Thursday, June 19, 2014 8:17 AM
To: Sunset Advisory Commission
Subject: Attn: Dawn Buckingham, M.D., Public Member

LONE STAR COUNSELING SERVICES

June 19, 2014

Dawn Buckingham, M.D. Public Member
Sunset Advisory Committee P.O. Box 13066
Austin, Texas 78711

Dear Dr. Buckingham:

We have reviewed the findings of the May 2014 Sunset Advisory Commission (page 46-48). These findings made the following statements:

“Programs to Discontinue Offender Education Providers - Little regulatory activity”

"In addition to evaluating risk levels, Sunset staff considered the number of licensees, complaints, enforcement actions, and investigations for each program. Low numbers of complaints, investigations, and enforcement actions typically reflect a lower risk of harm... programs suggested for deregulation have little impact on public health and safety...

Another program that experiences low regulatory activity relates to offender education providers. This program serves individuals who commit alcohol-and drug-related offenses and are must complete a court-mandated education course. Data suggest the occupational licensing aspect of this program is unneeded since DSHS conducted no investigations or enforcement actions in the last two fiscal years on the 2,475 people licensed to provide the education.

However, as part of this unique program, DSHS should continue to establish statewide offender education curriculum standards the courts use in sentencing. Also, developing and approving curriculum is not resource-intensive, as the agency receives assistance for this task from universities.”

We are quite concerned by these findings. We also ask the following questions to be considered. Was it DSHS Agency policy not to conduct investigations nor encourage enforcement actions? All of us within the Coalition strive for educational excellence, yet we have heard of issues of non-compliance. Why were these issues not reviewed, investigated, and taken into consideration? Our Coalition mission is to be effective, we need evaluation, yes?

- **Did you know in 2012, TDSHS Offender Education services educated 101,461 people on all topics by licensed instructors. If we consider an average of 7 people per student education (families, friends, significant others, drinking/drugging buddies) an impact is about 710,227 people. That represents about 3/4 of million Texans, how can this be construed as “low impact?” These Texans are influenced by the importance of this work, is this not important? Worthy of reflection?**

We look forward to your response and we will duly advise our coalition of your thoughts and kind consideration about these questions. Thank you again for your valuable time and kind consideration.