

From: [Sunset Advisory Commission](#)
To: [Janet Wood](#)
Subject: FW: Form submission from: Public Input Form for Agencies Under Review (Public/After Publication)
Date: Tuesday, June 24, 2014 4:00:06 PM

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From: sundrupal@capitol.local [<mailto:sundrupal@capitol.local>]
Sent: Tuesday, June 24, 2014 9:20 AM
To: Sunset Advisory Commission
Subject: Form submission from: Public Input Form for Agencies Under Review (Public/After Publication)

Submitted on Tuesday, June 24, 2014 - 09:20

Agency: DEPARTMENT STATE HEALTH SERVICES DSHS

First Name: Dean S

Last Name: DeSoto

Title: Executive Director

Organization you are affiliated with: TDSHS Offender Education Services

City: San Antonio

State: Texas

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

The Texas Coalition of Concerned Alcohol-Drug Interventionists (TCCADI) in direct response to with the proposed actions of the Texas Sunset Advisory Commission Staff Report of May 2014. In this report the recommendation is made to “discontinue Offender Education” programs. “As always we ask the support of any coalition or anyone who will help ensure that we effectively address the issues of alcohol and drug abuse within our state.

On behalf of all 2,475 licensed TDSHS Offender administrators and instructors, many thanks and my deepest respect to the work you continue to do so well.” Stated Dean S. DeSoto (TCCADI) The volunteer Texas Coalition of Concerned Alcohol – Drug Interventionists (TCCADI) is quite concerned about this report for a variety of reasons. From a simple statistical review our TDSHS Offender Education programs have impacted in the following manner:

- DWI Intervention Program shows a completion rate of 91.98% in 2012 (Average for 2008-2012 is 91.52%)
- DWI Education Program shows as positive knowledge increase of 70.6% in 2012 (Average for 2010-2013 is 69.95%)
- Drug Offender Education Program shows a positive knowledge increase of 58% in 2012 (Average for 2008-2012 is 57.60%)
- "Potential Problem" of Substance abuse/addiction rate of students in this Drug Offender Education program in 2012 is 36%. (Average for 2008-2012 is 37.60%)
- Alcohol Education for Minors shows a positive knowledge increase of 69% in 2012 (Average for 2008-2012 is 70.60%)
- Texas Youth Tobacco Awareness Program shows a positive knowledge increase

of 93.6% in 2010 (Average for 2008 - 2010 is 93.40%)

Further review of completed TDSHS Offender Education programs indicates a high level of collateral information being delivered to the general population from clients completing program. TDHS Offender Education programs have trained 531,442 students from 2008 until 2012. If we extrapolate these numbers to include significant others, wives, husbands, children, friends, by a factor of 7 then we have delivered the message to 3,720,094 people. This is a conservative estimate.

Any Alternative or New Recommendations on This Agency: Was it TDSHS Agency policy not to monitor, investigate complaints, or inspect Offender Education programs for the past two years? Perhaps this should be done before discontinuing these programs?

My Comment Will Be Made Public: I agree

Dean DeSoto

My name is Dean S. DeSoto. I am the Director of the Community Alliance for Traffic Safety, a non-profit based in San Antonio, Texas. We have focused on public safety issues for twenty six (26) years. I am graduate of the University of Florida and currently hold ten certifications including all of the Offender Education Programs. My favorite readings early years were about Texas and Socrates. Representative Price, I agree with you and Sam Houston "Texas is the finest portion of the globe that has ever blessed my vision." I am also compelled by "The unexamined life is not worth living." Socrates

Twenty eight (28) days ago, we set up a volunteer coalition of licensed TDSHS Offender Education programs. Texas Coalition of Concerned Alcohol-Drug Interventionists (TCCADI). Our coalition represents 2,475 licensed administrator/instructors. We are quite concerned by the report of May 2014.

Discontinue Offender Education? Some of you have heard the headlines, even made the headlines. Headlines. A continuing concern for the humanitarian crisis currently on our border. Somehow the impact of Federal policy on releasing of immigrants with DWI, alcohol or drug issues having a direct impact on all of our communities within our state has been missed. Some of the youths in the crisis are gang members. Gang members are part of the drug culture. Alcohol - drug abuse and addiction is on the rise in our State.

Costs to our communities? According to the National Institute on Drug Abuse (NIDA) costs our country \$600 billion dollars per year.

Yesterday, testimony was given many regarding the impact of steroids and recreational drugs upon our youth. Quite true, it is within communities and our state. The challenge before is quite real and quite expensive. To reduce these programs that have impacted upon the lives of both the offenders (we call them clients) and their significant others, is not logical, nor fiscally responsible. Our State does not pay the fees for the clients, only to credential and assure quality control. Quality control is

vital to our mission. We estimate that the TDSHS Offender Education programs have shown a demonstrative impact upon some **3,720,094 people during a five year period (2008-2012). This is based upon a factor of seven (7) people on the average are exposed by the clients to the program.**

Our efforts not only educate the offender population but are designed inspire and invite positive change. Our credo is to tell me I will forget, teach me I will learn, involve me I will understand. Our mission is simple, to involve those who have made poor choices and involve them into a sense of fulfillment inviting their family, friends, and significant others into this change. We are much more than simply dispensing information to the clients with good wishes. We are about active and powerful invitation to positive change. That is the human factor in this. It works.

There are some quarters that feel perhaps we could simply be replaced by on line or simply written information. The Miami Dade County Drug Court (the first Drug Court in the United States) attempted this and discovered that their clients were actually becoming intoxicated while completing their on-line programs, or having “co-dependents” (mothers, fathers, girl or boy friends) do the program for them. It was not effective. **I am mystified why no investigations of complaints nor enforcement actions were conducted by TDSHS for the past two fiscal years. Was this TDSHS Agency policy, if so why?** Fires in life can be averted by thoughtful prevention and effective remediation. I submit to you that the fire has started in Texas with increasing amounts of alcohol – drug abuse and addiction. “Nobody has ever measured, not even poets, how much the heart can hold.” Zelda Fitzgerald The fire is burning now. What are we prepared to do? When do we plan to do it? Thank you for your time and kind consideration.

Dean S. DeSoto, CATS – TCCADI

San Antonio, Texas