



Texas Skill Standards Board

November 17, 2014

WAYNE OSWALD,
CHAIR

Mr. Ken Levine
Sunset Advisory Commission
1501 North Congress Avenue
Robert E. Johnson Building, Sixth Floor
Austin, Texas 78701

BRUCE AUMACK

Dear Mr. Levine:

CARLOS CHACON

I would like to extend my appreciation to you and your staff for contacting me during the Sunset review of the Texas Workforce Investment Council (Council). Sunset staff interviewed me in relation to the charge of the Council to both staff and provide administrative support to the Texas Skill Standards Board (TSSB). I have been a Governor-appointed member of the TSSB since 1996. I was appointed as chair in March 2003, following the retirement of our long-serving chairwoman Billie Pickard. During Chair Pickard's tenure, the TSSB was instrumental in establishing both the policies and processes required to build a voluntary skill standards system in Texas through the development and recognition of occupational skill standards. She also was key to finding the resources, through agreement with Pam Willeford, the then Chairwoman of the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board, for Texas two-year colleges to develop programs that are responsive to the needs of employers by integrating skill standards into their technical programs and receive recognition from the TSSB.

JOSEPH CROCI

ANDY ELLARD

TERRI FLOW

For the past several years, the TSSB has met only twice a year. This is largely due to the fact that, with TSSB policies and procedures in place to guide skill standards development and program recognition, the role of the TSSB has changed to focus more on maintaining and promoting the skill standards system, while adjusting processes as necessary and fine-tuning policies where required. The TSSB delegated to the Chair the approval of applications by community and technical colleges to have their technical programs recognized. This delegation was critical to ensure that there was no delay in a college's ability to advertise and implement their program in the event that the TSSB did not have a meeting scheduled during that calendar year quarter. Much of the staff's work is focused on review and recommendation for approval of programs that have integrated skill standards into the curriculum; thus, much of the work now is administrative in nature.

EDWARD FOSTER, JR.

IRIA GANIOUS, JR.

FORD KEATING

Based on my time as a member and chair of TSSB and my understanding of the evolution of the TSSB's work, I agree with the recommendation in the Sunset Advisory Commission Staff Report to eliminate the TSSB and have the Council assume its four core statutory functions. Based on responses to a request for feedback on the TSSB-related recommendation, other TSSB members also support the recommendation. Of the 11 board members, responses were received from five indicating that they concur with the recommendation to eliminate the TSSB and have its functions absorbed by the Council.

ERMA PALMER

LINDA STEGALL

Thank you for acknowledging the important work of the TSSB in developing a voluntary skill standards system in Texas. The TSSB has achieved many great things since it was created; however, it is my belief that a separate body is no longer necessary to carry out its functions. I believe that the Council is the appropriate entity to assume the duties of the TSSB and that it would continue the valuable work of the TSSB. Thank you also for the opportunity for board members to comment on TSSB-related recommendation in the Sunset Advisory Commission Staff Report. If you have any questions regarding our response, please do not hesitate to contact me at 713-645-0923 or 979-922-9848.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "W. Oswald", written in a cursive style.

Wayne Oswald
Chairman

cc: Wes Jurey, Chair, Texas Workforce Investment Council