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# TEXAS HOUSE *of* REPRESENTATIVES

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**Joe Moody**

STATE REPRESENTATIVE  
DISTRICT 78 • EL PASO COUNTY

June 23, 2014

Texas Sunset Advisory Commission  
PO Box 13066  
Austin, TX 78711

Dear TSAC Board Members & Staff:

As a strong advocate for people with disabilities, I want to express my support for the recommendations the American Council of the Blind of Texas (ACBT) issued in regards to the merging of the Division for Blind Services with the Division for Rehabilitation Services.

Consolidating both agencies will diminish services to blind persons. It is my understanding that other states have previously merged their rehabilitation service agencies causing reduced quality of care. Seniors who lose their independence because of decayed sight are best served by specialized intervention and support from professional staff specifically trained in the blindness field; these special types of rehabilitation are best accomplished by a specialized agency like DARS Division for Blind Services. On the surface, these two may be seen as agencies with the same goal—but the fact of the matter is, elders who lose sight because of age and decay need specialized staff to help them cope with the changes in their lives.

I strongly believe both programs should not be merged; elders who lose their vision need specialized orientation (e.g. travel guides, coping counselors, day-to-day facilitators, etc.), technology to aid them with their independence, and our support as fellow citizens to keep them out of nursing homes.

If you have any further questions, please feel free to contact me at [joe.moody@house.state.tx.us](mailto:joe.moody@house.state.tx.us)

Respectfully,

Representative Joe Moody  
District 78 | El Paso County