



## TEXAS SPEECH-LANGUAGE-HEARING ASSOCIATION (TSHA)

### Sunset Review

#### Frequently Asked Questions

##### **What is Sunset?**

Sunset is a process intended to streamline state government by determining the need for agencies to continue to exist. During Sunset, an agency such as the State Board of Examiners in Speech-Language Pathology and Audiology will be abolished unless legislation is passed to continue its functions.

##### **Why does Texas have a Sunset process?**

The Texas Legislature created the Sunset Advisory Commission in 1977 to identify and eliminate waste, duplication, and inefficiency in state government.

##### **How often does Sunset occur?**

Agencies typically are reviewed once every twelve years. The Legislature reviews 20 to 30 agencies each legislative session.

##### **Who conducts the Sunset review?**

Staff of the Sunset Commission typically spends three to eight months evaluating an agency. They review the agency's Self-Evaluation Report and solicit input from interested groups and the public. Staffers prepare a report for the Sunset Advisory Commission, and the Commission conducts a public hearing to receive input. After determining if an agency's functions are needed, those functions could be performed better by another agency, and/or the agency's statute should be changed to improve its operation, the Commission then recommends to the full Legislature that the agency either continue or be abolished.

##### **What questions are asked in the review process?**

*The Commission staffers ask questions such as:*

- How efficiently and effectively does the agency operate?
- In what ways could the agency's operations be less burdensome or restrictive and still adequately protect and serve the public?
- How much do the agency's programs duplicate those of other agencies and how well does the agency coordinate with those agencies?
- Does the agency promptly and effectively address complaints?

### **Who serves on the Sunset Advisory Commission?**

The 12 members of the Sunset Advisory Commission include: 5 members of the Senate appointed by the Lieutenant Governor, 5 members of the House of Representatives appointed by the Speaker of the House, and 2 public members.

### **Who are the Sunset Commission members for the 82<sup>nd</sup> Legislature?**

#### **Senate Members**

Chair – Glenn Hegar, Jr.	Katy
Juan “Chuy” Hinojosa	McAllen
Joan Huffman	Houston
Robert Nichols	Jacksonville
John Whitmire	Houston
Charles McMahan	Schulenberg

#### **House Members**

Vice Chair – Dennis Bonnen	Angleton
Rafael Anchia	Dallas
Byron Cook	Corsicana
Linda Harper-Brown	Irving
Carl Isett	Lubbock
Lamont Jefferson	San Antonio

### **What changes can be made through the Sunset process?**

The State Board of Examiners would be abolished automatically unless the Legislature passes legislation to continue its functions. Legislation to continue licensure may include changes designed to promote efficiency, effectiveness, fairness, and accountability to protect the public

### **How many agencies have been abolished through the Sunset process?**

58 agencies have been abolished and 12 have been consolidated

### **What is the timeframe for Sunset of the State Board?**

<i>September 2009</i>	Agencies submitted Self-Evaluation Reports
<i>September 2009 to January 2011</i>	Sunset staff prepares reports; Sunset Commission holds public hearings and makes decisions
<i>February 2011</i>	Commission reports to 82nd Legislature
<i>February 2011 through May 2011</i>	Legislature considers Sunset Commission recommendations

### **How can I get involved?**

TSHA would welcome your support during this critical Sunset Review period. Here are a few ways to get involved:

- Tell your story! Share your passion for your profession with friends and contacts who are unfamiliar with the mission of your scope of work through success stories.
- Vote! Be involved in the legislative process by educating yourself on candidates and issues.
- Make a contribution to the TSHA PAC (for more information on the TSHA PAC, please refer to the TSHA Political Action Committee FAQ).