

Texas Sunset Commission Overview

House Ways and Means
May 9th, 2023

How Texas Sunset Works

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The Texas Sunset shines a light on state agencies and programs to see if they are still relevant in a changing world. If the answer is yes, The Sunset recommends improvements to make them more effective and efficient. If the answer is no, the sunset recommends abolishing the agency or transferring its functions to another agency with related functions. Learn how the Sunset process can have major impacts on state government.

How the Texas Sunset Works

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- Sunset Staff Evaluation
 - Sunset staff performs extensive research and analysis to evaluate the need for, performance of, and improvements to the agency under review.
- Sunset Commission Staff
 - Reviews agency's self-evaluation report
 - Receives input from interested parties
 - Evaluates agency and identifies problems
 - Develops recommendations
 - Publishes staff report

Public input is confidential

- Sunset Commission Deliberation
 - The Sunset Commission conducts a public hearing to take testimony on the staff report and the agency overall. The Sunset Commission conducts a second meeting to vote on which changes to recommend to the Texas Legislature.

How the Texas Sunset Works

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- Public Hearings
 - Sunset staff presents its reports and recommendations
 - Agency presents its response
 - Sunset Commission hears public testimony and receives written comments
 - Sunset Commission meets again to consider and vote on recommendationsPublic Input is published on the website
- Legislative Action
 - The Texas Legislature considers Sunset's recommendations and makes final decisions
- Texas Legislature
 - Sunset bill on an agency is drafted and filed
 - Sunset bills go through normal legislative process
 - The Senate and the House conduct committee hearings and debate the bill
 - Bill passes or fails adoption
 - Governor signs, vetoes or allows bill to become law without signature

Public may participate in legislative process

How the Texas Sunset Works

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Agency continues with improvements

Or

Agency is abolished but may continue business for up to one year, or its functions are transferred to another agency

Texas Sunset Commission 2021 Legislative Session Highlights

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- The Sunset Commission reviewed 19 state entities for the 87th regular legislative session in 2021 and made 115 statutory recommendations to the Legislature based on staff reports and public hearings. The Legislature adopted 78 percent of these recommendations and added other changes to further improve state government. The Sunset Commission also adopted 114 management directives to address operational concerns identified during staff reviews. Together, these changes significantly improved state government by:

Texas Sunset During the 88th Legislature

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The Sunset Commission reviewed 21 entities for the 88th Legislative Session, resulting in 235 recommendations to streamline state government while enhancing services to our citizens. Generally, the recommendations eliminate unnecessary regulations, and improve accountability, align agencies' procedures with best practices, and strengthen effective delivery of services to Texans. Notably, the commission is making several appropriative recommendations, which is atypical for Sunset, to the House Appropriations and Senate Finance committees to consider funding increases for Texas Juvenile Justice Department to increase capacity of juvenile justice facilities and address chronic staff retention issues, and for Public Utility Commission of Texas to improve oversight of the electric and water utility industries. Other recommendations include transferring the functions of the Anatomical Board of the State of Texas to the Texas Funeral Service Commission to improve regulation of whole-body donation in Texas, and temporarily attaching the State Board of Veterinary Medical Examiners to the Texas Department of Licensing and Regulation to provide the board with oversight, guidance, and support.

Texas Sunset Commission 2021 Legislative Session Highlights

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- Eliminating 31 license types across 18 regulatory programs, reducing unnecessary regulatory burdens for almost 140,000 licensees across Texas. Sunset further streamlined and removed other subjective, anticompetitive, or unnecessary regulatory requirements, eliminating barriers to working in Texas that have little or no impact on public safety.
- Making regulatory complaint processes easier for the public to use and more objective, and ensuring state agencies' inspections and enforcement actions are transparent, consistent, and focused on regulated activities that pose the greatest risk to the public.
- Clarifying stakeholder engagement standards and expectations to improve the content and quality of information provided to the public, and expanding opportunities for public participation and input in agencies policies, planning processes, and operations
- Improving agency management and operations by strengthening fiscal policies, reporting requirements, audits, tracking and use of data, fair contracting processes, and risk-based decision making and resource allocation.

Impact of Sunset Reviews

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The sunset process is a key legislative oversight tool that significantly streamlined and improved Texas government since it was created by the Texas Legislature in 1977. Sunset promotes a culture of continuous improvement in state government by providing objective, nonpartisan public forum for evaluating the need for state agencies and their effectiveness, efficiency, and responsiveness to the public

Impact of Sunset Reviews

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Changes made through the Sunset process demonstrate its positive impact, with a proven track record of reducing state agencies and programs, saving the state money, and updating and improving state laws. Key Sunset outcomes, highlighted in the textbox *Sunset's Impact Since 1977*, illustrate Sunset's success

Impact of Sunset Reviews

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The Sunset process has led to major policy changes in almost every area of state government. Sunset recommendations also have eliminated duplication among agencies and programs, increased public participation and government accountability, and improved the quality and efficiency of government services. A timeline of key events describes how the Sunset Commission and the review process have evolved over time.

Sunset's Impact Since 1977

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Streamlining Texas Government

- 42 Agencies and programs abolished
- 52 agencies and programs abolished and transferred or consolidated

Saving Taxpayer money

- \$1 billion in state and federal savings and revenue gains
- Return of \$18 for every \$1 appropriated to the Sunset Commission since 1985

Providing Effective Oversight

- 570 reviews of state agencies and programs conducted
- 80 percent of Sunset recommendations to the Legislature have become state law since 2001

Question?

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Texas Sunset Advisory Commission
<https://www.sunset.texas.gov/>