

TCEQ Sunset Review Schedule At-A-Glance

December 2009: TCEQ “Self-Evaluation Report” to the Sunset Commission

This report is available on-line and includes detailed information about TCEQ as well as recommendations from TCEQ to the Legislature. Read the report at www.sunset.state.tx.us/82.htm#tceq

April-November 2010: Public Comments Accepted

Sunset Commissioners and staff accept public comments in person as well as via phone, fax, email and “snail mail.” The Sunset Commission website includes contact information for the lead staff member on each agency evaluation.

Public input can include concrete recommendations regarding specific agency functions or broader comments about an agency’s mission. The public is also free to raise concerns about laws and policies that are related to the agency, even though the scope of the Sunset Commission staff report may not include all the policy issues the public raises.

ACT and its member groups are encouraging Texans to engage in two special opportunities for comment: a series of townhall meetings in local communities around the state and a postcard campaign including both physical postcards and an internet sign-on option. Find out more about the meetings and postcard campaign at www.acttexas.org

November 2010: Sunset Staff Report

This report will be available on-line as soon as it is completed, probably around November 1. During the month following the release of the staff report, Sunset staff will accept formal written comments on the report to be included in a packet of information that goes to all the Sunset commissioners.

December 15, 2010: Public Hearing on Sunset Staff Report

This is the big opportunity for members of the public to present formal testimony to the Sunset Commission. Anyone who wants to can attend the public hearing and present testimony. ACT and its member groups will help to coordinate travel, lodging and logistics for individuals outside Austin who want to present public testimony at the public hearing.

January 11, 2011: Decision Meeting

At this meeting, the Sunset Commissioners will adopt official recommendations—they might recommend only a few minor changes to TCEQ, or they could recommend major changes, up to and including reconfiguring, renaming or abolishing the agency. There is no public testimony taken at the decision hearing, but following the adoption of the Commission’s recommendations the public can comment on the recommendations to the Commission and other lawmakers.

January-June 2011: The Sunset Bill

For each agency undergoing sunset review, there is an official “sunset bill” that must pass for the agency to continue its existence. Members of the Sunset Commission divide up the responsibility for carrying the bills, so there is no way to know yet which legislators will be the official bill sponsors.

ACT and its member groups are planning multiple education and advocacy activities to help ensure a strong TCEQ sunset bill, including two lobby days during the legislative session.

**ACT LOBBY DAYS ARE SCHEDULED FOR
MARCH 15 AND APRIL 19, 2011.**

Texas Sunset Advisory Commission Members

Senate Members

Hon. Glenn Hegar, Jr., Chair
Hon. Juan "Chuy" Hinojosa
Hon. Joan Huffman
Hon. Robert Nichols
Hon. John Whitmire
Charles McMahan, Public Member

House Members

Hon. Dennis Bonnen, Vice Chair
Hon. Rafael Anchia
Hon. Byron Cook
Hon. Linda Harper-Brown
Hon. Larry Taylor
Lamont Jefferson, Public Member

What Is Sunset?

Almost every state agency in Texas goes through a once-a-decade "sunset review," where legislators evaluate the effectiveness of state government operations and assess whether or not particular state agencies are still needed.

Texas' sunset process includes significant public participation opportunities at every step, and it's up to Texans to use those opportunities to advocate for strong laws. ACT is here to help you make the most of your opportunity to work for strong environmental and health protection through the TCEQ sunset review.

The Sunset Advisory Commission is made up of ten legislators and two public members appointed by the Lt. Governor and Speaker of the House. The Sunset Commission staff performs the research and analysis functions of the review, with the appointed Commission members taking public testimony and voting on recommendations. The sunset review process takes a full 18 months from start to finish.

The sunset review process was one of the first state government accountability programs developed in the United States. Colorado passed the first sunset review legislation in 1976, and within five years, the majority of states had adopted similar legislation. Texas adopted its sunset legislation in 1977.

Contacting the Sunset Commission

Phone:

(512) 463-1300

Website:

www.sunset.state.tx.us

Fax:

(512) 463-0705

Submit a comment via email: <http://www.sunset.state.tx.us/question.htm>

Comment on a Sunset staff report: <http://www.sunset.state.tx.us/staffreportemail.htm>

Physical Address:

Sunset Advisory Commission
1501 North Congress Avenue
6th Floor, Robert E. Johnson Bldg.
Austin, TX 78701

Mailing Address:

Sunset Advisory Commission
PO Box 13066
Austin, TX 78711

ACT

Alliance for a Clean Texas

The Alliance For A Clean Texas is an alliance of environmental, public interest, consumer rights and religious organizations dedicated to improving public health, quality of life and the environment in Texas by working for change at the regulatory and legislative levels.

Alliance for a Clean Texas • 221 East 9th Street #403 • Austin, Texas 78701
512.619.7076: • info@acttexas.org