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Sunset Advisory Commission
P. O. Box 13066
Austin, Texas 78711-3066

Re: Staff Report on the Texas Youth Commission, Texas Juvenile Probation Commission, and the Office of Independent Ombudsman

Dear Commission Members:

I have read the recently published *Staff Report on the Texas Youth Commission, Texas Juvenile Probation Commission, and the Office of Independent Ombudsman*.

I am troubled by the recommendation that the Texas Youth Commission (TYC) and the Texas Juvenile Probation Commission (TJPC) be abolished and their functions transferred to a newly created Texas Juvenile Justice Department. Having lived through the consolidation of the Texas Department of Corrections, Texas Adult Probation Commission, and all parole supervision functions – creating the behemoth Texas Department of Criminal Justice – I am convinced that attempts to create a mega juvenile justice agency will result in a similar disaster. Bigger certainly is not better, which has clearly been demonstrated in the institutional takeover of the components that comprise the adult criminal justice system.

Present now at the helm of TYC and TJPC are two highly competent and respected leaders who have pledged to work collaboratively to return Texas to the forefront of model juvenile justice practices and programs. It seems prudent to allow these professionals – Cherie Townsend and Vicki Spriggs – the opportunity to bring about reforms without having to deal with the distractions of consolidation. Too, these two agencies have different functions and focus and should be kept separate so that they can excel in their respective areas of competence.

Please reject the staff recommendation to abolish these two agencies.

Very truly yours,

DAN RICHARD BETO
Editor, *Executive Exchange*
Past President

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