



JUVENILE JUSTICE DEPARTMENT

County of Galveston

(PROBATION, RESIDENTIAL AND DETENTION SERVICES)

November 21, 2008

The Honorable Carl Isett
Texas House of Representatives
P.O. Box 2910
Austin, Texas 78768-2910

Dear Chairman Isett:

Thank you for this opportunity to comment on the Sunset Staff Recommendations regarding the Texas Juvenile Probation Commission. I am strongly opposed to the consolidation of the Texas Juvenile Probation Commission and the Texas Youth Commission in order to create a new Texas Juvenile Justice Department. Both agencies play a separate and vital role in our system. TJPC's emphasis is working with local jurisdictions and assisting in community based programming. TYC's emphasis is operating institutions and providing services for the most serious juvenile offenders.

In reviewing the report, a majority of the concerns of consolidation are discussed and an attempt is made to dispel those concerns. TJPC diligently works with local jurisdictions to provide community based programs in an effort to prevent offenders from being sent to the Texas Youth Commission. I strongly believe that a newly created "Texas Juvenile Justice Department" will not share that same philosophy and the focal point will be operating facilities. This will severely hamper local jurisdictions ability to work with juvenile offenders.

Thank you in advance for your time and the opportunity to respond to such an important issue.

Sincerely,

Brent T. Norris, Director
Galveston County Juvenile
Justice Department