

**Attitudes Toward Sunset Review in Texas**

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### Attitudes Toward Sunset Review in Texas

The purpose of this study is to test the theories laid out by Curry (1990) and others concerning more realistic objectives for sunset review. These theories posit that sunset: (1) enhances system reliability by providing an independent perspective to detect organizational goal displacement, (2) allows overseers a more comprehensive review of administrative problems because of the time devoted to the process, (3) standardizes and systemizes administrative procedures and oversight efforts, (4) increases the legitimacy of political decision-making by allowing interests greater access, and (5) may increase political gamesmanship that has nothing to do with the substance of agency politics and procedure. These theories are examined empirically by using survey data derived from samples of two extremely relevant sets of actors in the sunset review process: (1) professional staffers directly responsible for the review of state agencies and (2) public administrators who have been subject to the sunset review process. Although such observations make substantial contributions to our understanding of the practical and theoretical implications of sunset, ours is the first to systematically study the subjective orientations of important actors in the sunset process.

From 1976 through 1982, 36 states passed and implemented some sort of sunset review. The premise of sunset was simple and appealing: certain state agencies would be scheduled for termination each year and would be subjected to an audit or performance review to determine whether they should be

continued or modified. Sunset laws were distinguished by the "automatic termination" function which mandated that agencies not specifically reauthorized by statute or resolution before the scheduled "Sunset" deadline would simply cease to exist.

Sunset was launched amidst a myriad of exaggerated expectations and misunderstandings. Its most ostensible mission, to abolish unnecessary or unproductive agencies, has been only marginally successful. Predictably, most of the agencies terminated were small and politically weak (State Reorganization Commission, 1986). Although abolition of agencies is still an alternative, it becomes increasingly remote since most unsupportable agencies have been eliminated in the first cycles of reviews. Yet after a decade, sunset, in various forms, is institutionalized in 31 states.

The institutionalization of sunset has occurred, in part, because scholars and practitioners now posit more realistic objectives for sunset review. Sunset review may help to standardize and systemize administrative procedures and many of the procedural interactions involved in the oversight process (Roederer and Palmer, 1981). A sunset process allows legislative overseers a more comprehensive appreciation of the problems of administrative management (Adam and Sherman, 1978; Lyons and Freeman, 1984). In one of the few comprehensive studies of sunset review since 1982, Kearney asserts that sunset serves to provide a broader legislative perspective for oversight than is typically provided by means of the traditional, episodic process of oversight (Kearney, 1989).

In a recent study, Curry develops a theoretical perspective on the process of sunset review (Curry, 1990). Curry maintains that Sunset serves to assure system reliability by means of multiple, independent subsystems that overlap or duplicate functions. The key to system reliability, a concept established by Landau (1969), lies in redundancy by design: institutions acting as checks on one another. Sunset review is valuable because it provides an independent perspective to facilitate error detection and correction, and hence produces a more reliable system of administration. State agencies subject to sunset review are forced to reexamine organizational goals that may have been displaced by the individual procedural goals of members. Sunset review provides the outside intervention that is frequently necessary for an agency to determine the value of its procedures relative to its goals.

In addition, Curry states that Sunset helps to deal with the problem of political goal displacement. Public organizations tend to institutionalize the path of least political resistance, often at the expense of broad public accountability. The so-called capture of regulatory agencies by the industries they seek to regulate is only one example of political goal displacement. Independent review of an agency, such as that afforded through the sunset process provides an opportunity to examine the problems of political goal displacement. Sunset's unique threat of automatic termination of an agency gives political muscle to the sunset review process--it allows sunset bills to bypass the legislative barriers that make passing legislation difficult. Often the

scope of political conflict expands and the level of political involvement by interest groups, legislators, the press, and the agencies involved is noticeably heightened. Hence, sunset review may increase the legitimacy of political decision-making as interests which, for a variety of reasons, have been thwarted by the normal routine of incremental policy-making can make a positive contribution to the character of administrative behavior.

There is, of course, a down side to sunset's automatic termination feature, one that may have to be dealt with in subsequent procedural reforms. The threat of agency abolition can produce a plethora of political games which may have little or nothing to do with the substance of agency politics or procedures. Interest groups may use reauthorizing legislation as a vehicle to introduce or expand their own agendas in a way that is inappropriate and that ignores the administrative or political issues that surround the agency. Still without the political urgency or reauthorization, sunset is stripped of the very attribute that makes it a meaningful oversight process.

#### Sunset Review in Texas

Our study focuses on sunset review as it is implemented in Texas. Assessment of sunset in Texas is particularly appropriate because the state is considered a model for the practice and potentials of the sunset review process. The Texas Sunset Act, passed in 1977, is extremely comprehensive. It covers 177 agencies, both regulatory and non-regulatory, excluding few administrative bodies, notably institutions of higher learning (Crawford, 1986). Each agency covered by the

act is required to submit to a sunset review once every twelve years. If an agency fails to gain reauthorization, the Sunset act provides for a one-year wind-down period.

#### The Sunset Advisory Commission (SAC) and SAC staff

The administration of the Sunset Act is the responsibility of the Sunset Advisory Commission. The SAC originally is composed of ten members: four members of the House, appointed by the Speaker, four members of the Senate, appointed by the Lt. Governor, and two public members, one appointed by each presiding officer. The legislative members serve four year terms and the public members, two-year terms.

The SAC is assisted by a full-time, 23 member professional staff. This represents an unusually large commitment to staffing as only a few state sunset commissions have more than eight analysts on staff (Crawford, 1986). These staffers are given the exclusive responsibility for sunset review, and one to four staff members are assigned to review the various agencies. The SAC staff is composed of generalists in program analysis with backgrounds and advanced training in law, political science, public administration, education, business, accounting, economics and social work (Crawford, 1986; Slaughter, 1984).

#### The Process of Sunset Review in Texas

The sunset review process takes place in a 22 month cycle and involves five general steps:

(1) agency self-evaluations: To initiate the sunset review process, the sunset staff mails out the instructions for the two-part agency self-evaluation report (SER) in June. This

report is a statutory requirement of the process. The statute also specifies the criteria to be used in evaluating an agency, department, commission, board; the self-evaluation report must address each of the criteria (Texas Sunset Advisory Commission, Sunset Review in Texas 1985). The first part of the report consists of the administrator's general statement, which must be returned to the commission in August of the same year. The second, and much longer part of the self-evaluation report, must be returned to the sunset commission by the end of September of the same year. Administrators must address five sections: policy-making structure, overall administration, evaluation of programs, other sunset criteria, and sunset across-the-board recommendations (Texas Sunset Advisory Commission, Instructions for Preparing the Self-evaluation II, 1985).

The completion of these two self-evaluation reports by agencies is a length and time-consuming process. To assist in this task, some agencies hire consultants. Other agencies use in-house staff to gather information and compose the report. A line of communications between the agency and the sunset staff also is established at this time (Regulation in Texas, 1986).

(2) SAC staff evaluation and report: While an agency is preparing its report, the SAC staff members are analyzing legislative issues concerning the agency. With the help of the agency staff, SAC staff compile the sunset staff evaluation. In the process of compiling their evaluation, it is not unusual for staffers to remain on the agency's premise for two or three

months at a time (Opheim, 1989). Copies of the staff report are given to both the SAC and the agency.

(3) Public Hearing by the Sunset Advisory Commission (SAC): One year before the agency's bill goes before the legislature, a public hearing is held between September 1 and December 1. The public hearing constitutes the formal process of collecting citizen viewpoints. In addition, sunset staff will meet informally with individual and representatives of groups who may have suggestions or concerns about the agency.

(4) SAC recommendations and proposed legislation concerning abolition or reauthorization: The SAC initially votes to see if the agency should be abolished. If the SAC votes to continue the agency, an evaluation is made of what changes, if any, should be recommended. Next, the SAC directs its attention to areas described in the sunset staff report.

Once the SAC renders decisions on recommended changes for the agency, staff members begin to prepare a draft of the proposed legislation. The agency is allowed to review the proposed legislation and to comment. But the only way an agency can make substantive changes in recommendations is by suggesting amendments. The latter must be voted on by the SAC before they can be included.

(5) Legislative action on the bill or alternatives to it sponsored by others: The SAC bill is submitted, along with a report containing all commission decisions, to the legislature and governor as required by law. A member of the SAC usually sponsors an agency's bill, but there are occasions when an alternate bill is sponsored by another legislator. Failure to



approve by either house or the unwillingness of the governor to sign an approved bill means the agency will be abolished.

Throughout the first 12 year cycle in Texas, a majority of the SAC's recommendations were adopted by the legislature. However, there may be differences in the SAC recommendations and the final bill. In general, legislative changes have been more substantial than the commission's recommendations (Regulation in Texas, 1986). For example, closing the Texas Health Facilities Commission (THFC) was discussed by the SAC, but since a majority did not support the proposals, they were not recommended. Once taken to the legislature, however, the issues were raised and more support was present for these actions.

#### Survey Methodology

This study targets administrators and SAC staff members who have participated in sunset reviews over the past twelve years. Sixteen SAC staff members, roughly 95 percent of the current non-clerical staff, responded. Data from 79 administrators was also generated. Respondents were contacted to ascertain their willingness to participate. This resulted in a response rate in excess of 85 percent. It is important to recognize that the universe of participants is roughly 150, making the sample size a rather large proportion of the universe. The questionnaire involved a wide range of issues related to the process and the political and administrative implications of sunset review (Appendix A).

## Findings

(1) The first hypothesis the researchers addressed is that sunset enhances system reliability by providing an independent perspective to detect organizational goal displacement. The independence of the sunset process provides the opportunity for in-bred relationships to be unsettled, at least for the sunset review. This unsettling allows for legislators, public administrators, interest groups, and the general public to have a fresh look at the purposes and processes of what may be a closely guarded agency. In the hectic biennial legislative session, oversight often becomes quite perfunctory. The sunset process periodically breathes a bit of life into the oversight process by providing an in-depth analysis which is not conducted by the regular overseers of a particular agency. This independence produces the major benefit of the sunset process (Curry, 1990).

Agency administrators were asked to evaluate the usefulness of the self-study and the SAC staff review of their respective agencies. The self-study forced agency personnel to evaluate administrative procedures according to external criteria, that is, from an independent perspective. The staff review provided an immediate and direct experience with outside reviewers.

It is obvious from Table 1 that administrators were highly positive toward the self-study as well as the staff review of their agency.

Table 1 about here

Seventy percent of the administrators said the self-study was useful or very useful. Another 63 percent felt the data required for the study was relevant or very relevant.

Administrators also gave an extremely favorable evaluations to the staff reviews of their respective agencies. Eighty-three percent felt that staff recommendations to the SAC were very well or generally well founded. Seventy percent thought that, overall, the staff review of the agency was excellent or good. In addition, to their positive evaluation of the staff review process, agency personnel were also impressed with the competency of the staff themselves. This is important since the value of an independent review process can only be realized if the reviewers are proficient. Table 1 also includes the questions and responses given by administrators to assess the competency and professionalism of the SAC staff. These assessments of competency are even higher than the assessments of process. For example, 83 percent of public administrators thought staff highly or basically qualified; an even higher percentage (96%) thought the staff was professional. The survey also shows that a comprehensive on-site review will generally result in friendly or cooperative relationships between reviewers and those reviewed. Ninety-seven percent of administrators thought the working relationship between staff and agency personnel was very or generally cooperative.

(2) A second hypothesis tested in this study in that sunset provides for a more comprehensive review of administrative problems because of the time devoted to the

process. Time allows a breadth of focus that is rarely seen through normal oversight processes. As implemented, other forms of oversight in Texas government such as Zero-Based Budgeting, Performance Evaluations, and audits are somewhat inadequate because of their limited perspectives and because of their routine natures. The formal oversight activities by standing and interim legislative committees and executive task forces have proved limited because of the lack of time, expertise, and breadth of focus. This is particularly true of committee oversight, where strong, long-term political relationships tend to institutionalize the routine, narrow focus which limits reviews to specific problem-solution.

Sunset review provides a unique opportunity for in-depth evaluation because of the time which is invested in each agency review. During the short 140 day session time is taken up putting out fires and attending to only the highest priorities for legislative action. There is no initiative for the legislature to review the implications of its actions in a comprehensive fashion. Other agencies that provide oversight information to the legislature typically are understaffed and must review all agencies for each legislative session. Perhaps an hour's time will be devoted to any information related to any given agency's operations in the typical legislative process (Curry, 1990). Conversely, sunset review allows for approximately 25 agencies to be reviewed over a 22 month period. The SAC staff carefully evaluates the agency even staying on site over a period of weeks.

Both staff and public administrators were asked if sufficient time was allowed different steps of the review process. These questions and both sets of responses are shown in Table 2.

Table 2 about here

Both administrators and staff felt that those responsible for review at each step of the sunset process were given sufficient time. The percentage of responses indicating sufficient time was available never falls below 70 percent in any of the four questions.

(3) The third hypothesis tested is that sunset helps to standardize and systemize both administrative procedures and oversight efforts. Sunset reviews can result in more coordination or even the combination of agencies performing related functions so that oversight is easier to conduct. Because of its breadth of focus, sunset can draw together oversight efforts among more narrowly focused agents such as auditors, performance review boards, budget officials and staff, and legislative committees.

Responses from administrators and staff to two questions address this third hypothesis and, interestingly, there are significant differences in their responses. Table 3 shows that SAC staff feel strongly that sunset results in more coordination among agencies and more coordination among oversight agents.

Table 3 about here

Seventy-five percent of the staffers feel coordination among agencies is improved while a majority feel oversight efforts

are more coordinated as a result of the sunset process. In contrast, a majority of administrators feel that sunset review has no effect on either. Perhaps this difference lies in the fact that staffers have a much broader perspective of administrative as well as oversight procedures. A fourth hypothesis addresses the role sunset places in the political process. The need for positive action by the legislature for reauthorization invariably heightens interest in sunset legislation. The threat of termination means that sunset legislation will bypass many of the normal legislative barriers that make passage of a bill difficult. Thus sunset serves as political lightning rod, providing a convenient forum for the politically-interested to interact and influence public policy-making. Once a sunset bill is introduced into the legislature, a variety of opportunities are produced by the pressure for positive action. A sunset bill can be regarded as a vehicle, attracting riders along the way. Because the sunset bill "just can't die," it can be packaged with other initiatives either by amendment or informally with other bills.

As we examine the assumption that sunset increases interest and activity in the legislative process, we also expect to find both healthy and destructive effects from this heightened interest and activity. Sunset may increase the legitimacy of political decision-making by allowing diverse interests greater access and influence. Sunset review may help to balance conflicting constituency pressures on an agency giving it a new political perspective and a more balanced view of policy alternatives. At the same time, sunset bills may be

used or even held hostage by those whose agenda is not related to the issues surrounding review of the agency.

Three questions were used to assess whether sunset legislation increases interest and activity. The first question asks "Was sunset legislation handled differently than other legislation?"; respondents were allowed to mark all the answers that applied. A majority of both groups (58 percent of staff and 51 percent of administrators) responded that sunset bills were given closer scrutiny by the legislature. In addition the question "How many additional legislative amendments were included in the sunset bill?" allowed a range of zero to more than ten. The largest modal category for both staff and public administrators was "over 10" (40 and 32 percent respectively). Finally a third question asked "...the effects of sunset reforms on the intensity of interest group behavior." Sixty-four percent of staff and 47 percent of administrators stated that interest group behavior significantly increased or increased.

Three questions assessed the involvement and influence of interest groups in each step of the sunset process. Table 4 shows that a majority of both staff and administrators thought that interest groups yielded sufficient influence in the staff, the SAC, and the legislative review.

Table 4 about here

However, it should be noted that 25 percent or more of the administrators thought interest groups wielded too much influence in all three steps.

In addition to the three questions concerning the influence of interest groups, staff and administrators were also asked to "Assess the effects of sunset reforms on the balance of conflicting constituency pressures on the agency." There was a significant difference in the assessments of staff and administrators on this point. Sixty-nine percent of the staff thought that sunset significantly or partially balanced constituency pressures while 78 percent of administrators felt sunset either had no effect on the pressures or caused them to become more unbalanced.

(5) Finally, two questions were designed to determine whether sunset was used as a vehicle for issues unrelated or only peripherally related to agency administration and policy. Tables 5 and 6 show staff and administrator responses to these questions.

Tables 5 and 6 about here

Sixty percent of the administrators surveyed thought that political considerations unrelated to the review of the agency had a significant impact on the legislation. Forty three percent of administrators and 53 percent of staff believed that sunset bills always or frequently serve as vehicles for passing legislation while 43 and 47 percent respectively believe that they occasionally do.

## Conclusions

1. Sunset as a management tool. It should be emphasized that abolition is a threat that provides sunset review with urgency in the political process and is not the basic purpose of management recommendations. The data show that sunset



review generally works to provide an independent review of agency activities. The extent of support for this process by the administrators under review was surprisingly extensive. The SAC staff and their recommendations were widely well received. Sunset review has served to provide the time and the breadth of focus necessary to evaluate agency processes in a manner which meets or exceeds the expectations of agency personnel. Though sunset review has invariably included various provisions which are intended to produce uniformity of process and performance indicators, these efforts have not been regarded as particularly effective in stimulating more cooperation among agencies and among overseers.

2. Sunset as a political tool. Sunset review has stimulated interest group activity, extending and intensifying interest group influence on the decision making process. However, sunset review has also stimulated various political games which often have worked at cross purposes with the goals of improving administrative processes and providing more open access to decision making.

3. Overall, this study shows surprisingly strong support for the process by agency personnel, the very people who are the most threatened by it. In addition, this study suggests that attention needs to be directed at improving the coordination of agency oversight and inter-agency activities. Finally attention should be paid to reforms which are intended to reduce the extraneous political implications of sunset review (Curry, 1990).

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Table 1. Independent Perspectives -- Studying Agency  
Performance

	administrators % positive	staff
1. self study		
clarity	88	89
time	79	88
data collection	67	100
data relevance	63	63
usefulness	70	88
2. staff review		
staff qualifications	83	100
professionalism	96	100
methods	82	89
time	82	100
political sensitivity	67	89
staff/agency relations	97	100
recommendations	83	100
overall performance	70	100

**Table 2. Comprehensive Review -- Time and Breadth of Focus**

	administrators	staff
	% positive	
1. time		
self study	79	88
staff review	82	100
SAC decisions	78	93
legislative decisions	85	100
2. breadth of focus		
self study usefulness	70	88
staff review usefulness	70	100

Table 3. Uniformity of Procedures and Performance Indicators

	administrators % positive	staff
1. coordination		
oversight	32	50
among agencies	39	67
2. planning	32	73
3. performance	41	83

Table 4. Politics of Sunset -- Interest Groups Involvement

	administrators % positive	staff
1. access		
staff information	85	88
SAC review process	91	100
2. influence		
staff decisions	86	100
SAC decisions	90	100
legislative decisions	93	100
3. implications		
balance of conflict		
IG interaction	21	69
public membership	55	57
intensity of conflict	47	64

Table 5. Political Gamesmanship

	administrators % positive	staff
1. unrelated political influence	90	100
2. too much influence by		
presiding officers	15	6
governor	25	13
media	10	7
3. special handling		
closer scrutiny	52	47
attraction of riders	35	40
held up procedurally	38	20
expidited	1	1
vehicle for other bills	33	53

APPENDIX A

**SUNSET REVIEW SURVEY**

**PLEASE NOTE: Some questions may not be relevant to your experience please read all the questions but feel free to omit answers. And if you omit an answer, remember to skip the appropriate space on the answer form.**

**USE A #2 PENCIL FOR MARKING THE ANSWER FORM**

**GENERAL QUESTIONS**

**1. IN WHAT CAPACITY WERE YOU MOST DIRECTLY INVOLVED WITH THE SUNSET PROCESS?**

- a. Sunset Commission member
- b. Sunset Commission staff
- c. legislator or legislative staff
- d. public administrator
- e. lobbyist

**2. WHAT PERIOD OF TIME DID YOU FIRST BECOME INVOLVED WITH THE SUNSET PROCESS?**

- a. 1977-1981
- b. 1981-1983
- c. 1983-1985
- d. 1985-1987
- e. 1987-1989

**3. WHEN WAS YOUR LATEST INVOLVEMENT WITH THE SUNSET PROCESS?**

- a. 1977-1981
- b. 1981-1983
- c. 1983-1985
- d. 1985-1987
- e. 1987-1989

**4. HOW MANY PEOPLE WERE EMPLOYED BY THE AGENCY UNDER REVIEW?**

- a. under 20 employees
- b. 21 - 40 employees
- c. 41 - 80 employees
- d. over 80 employees

**EVALUATIONS OF THE SUNSET SELF-STUDY**

**5. AS PRESENTED BY THE SUNSET COMMISSION STAFF, WERE THE INSTRUCTIONS FOR COMPLETING THE SELF-STUDY**

- a. very clear
- b. sufficiently clear
- c. vague
- d. very vague

**6. WERE YOU ALLOWED ENOUGH TIME TO CONDUCT THE SELF-STUDY?**

- a. far more time than was needed
- b. more time than was needed
- c. sufficient time
- d. less time than was needed
- e. far less time than was needed

**7. OVERALL, WERE THE DATA REQUIRED FOR THE SELF-STUDY**

- a. already available
- b. generally easy to collect
- c. generally difficult to collect
- d. very difficult to collect



**8. WERE THE DATA REQUIRED FOR THE SELF-STUDY RELEVANT TO THE OPERATIONS OF YOUR AGENCY?**

- a. very relevant
- b. relevant
- c. somewhat relevant
- d. irrelevant
- e. thoroughly irrelevant

**9. WAS THE SELF-STUDY A USEFUL EXERCISE IN EVALUATING THE OPERATIONS OF YOUR AGENCY?**

- a. very useful
- b. useful
- c. of little use
- d. useless

**EVALUATIONS OF THE SUNSET COMMISSION STAFF REVIEW**

**10. ASSESS THE QUALIFICATIONS OF THE SUNSET COMMISSION STAFF MEMBERS ASSIGNED TO REVIEW THE AGENCY.**

- a. highly qualified
- b. basically qualified
- c. basically unqualified
- d. highly unqualified

**11. ASSESS THE PROFESSIONALISM WITH WHICH THE SUNSET COMMISSION STAFF CONDUCTED THE REVIEW OF THE AGENCY.**

- a. highly professional
- b. generally professional
- c. generally unprofessional
- d. highly unprofessional

**12. WERE THE ANALYTICAL METHODS USED BY THE SUNSET COMMISSION STAFF APPROPRIATE TO THE EVALUATION OF THE AGENCY?**

- a. highly appropriate
- b. generally appropriate
- c. generally inappropriate
- d. highly inappropriate

**13. DID THE SUNSET COMMISSION STAFF DEVOTE SUFFICIENT TIME TO THE AGENCY REVIEW?**

- a. far more time than was needed
- b. more time than was needed
- c. sufficient time
- d. less time than was needed
- e. far less time than was needed

**14. WAS THE SUNSET COMMISSION STAFF SENSITIVE TO AGENCY POLITICS?**

- a. highly sensitive
- b. generally sensitive
- c. neutral
- d. generally insensitive
- e. highly insensitive

**15. ASSESS THE WORKING RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN THE SUNSET COMMISSION STAFF AND AGENCY PERSONNEL.**

- a. very cooperative
- b. generally cooperative
- c. generally conflictual
- d. highly conflictual

**16. WERE THE RECOMMENDATIONS MADE BY THE SUNSET COMMISSION STAFF CONCERNING THE AGENCY WELL FOUNDED?**

- a. very well founded
- b. generally well founded
- c. generally poorly founded
- d. very poorly founded

**17. DID THE SUNSET COMMISSION STAFF PROVIDE INTEREST GROUPS SUFFICIENT ACCESS TO THE AGENCY REVIEW PROCESS?**

- a. far too much access
- b. too much access
- c. sufficient access
- d. too little access
- e. far too little access

**18. DID THE SUNSET COMMISSION STAFF PROVIDE INTEREST GROUPS SUFFICIENT INFORMATION CONCERNING THE AGENCY REVIEW PROCESS?**

- a. far too much information
- b. too much information
- c. sufficient information
- d. too little information
- e. far too little information

**19. ASSESS THE EXTENT OF INTEREST GROUP INFLUENCE ON THE SUNSET COMMISSION STAFF DURING THE AGENCY REVIEW PROCESS.**

- a. far too much influence
- b. too much influence
- c. sufficient influence
- d. too little influence
- e. far too little influence

**20. WAS THE SUNSET COMMISSION STAFF RESPONSIVE TO PROPOSALS MADE BY INTEREST GROUPS DURING THE AGENCY REVIEW PROCESS?**

- a. far too receptive to interest group proposals
- b. too receptive to interest group proposals
- c. sufficiently responsive to interest group proposals
- d. too resistant to interest group proposals
- e. far too resistant to interest group proposals

**21. WHAT IS YOUR OVERALL EVALUATION OF THE AGENCY REVIEW CONDUCTED BY THE SUNSET COMMISSION STAFF?**

- a. excellent
- b. good
- c. adequate
- d. poor
- e. dismal

**EVALUATIONS OF THE SUNSET COMMISSION DECISIONS**

**22. ASSESS THE INFLUENCE OF SUNSET COMMISSION STAFF ON THE DECISIONS MADE BY THE SUNSET COMMISSION.**

- a. far too much influence
- b. too much influence
- c. proper degree of influence
- d. too little influence
- e. far too little influence

23. ASSESS THE INFLUENCE OF INTEREST GROUPS ON THE DECISIONS MADE BY THE SUNSET COMMISSION.

- a. far too much influence
- b. too much influence
- c. proper degree of influence
- d. too little influence
- e. far too little influence

24. ASSESS THE INFLUENCE OF OTHER LEGISLATORS ON THE DECISIONS MADE BY THE SUNSET COMMISSION.

- a. far too much influence
- b. too much influence
- c. proper degree of influence
- d. too little influence
- e. far too little influence

25. DID THE SUNSET COMMISSION DEVOTE SUFFICIENT TIME TO DECISION-MAKING CONCERNING THE AGENCY REVIEW?

- a. far more time than was needed
- b. more time than was needed
- c. sufficient time
- d. less time than was needed
- e. far less time than was needed

26. OVERALL, HOW INVOLVED WERE THE PUBLIC MEMBERS OF THE SUNSET COMMISSION IN THE DECISION-MAKING PROCESS CONCERNING THE AGENCY REVIEW?

- a. very active
- b. active
- c. passive
- d. very passive

27. ASSESS THE WORKING RELATIONSHIP AMONG THE SUNSET COMMISSION MEMBERS CONCERNING THE AGENCY REVIEW.

- a. very cooperative
- b. generally cooperative
- c. generally conflictual
- d. highly conflictual

28. WERE THE SUNSET COMMISSION HEARINGS ON THE AGENCY REVIEW VALUABLE TO THE DECISION-MAKING PROCESS?

- a. quite valuable
- b. valuable
- c. of little value
- d. of no value

**EVALUATIONS OF LEGISLATIVE ACTION ON SUNSET BILLS**

29. WAS SUNSET LEGISLATION HANDLED DIFFERENTLY THAN OTHER LEGISLATION? (please mark all answers that apply)

- a. the bill was given closer scrutiny
- b. the bill attracted more riders than usual
- c. the bill was held up procedurally
- d. consideration of the bill was expedited
- e. the bill received no special handling

**30. HOW MANY ADDITIONAL LEGISLATIVE AMENDMENTS WERE INCLUDED IN THE SUNSET BILL?**

- a. 0
- b. 1-2
- c. 3-5
- d. 5-10
- e. more than ten

**31. ASSESS THE LEGISLATIVE ACTION CONCERNING SUNSET BILLS.**

- a. substantial revisions which were stronger than the Sunset Commission recommendations
- b. minor revisions which were stronger than the Sunset Commission recommendations
- c. no revisions to the Sunset Commission recommendations
- d. minor revisions which were weaker than the Sunset Commission recommendations
- e. substantial revisions which were weaker than the Sunset Commission recommendations

**32. TO WHAT EXTENT WAS THE LEGISLATIVE ACTION ON SUNSET BILLS AFFECTED BY POLITICAL CONSIDERATIONS WHICH WERE UNRELATED TO THE REVIEW OF THE AGENCY?**

- a. significant impact
- b. marginal impact
- c. no impact

**33. DID THE LEGISLATURE DEVOTE SUFFICIENT TIME TO DECISION-MAKING CONCERNING SUNSET BILLS?**

- a. far more time than was needed
- b. more time than was needed
- c. sufficient time
- d. less time than was needed
- e. far less time than was needed

**34. ASSESS THE INFLUENCE OF INTEREST GROUPS DURING LEGISLATIVE CONSIDERATION OF SUNSET BILLS.**

- a. far too much influence
- b. too much influence
- c. proper degree of influence
- d. too little influence
- e. far too little influence

**35. ASSESS THE INFLUENCE OF THE SUNSET COMMISSION STAFF DURING LEGISLATIVE CONSIDERATION OF SUNSET BILLS.**

- a. far too much influence
- b. too much influence
- c. proper degree of influence
- d. too little influence
- e. far too little influence

**36. ASSESS THE INFLUENCE OF THE SUNSET COMMISSION MEMBERS DURING LEGISLATIVE CONSIDERATION OF SUNSET BILLS.**

- a. far too much influence
- b. too much influence
- c. proper degree of influence
- d. too little influence
- e. far too little influence

**37. ASSESS THE INFLUENCE OF THE PRESIDING OFFICERS DURING LEGISLATIVE CONSIDERATION OF SUNSET BILLS.**

- a. far too much influence
- b. too much influence
- c. proper degree of influence
- d. too little influence
- e. far too little influence

**38. ASSESS THE INFLUENCE OF THE GOVERNOR DURING LEGISLATIVE CONSIDERATION OF SUNSET BILLS.**

- a. far too much influence
- b. too much influence
- c. proper degree of influence
- d. too little influence
- e. far too little influence

**39. ASSESS THE INFLUENCE OF THE MEDIA DURING LEGISLATIVE CONSIDERATION OF SUNSET BILLS.**

- a. far too much influence
- b. too much influence
- c. proper degree of influence
- d. too little influence
- e. far too little influence

**EVALUATIONS OF THE ADMINISTRATIVE ROLE OF SUNSET REVIEW**

**40. ASSESS THE OVERALL EFFECTS OF IMPLEMENTING SUNSET REFORMS IN THE AGENCY.**

- a. vastly improved performance
- b. improved performance
- c. no appreciable effect on performance
- d. harmed performance
- e. vastly harmed performance

**41. HAVE SUNSET REFORMS CONTRIBUTED TO THE COORDINATION AMONG AGENCIES PERFORMING RELATED FUNCTIONS?**

- a. vastly improved coordination
- b. improved coordination
- c. no appreciable effect on coordination
- d. harmed coordination
- e. vastly harmed coordination

**42. HAVE SUNSET REFORMS CONTRIBUTED TO THE COORDINATION AMONG OVERSIGHT AGENTS SUCH AS LBB, STATE AUDITOR, BUDGET AND PLANNING, AND LEGISLATIVE COMMITTEES?**

- a. vastly improved coordination
- b. improved coordination
- c. no appreciable effect on coordination
- d. harmed coordination
- e. vastly harmed coordination

**43. ASSESS THE EFFECTS OF SUNSET REFORMS ON THE COSTS OF AGENCY ADMINISTRATION.**

- a. significantly lowered costs
- b. lowered costs
- c. no appreciable effect
- d. increased costs
- e. significantly increased costs

44. ASSESS THE EFFECTS OF SUNSET REFORMS ON THE RECEIPT OF REVENUES BY THE AGENCY.

- a. significantly increased revenues
- b. increased revenues
- c. no appreciable effect
- d. reduced revenues
- e. significantly reduced revenues

45. ASSESS THE EFFECTS OF SUNSET REVIEW ON THE PLANNING PROCESS.

- a. significantly improved planning
- b. improved planning
- c. no appreciable effect
- d. hindered planning
- e. significantly hindered planning

EVALUTATIONS OF THE POLITICAL IMPLICATIONS OF SUNSET REVIEW

46. ASSESS THE EFFECTS OF SUNSET REFORMS ON THE BALANCE OF CONFLICTING CONSTITUENCY PRESSURES ON THE AGENCY.

- a. significantly balanced conflicting pressures
- b. partially balanced conflicting pressures
- c. no appreciable effect
- d. partially unbalanced conflicting pressures
- e. significantly unbalanced conflicting pressures

47. ASSESS THE EXTENT TO WHICH SUNSET BILLS HAVE SERVED AS A VEHICLE FOR PASSING OTHER LEGISLATION.

- a. always
- b. frequently
- c. occasionally
- d. never

48. ASSESS THE EFFECTS OF MANDATING PUBLIC MEMBERSHIP ON STATE BOARDS AND COMMISSIONS ON THE BALANCE OF CONFLICTING CONSTITUENCY PRESSURES ON THE AGENCY.

- a. significantly balanced conflicting interests
- b. partially balanced conflicting interests
- c. no appreciable effect
- d. partially unbalanced conflicting interests
- e. significantly unbalanced conflicting interests

49. ASSESS THE EFFECTS OF SUNSET REFORMS ON THE INTENSITY OF INTEREST GROUP BEHAVIOR.

- a. significantly increased intensity
- b. increased intensity
- c. no appreciable effect
- d. decreased intensity
- e. significantly decreased intensity

THANK YOU VERY MUCH FOR YOUR COOPERATION.