



Texas Radiation Advisory Board

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The Honorable Warren Chisum
House Environmental Regulation Committee
P.O. 2910
Austin, Texas 78768-2910

Dear Chairman Chisum:

The Texas Radiation Advisory Board (TRAB) has been briefed by the Bureau of Radiation Control (BRC) of the Texas Department of Health (TDH) regarding their human capital crisis. Given the state of the Bureau's personnel and staffing challenges, and in contrast to other states with similarly situated programs, the TRAB feels that your attention needs to be drawn to this very critical matter with utmost haste and resolve.

The attached study is not merely attempting to justify pay raises for BRC personnel. It is yet another sign of a persistent problem that the state has been loathe to address. Many positions within the Bureau remain unfilled and many more will soon become vacant due to retirements and losses to other businesses paying higher wages.

The net result of this situation is that critical tasks that Texans entrust the state to carry out are not being done in a timely manner or are not able to be done at all – despite the best efforts of many dedicated professionals within the BRC. The Bureau has worked diligently to meet growing demands with a shrinking staff and has thus far been successful in meeting its mission. However, at some point in the very near future, it is obvious that the employees will be stretched to the point where this is no longer possible.

Please take notice.

The positions within the BRC require highly competent and educated individuals with specialized training in biology, chemistry, and nuclear physics to name a few disciplines. Individuals meeting these qualifications are few and far between. Therefore, it is incumbent upon the state and TDH to attempt to attract these individuals with more competitive salaries and work to retain them once they have become proficient in their positions.

The attached study outlines several options that would go a long way toward making progress in this critical area. The TRAB endorsed these options during the January 2002 meeting with the understanding that any cost increases would be supported through fees and the impact to the State of Texas would be revenue neutral. The TRAB members look forward to working with you toward a solution for the BRC's human capital shortage.

Respectfully,

original signed by

Michael Ford, C.H.P.
Vice Chair

cc: Eduardo Sanchez, M.D., Commissioner of Health

