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# County of San Diego
# Board of Supervisors

JIM BATES
SUPERVISOR FOURTH DISTRICT

October 12, 1977

Board of Supervisors
County Administration Center
1600 Pacific Highway
San Diego, CA 92101

Supervisors:

On January 7, in my State of the County Address, I expressed the need for a procedure for the planned elimination of ineffective, nonessential, inactive, outdated, and conflicting county programs, ordinances and policies, and any other activities that are not absolutely essential to the effective and efficient conduct of County government. This procedure is popularly known as "Sunset" legislation.

The essence of Sunset is the placing of automatic termination dates--an action-forcing mechanism that provides for a periodic review of programs, ordinances and policies. Such re-evaluation of all County activities doesn't just happen in the normal course of events; it must be prescribed and consciously performed.

In San Diego County, we are presently administering nearly 200 direct public service programs and dozens of ordinances and policies. The County cannot afford activities that have outlived their usefulness, serve only a narrow constituency, or have proven unworkable. Yet, there has never been a comprehensive review of all of the above mentioned activities in order to eliminate, reauthorize, consolidate or revise the same. Therefore, it is my

RECOMMENDATION

that the Board of Supervisors:

(1) Approve in principle the Sunset review process related to programs, ordinances and policies outlined in the attachment.

(2) Direct the Chief Administrative Officer to return to the Board within 30 days with:

(a) a recommendation of policies and ordinances necessary to implement this process beginning in the 1978-79 fiscal year;

On 11/8/77 (67) the Board approved in principle, with Chief Administrative Officer and County Counsel to provide progress report with an outline on 12/6/77 and final report on 1/3/78.

PORTER D. CREMANS
Clerk of the Board of Supervisors

NOV 8 1977 (67)

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By Rosina Monteleone Deputy

(b) a detailed Sunset review process incorporating the steps and concepts outlined below; and

(c) a modification of the Program Planning and Management System (PPMS) process to include provisions for Sunset review.

DISCUSSION

While the phrase "Sunset Legislation" has come to mean that agencies, programs or regulations sink under the western horizon at the end of a given period of time, its true purpose is to evaluate and update programs, laws, and policies on a regular basis, and not allow them to be perpetuated indefinitely.

The Sunset concept is not new. In fact, eleven States have enacted Sunset laws and Sunset bills have passed one house of the legislature in over a dozen others. The idea has been discussed in every legislature that is meeting.

There have been several bills introduced in both houses of the California Legislature this year that would impose the Sunset concept on either all or some selected group of State operations. In early May of this year, the California Senate approved a resolution which directs the legislative analyst to start a specific review and evaluation of the Sunset approach (SCR3 - Mills).

In Washington, a Sunset bill for federal programs has 54 Senate and 140 House co-sponsors. This "Program Evaluation Act of 1977", introduced by Senator Muskie, is currently being reviewed in both House and Senate committees. President Carter, both as a candidate and since assuming office, has endorsed the Sunset concept as a necessary part of the process to reform and revitalize federal programs.

County government, like State and federal governments, has become a large and complex bureaucracy which is increasingly more difficult to oversee and evaluate in terms of performance and effectiveness. Sunset is a powerful concept which will facilitate: (1) responsiveness to citizens, not special interests; (2) the consolidation of functions; and (3) overall improvements in management.

The enactment of this legislation will help to meet our responsibility to the people of San Diego County for effective and efficient government.

Respectfully submitted,

JIM BATES, Chairman
Board of Supervisors

NOV 8 - 1977 # 67

Attachments