

# Minutes

## Joint Legislative Program Evaluation Oversight Committee

November 20, 2019

### Members Present

Senator Brent Jackson, Chair  
Senator Don Davis  
Senator Chuck Edwards  
Senator Carl Ford  
Sen. Valerie Foushee  
Senator Paul Newton  
Senator Andy Wells

Representative Craig Horn, Chair  
Representative Ted Davis  
Representative Julia Howard  
Representative Pat Hurley  
Representative Marvin Lucas

Senator Brent Jackson, Chair, called the meeting to order.

Representative Howard moved to approve the October 21, 2019 Minutes. Motion passed.

Chairman Jackson recognized Emily McCartha, Program Evaluator, to present the report entitled ***DEQ Working to Improve Organizational Structure and Permit Processes, But Targeted Adjustments and a Performance Management System Are Still Needed***. The Department of Environmental Quality's (DEQ's) average span of control and total organizational layers in 2019 remain similar to levels that PED found in 2016. Five of DEQ's 20 organizational units contain higher levels of narrow spans and more organizational layers than recommended, with the Division of Marine Fisheries presenting the greatest potential for structural issues. Although decentralization of permit processing enables units to meet varied permit requirements, granting such autonomy absent a permit performance management system limits DEQ's ability to ensure processes are efficient and effective. DEQ's Permitting Transformation Project offers a way to build such a system.

The committee heard remarks from Joy Hicks, Senior Director for Governmental Affairs and Policy, DEQ.

Jeff Cherry, Bill Drafting presented the bill draft that would implement the report's recommendations. Chairman Jackson announced the bill draft would be voted on at the next meeting in January 2021.

Senator Edwards asked if there was any resistance from DEQ to the proposed bill draft. Senator Wells asked that DEQ provide the Committee with the date that all recent organizational changes at DEQ would be in place.

Chairman Jackson recognized Sara Nienow, Program Evaluator, to present the report entitled ***Child Protective Services Intake Screening Lacks Consistency***. County social services workers receive referrals of potential child maltreatment at the community level. Workers screen each allegation to decide if a more in-depth assessment should be conducted. County offices vary substantially in the rates of initial referrals that are screened in or out. County Division of Social Services (DSS) directors surveyed by PED attributed this variation to differing local policies, lack of staff familiarity with intake screening procedures, and an absence of consistent and timely central guidance by the Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS). PED found that the current structured intake tool makes the reporting process lengthy and redundant and may also contribute to screening inconsistency.

The committee heard remarks from Susan Osbourne, Assistant Secretary for County Operations, DHHS and Amy Betts, an advocate for parents.

Kiernan McGorty, Committee Counsel presented the bill draft that would implement the report's recommendations. Chairman Jackson announced the bill draft would be voted on at the next meeting in January 2021.



Chairman Jackson recognized Joshua Freeman, Bill Drafting to present the bill draft on **State Ports**. Senator Don Davis offered an amendment, which was later withdrawn. Representative Julia Howard made a motion to recommend the bill draft. Motion passed.

Chairman Jackson recognized Drupti Chauhan, Legislative Analysis to present the bill draft on **State Scholarships**. Senator Jackson offered an amendment. Senator Edwards made a motion to adopt the amendment. Motion passed. Senator Edwards made a motion to recommend the bill draft as amended. Motion passed.

Chairman Jackson announced that there were two items that would need to be voted on by committee members.

- (1) His request that PED's work plan include an evaluation of the state Department of Transportation's internal audit unit and oversight of the unit by the department and the state Council of Internal Auditing.

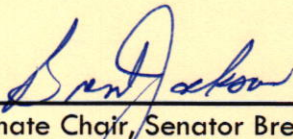
Senator Edwards made a motion to amend the work plan to include an evaluation of DOT's internal audit unit. Motion passed.

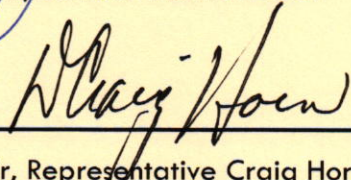
- (2) The General Assembly passed laws that assigned PED three new studies (Military Licensure Practices, Reorganization of the Department of Public Safety, and NCFAS Child Welfare Case Management).

Representative Howard made a motion to exempt the studies from the mandatory evaluation components required by G.S. 120-136.14(b). Motion passed.

Chairman Jackson announced that the committee would meet again on January 13, 2020.

With no further business, the committee adjourned.

  
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Senate Chair, Senator Brent Jackson

  
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House Chair, Representative Craig Horn