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MAINE STATE LEGISLATURE

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SEN. DANA L. DOW
SEN. JOSEPH C. PERRY
SEN. KEVIN L. RAYE

GOVERNMENT OVERSIGHT COMMITTEE

(Joint Legislative Committee on Program Evaluation
And Government Accountability)

REP. MARILYN E. CANAVAN
REP. RONALD F. COLLINS
REP. ROBERT H. CROSTHWAITE
REP. LILLIAN LAFONTAINE O'BRIEN
REP. A. DAVID TRAHAN

Meeting Summary **December 4, 2006** **Accepted January 22, 2007**

CALL TO ORDER

Senator Bartlett, Acting Chair, called the Government Oversight Committee meeting to order at 10:13 a.m. in Room 202 of the Burton Cross Office Building.

ATTENDANCE

Senators: Sen. Bartlett and Sen. Dow
Joining the meeting in progress: Sen. Perry and Sen. Courtney
Absent: Sen. Mitchell and Sen. Raye

Representatives: Rep. Trahan, Rep. Collins, Rep. O'Brien, Rep. Canavan and
Rep. Crosthwaite
Absent: Rep. Dugay

Legislative Officers and Staff: Beth Ashcroft, Director of OPEGA
Diana Stiles Friou, Principal Analyst, OPEGA
Susan Reynolds, Analyst, OPEGA
Jennifer Reichenbach, Analyst, OPEGA
Etta Begin, Adm. Secretary, OPEGA

Department of Economic & Community Development: Jack Cashman, Commissioner
T J Tavares, Policy Specialist

Introduction of Government Oversight Committee Members

Members of the Government Oversight Committee introduced themselves for the benefit of the listening audience.

Members of the GOC and Director Ashcroft recognized and thanked Rep. Trahan for his hard work in the creation of the Office of Program Evaluation and Government Accountability. They also recognized and thanked Matthew Dunlap, Secretary of State, who had worked with Rep. Trahan in that effort. Rep. Trahan expressed his gratitude to Secretary of State Dunlap and former representative, Peggy Pendleton, for their help.

Acting Chair, Sen. Bartlett, moved to **Unfinished Business, GOC Action on Citizen Request for OPEGA Audit, Tax Subsidized Competition.**

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

- **GOC Action on Citizen Request for OPEGA Audit
- Tax Subsidized Competition – Printing & Publishing**

The Committee agreed not to take action on this request and instead leave it to be considered by the Government Oversight Committee for 123rd Legislature.

FINAL REPORT PRESENTATION

- **Review of Economic Development Programs**

Director Ashcroft recognized and thanked Susan Reynolds, lead OPEGA Analyst on the review, and Jennifer Reichenbach. She also thanked other OPEGA staff for their help on the report. Director Ashcroft turned the meeting over to Ms. Reynolds, for the presentation of the Review of Economic Development Programs.

Ms. Reynolds thanked all those who participated in the review process with a special thanks to the Department of Economic and Community Development, Maine Revenue Services and the Finance Authority of Maine.

Following Ms. Reynolds' presentation, Rep. Trahan and other members of the Committee expressed their concern over the follow-up on this review given this was the last meeting of the 122nd GOC. Director Ashcroft said that OPEGA intended to re-present this report in some fashion to the next GOC which would proceed with the vote on endorsement. Rep. Trahan suggested that the Governor's office be contacted to inquire as to what action they will be taking as a result of the findings. Director Ashcroft introduced T J Tavares, Policy Specialist, Department of Economic and Community Development, to address this. The Director noted that the Department had been very instrumental in the review and is the closest thing to a lead economic development function that the State government has. Consequently, DECD has taken on the management actions. Mr. Tavares gave an overview of the actions DECD will be taking. Mr. Tavares also noted that DECD was a relatively small department and likely would need additional resources to perform some of the functions OPEGA had suggested.

The Committee also asked other questions regarding the report and discussion ensued in the following areas:

- whether the 20% of programs that have no clear purpose represent significant dollars;
- the Economic Development Programs OPEGA suggests be followed up in more depth;
- whether governing statutes are specific enough;

- possible duplications or overlaps among programs;
- the lack of sunset clauses or review processes;
- the development of a format for DECD to oversee the newest programs;
- the need for a portfolio of Economic Development Programs;
- the political barriers;
- DECD's lack of authority or recourse in carrying out certain responsibilities; and
- the need for a solid legislative foundation for each Economic Development Program.

The GOC did not take any further action on the Review of Economic Development Programs because it will be re-presented to the 123rd GOC.

The Government Oversight Committee thanked OPEGA staff for their work on the report, DECD and others involved in the report for their cooperation in developing the report.

SUMMARY OF NOVEMBER 14, 2006 MEETING

Motion: That the Meeting Summary of November 14, 2006 be approved as written. (Motion by Rep. Trahan, second by Rep. Collins, PASSED unanimously 7-0).

REPORT FROM OPEGA DIRECTOR

• Project Status Report

Director Ashcroft referred members to the status report in their packets regarding the projects OPEGA has in progress. She reminded the Committee that at the November 14, 2006 meeting, the GOC granted approval for OPEGA to move forward with three IT reviews that would be contracted out. They also gave approval for starting the preliminary research on a review of contracting for social and health services. The Director also reported that the final report on the review of Highway Fund Use by the Department of Public Safety would be ready for presentation by the end of January.

NEW BUSINESS

• Update on OPEGA Analysis of Riverview Admissions Requests

Director Ashcroft reported that since May of 2006 Riverview has been collecting data that OPEGA had requested. She has begun the analysis on five months of the data received. She will be sharing the information with DHHS and will be presenting the findings to the next GOC. Director Ashcroft thanked Terry O'Neal, Director of Finance and Ambulatory Care at Riverview for his help in collecting the necessary data.

The members of the GOC thanked Director Ashcroft and OPEGA staff for all their work for the Committee, the Legislature and the rest of State government.

ADJOURNMENT

The Government Oversight Committee meeting was adjourned at 12:15 p.m. (Motion by Rep. Trahan, second by Rep. O'Brien, unanimous).