The Honorable Paul LePage
Governor of Maine
1 State House Station
Augusta, Maine 04333-0001

Dear Governor LePage:

On behalf of the Government Oversight Committee, I respectfully request the attendance of Commissioner Ricker Hamilton, and/or his designated representative, at the GOC's next meeting on Thursday, June 28, 2018 to participate in the Committee's first Work Session relevant to Maine's Child Protection System. The meeting will be held in Room 220 of the Cross Office Building. The meeting will begin at 8:30 or 9:00 am. The first item on the agenda is OPEGA’s presentation of its report on the Temporary Assistance for Needy Families program. Consequently, we do not expect the Child Protective Work Session to begin until about 10 am and the Committee plans to finish the Work Session by Noon.

The focus of the Work Session will be on determining what actions the GOC might take now to address particular areas for concern or improvement raised in OPEGA’s Information Brief, through the Public Comment Period held on May 31, 2018, or that have otherwise been brought to legislators’ attention. Potential actions the GOC may consider include initiating legislation to address one or more subject areas and/or directing OPEGA to perform particular research or analysis as part of, or prior to, beginning a broader review of the Child Protection System. The Work Session will not involve discussion of the details of the two specific cases OPEGA reviewed.

The Committee appreciated the dialogue with you at the Public Comment Period and looks forward to the opportunity to work with the Executive Branch in addressing these important matters beginning with the Work Session on June 28th. In particular, the GOC will be seeking to get a better understanding of the Department's Strategic Initiatives described in the Child Welfare Overview you provided the Committee. It will also be vital to have DHHS's perspective and input on ideas considered for possible statutory changes.

Thank you for your consideration of this request. I would appreciate if you could let me know by Friday, June 22nd whether Commissioner Hamilton, and/or his designated representative, will attend the June 28th meeting.

Sincerely,

Beth L. Ashcroft
Director

cc: Ricker Hamilton, Commissioner, Department of Health and Human Services
Kirsten Capeless, Acting Director, Office of Child and Family Services, Department of Health and Human Services
Julian Baer, Director of Community Relations, Department of Health and Human Services
Holly Lusk, Chief of Staff, Governor's Office
Madeline Malisa, Deputy Counsel, Governor’s Office
Members of the Government Oversight Committee