

**PCOL – Management and Human Resources Committee  
Recommendation on Staffing**

**Legislative Counsel, Legislative Fiscal and Legislative Revenue**

The committee heard testimony that there is a need to increase the number of staff in the Legislative Counsel, Fiscal and Revenue Offices whether or not the Legislative Assembly chooses to transition to annual sessions. The exact number of additional staff needed is difficult to determine.

*The committee recommends* that Legislative Counsel, Fiscal and Revenue review their staffing needs based on duties assigned to the office, ability to perform those duties, and quality of service and present policy option packages to the next Legislative Assembly requesting additional staff. The goal of each office is to provide timely and accurate service to customers in order to facilitate the legislative process.

**Issue Area and Committee Staffing**

The committee heard from former legislators, the lobby and business leaders that there is a need for consistency in staffing substantive policy committees. It has been said that continuity in issue area staffing may help in the development of good public policy.

Currently, attempts are made to match staff with issue area expertise to corresponding committees, however there are times when chairs choose to work with staff who are more oriented to management of the legislative process rather than being knowledgeable about an issue area. Since committee chairs and leadership staff have some influence in the decisions about staffing of committees, the perception can be created that staff are not equally accessible to all legislators and staff.

*The committee recommends* separating issue area staff and committee staff in an effort to professionalize issue area staff, make them more accessible to all members and to acknowledge relationships between chairs and committee staff. The organization of this staffing structure should be done in a way to achieve the following five objectives:

- Professionalism – maintain and enhance a professional staff which has recognized “experts” in major issue areas;
- Continuity – create a staffing system that is consistent from session to interim and between chambers;
- Stability – create the ability to attract and retain professional staff with recognized expertise in specific issues areas;
- Non-partisan – ensure that research staff is equally accessible to all members regardless of minority or majority status, seniority, or committee assignment; and
- Non-political – insulate staff personnel decisions from the political environment including hiring, firing and staffing assignments.

**Legislator Staffing – Legislative Assistants**

In general, legislators represent approximately 57,000 or 114,000 Oregonians whether they’re in the House or Senate respectively. With improvements in technology over the last decade, the public has the ability to communicate with legislators more often and in more ways than ever before. With this communication comes an increase in constituent requests and concerns that a legislator may respond to. Also, the issues that legislators currently reflect on are perceived to be more complex than in the past. *The committee recommends* that legislators have at least one full-time personal staff to assist with legislative work.