

Approved

Date

MINUTES OF THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON GOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATION

The meeting was called to order by Representative Stephen R. Cloud at
Chairperson

9:04 a.m./~~p.m.~~ on Thursday, February 7, 1985 in room 522-S of the Capitol.

All members were present except:

Committee staff present:

Avis Swartzman - Revisor
Russ Mills - Legislative Research Dept.
Julian Efird - Legislative Research Dept.
Jackie Breymeyer - Committee Secretary
Conferees appearing before the committee:

The meeting of the House Governmental Organization Committee was called to order at 9:04 a.m. by Representative Stephen R. Cloud, Chairman. The minutes of the January 31 meeting were approved. Minutes of the February 5 meeting were distributed.

The purpose of the meeting was to review a Scope Statement entitled, "Are State Agencies Making Employees Responsible for Reviewing and Protesting Unemployment Claims?" (See Attachment A) This statement which asks for a two-week audit, will have to be approved by the Legislative Post Audit Committee which is meeting today. The statement was drafted by Mr. Hafner at the chairman's request to address the problem of state agencies and their lack of response to unemployment claims. The chairman read the questions the audit will try to answer. Representative Sprague moved to send the Scope Statement to the Legislative Post Audit Committee. Rep. Walker gave a second to the motion. The motion carried.

The chairman announced that Secretary Wolgast will return to the committee Tuesday, February 12, to continue his audit response. He will focus primarily on hiring practices of the Department. The committee members were asked to bring their audit reports.

The chairman announced that House Concurrent Resolutions 5005, 5006 and 5007 have been assigned to the Governmental Organization Committee. HCR 5005 would make the office of commissioner of insurance a constitutional office of the state but prohibit any person from being elected to more than two successive terms to such office. HCR 5006 would make the offices of state treasurer and commissioner of insurance constitutional offices of the state. HCR 5007 would make the office of state treasurer a constitutional office of the state.

The various options the committee has with regard to the sunset law were discussed. A department or agency can be abolished, modified or strengthened. The status quo can be maintained. Every particular situation merits its own approach. The subcommittees should proceed with their sunset review process dealing with the mechanics of the office or agency they are reviewing.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:29 a.m.

SRE

Scope Statement

Are State Agencies Making Employees Responsible for Reviewing and Protesting Unemployment Claims?

During the Spring of 1984, the Legislative Division of Post Audit conducted an audit of protested unemployment claims. A portion of that audit dealt with the failure on the part of some state agencies to protest questionable unemployment claims.

Legislative concerns have been expressed that there are no real incentives for State agencies to protest claims. The agencies feel no direct penalty for failure to do so. As a result, the House Governmental Organization Committee is requesting a limited audit to determine whether agencies' failure to protest questionable unemployment claims may have resulted from a failure on the part of some agencies to assign the related duties to a specific employee, and then make that employee accountable through the performance evaluation process.

The audit would focus only on those agencies previously identified as having poor records of responding to unemployment claim notices. The audit would specifically address the following three questions.

1. Is there a specific person at each agency who is assigned the duties of reviewing and protesting unemployment claims? The auditors would contact officials at each agency to determine if there is a specific employee responsible for receiving unemployment claim notices, reviewing those notices, and returning them to the Department of Human Resources with appropriate documentation.
2. Are the duties of employees who handle unemployment claims specifically stated in their job descriptions? For the person(s) at each agency who are responsible for handling unemployment claims, the auditors would review job descriptions to ensure that all duties relating to unemployment claims had been properly included in those employees' job descriptions.
3. Are employees being evaluated on how well they perform duties related to protesting unemployment claims? The auditors would interview the person at each agency who is responsible for evaluating the performance of employees who handle unemployment claims. This interview would determine if the evaluator considers the employee's performance in protesting unemployment claims, when completing the employee's evaluation. The auditors would also review any existing work standards used in the evaluation process to determine if protesting unemployment claims is an area that is evaluated. As necessary they would also review the employees' evaluations.

Estimated Time to Complete: 2 weeks

2/7/85
ATTACHMENT A