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From: "Legislative Office of Fiscal Transparency (LOFT)" <info@okloft.gov>
Date: August 13, 2020 at 4:26:49 PM CDT
To: "Legislative Office of Fiscal Transparency (LOFT)" <info@okloft.gov>
Subject: Legislative Oversight Committee Approves LOFT Inaugural Workplan



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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August 13, 2020

Legislative Oversight Committee Approves LOFT Inaugural Workplan

Members of the Legislative Oversight Committee today approved the workplan for the newly created Legislative Office of Fiscal Transparency. The plan maps out a schedule for in-depth, data-driven evaluation of specific programs and processes of state agencies to ensure Oklahoma taxpayer funds are used efficiently and effectively.

“LOFT has the potential to examine state agencies both in fiscal and performance reviews for the sole purpose to make sure taxpayer dollars are being efficiently and effectively spent to serve the citizens of Oklahoma,” said Sen. Roger Thompson, who serves as co-chair of the Oversight Committee. “I am looking forward to the data produced by LOFT as we craft future budgets for Oklahoma.”

Co-Chair Rep. Kevin Wallace said, “Approving this workplan was a historic first step toward state budgets based on better data, a deeper understanding of where taxpayer dollars go, and what the taxpayers are getting in return for their investment. I appreciate the hard work the LOFT staff has done to date and look forward to the results they will bring legislators in the future.”

While review of all programs and expenditures are within the scope of the agency, the office’s first work plan focuses on gathering and analyzing operations and expenditures of some of the largest agencies and programs to determine how well resources are being used to fulfil the core missions of the entities. Approval from the Legislative Oversight Committee now allows LOFT staff to begin the data gathering and analysis process for rapid response evaluations and other priorities as identified by the Committee. A copy of the LOFT workplan is available at www.okloft.gov/workplan.pdf

About LOFT

LOFT has statutory authority to examine and evaluate the finances and operations of all departments, agencies and institutions of Oklahoma and all its political subdivisions. LOFT's mission is to assist the Oklahoma Legislature in making informed, data-driven decisions that will serve the citizens of Oklahoma by ensuring accountability in state government, efficient use of resources, and effective programs and services.

Created in 2019, LOFT is overseen by a 14-member Legislative Oversight Committee, appointed by the Speaker of the House and the Senate Pro Tempore.

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LOFT

LEGISLATIVE OFFICE OF
FISCAL TRANSPARENCY

2020 Work Plan - Program Evaluation Projects

Rapid Response Evaluations

Time Frame: 90 – 100 days

- Rapid response examinations are prioritized in response to special requests from the Legislative Oversight Committee, with the intent to inform immediate funding or policy decisions.

Priority Program Evaluations

Time Frame: 6-8 months

- Priority program evaluations are undertaken by LOFT as part of its annual work plan, with the expectation that reports will be available at the start of the Legislative session.

Secondary Program Evaluations

1, 3 & 5 year schedule

- Secondary program evaluations are planned evaluations of large state agencies or programs, with review staggered in order of program funding and impact.

2020 Rapid Response Evaluations			
Program/ Agency Name	Project Description	Scope of Work	Prioritization Ranking
Unemployment Compensation/ Oklahoma Employment Security Commission	Evaluate the efficacy of resources available to the program for delivery of services; examine occurrence of fraudulent filings; examine the rate of unverified Unemployment Insurance and Pandemic Unemployment Assistance	Assess disaster readiness and process mapping to reduce cycle-time to end-user.	1
Board of Equalization	Conduct historical analysis of revenue projections compared to certified funds available for appropriation.	Examine the difference between certified revenues and actual revenues; identify trends	2
Dept. of Health	Examine the impact of Federal COVID funds on state health programs;	Evaluate efficiency and outcomes of contact tracers related to limiting the spread of COVID.	3

	examine outcomes of contact tracing for COVID active infections.	Evaluate categories of reimbursement funds, approval process, and compliance with Federal reimbursement policy.	
State COVID funds/ Multi-agency	Gather preliminary data on current COVID 19 reimbursement and funding allocation while initiating analysis on state department performance.	Collect data on funds distributed by the Federal Government in response to the COVID-19 pandemic; identify any gaps in information; present data trends or anomalies.	4
Institutions of Higher Education	Gather preliminary data on current COVID 19 reimbursement and funding allocation.	Ensure transparency and availability of data to analyze institutional cost share expenditures.	5
2020 Priority Program Evaluations			
Tobacco Settlement Endowment Trust	Evaluate program spending and outcomes	Examine the percentage of funds going to tobacco cessation and forecast projections on tobacco-using population trends	1
County Improvements for Roads & Bridges Program/Dept. of Transportation	Review the progress in infrastructure maintenance and repair contributed to the CIRB program.	Complete a performance-based review of the CIRB program based on evidence of repaired or replaced county roads and bridges compared to the allocated fiscal funding.	2
Oklahoma's Promise/Regents for Higher Education	Evaluate outcomes of the Oklahoma's Promise program (formerly known as OHLAP)	Quantify the state-wide economic impact from Oklahoma's Promise; Forecast projected costs and impact of the program over the next decade.	3
ADvantage Waiver/Dept of Human Services	Evaluate program resources and outcomes.	Examine expenditures, trends, and forecast projected capacity of the program.	4
Early Childhood Program	Evaluate outcomes of the program.	Examine outcomes of the program and forecast long-term economic impact of state investment.	5
Agency Performance and Accountability Commission/OMES	Review the performance audits completed by the contracted consultants of APAC.	Perform an output analysis on the intended increased performance results stemming from APAC recommendations.	6

Secondary Program Evaluations			
Virtual Learning / COVID Funding	Evaluate outcomes of virtual or blended learning educational models	Examine various educational approaches in response to COVID, associated outcomes of each, and how COVID federal funds have been utilized.	1
State Tax Incentives	Evaluate outcomes of state tax incentives	In descending order, examine the fiscal impact of individual tax incentives, the extent to which the tax incentive accomplishes intended goals, the extent to which those benefitting from the tax expenditure are the intended beneficiaries, the extent to which it is likely the desired behavior might have occurred without the tax expenditure, the extent to which the state's administration of the tax expenditure is efficient and effective, and whether there are other state or federal tax expenditures or programs that have similar purposes, intent or goals.	2
Citizen Initiative Petition Process	Evaluate the voter referendum process	Examine the process of direct initiative efforts, with emphasis on the economical use of resources and enhanced accountability.	3
Absentee Voting	Evaluate the outcomes and accuracy of absentee voting	Examine the process of the collection, counting and administration of absentee ballots.	4