

Quarterly Listing of Audit Requests for GOC Consideration

First Quarter 2017						
#	Topic Area	Possible Areas of Focus	Rough \$ estimate	Covered by other topic?	Past or current efforts in this area?	Additional Information
1	Maine Turnpike Authority	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Impact of the timing of EZ Pass toll postings on customer discounts under the toll discount program		No	OPEGA MTA review, report released in 2011. However, the review did not cover this possible area of focus.	<p>The Maine Turnpike E-ZPass is an automated toll collection system that allows individuals and businesses to pay tolls electronically. An electronic "tag" is attached to the windshield, roof or license plate of the vehicle. This tag relays the vehicle's turnpike entry and exit locations to the MTA and the appropriate toll is then calculated and deducted from a prepaid toll account.</p> <p>Maine Turnpike toll payers who have an EZ Pass are eligible for a 25% rebate if they make 30 one-way trips (or 15 round-trips) in a month, and a 50% rebate if they make 40 trips in a month.</p> <p>The requester alleges that sometimes EZPass tolls for trips on the turnpike that occur in the last few days of a month get posted in the following month, depriving the EZPass holder their proper rebate.</p>
		<ul style="list-style-type: none">Effectiveness of Whistleblower Hotline and other avenues for employees to report concerns		No	OPEGA MTA review, report released in 2011	<p>The 2011 OPEGA MTA review resulted in the MTA proposing to update or establish additional written policies and procedures to govern employee job training and internships, protection of whistleblowers, network access, computer usage, and union negotiations. As part of this effort, a whistleblower hotline was established.</p>
LEGISLATIVE SPONSOR: Rep Fecteau						

Quarterly Listing of Audit Requests for GOC Consideration

#	Topic Area	Possible Areas of Focus	Rough \$ estimate	Covered by other topic?	Past or current efforts in this area?	Additional Info (OPEGA has conducted no research on this topic)
2	State Law Enforcement Agencies' Undercover Operations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Approval process for undercover operations • Oversight of undercover operations • Controls on the length of the operation • Funding for undercover operations • The role of the Attorney General, if any, in approval or oversight 	Unknown	No	Unknown	Some state law enforcement agencies include undercover work as part of their law-enforcement efforts. The requestors are interested in whether the general policies, procedures, and practices for these activities are ensuring that the operations, while remaining confidential, are carried out in a way that respects the rights of individuals so that citizens will have confidence in the integrity of such operations.
LEGISLATIVE SPONSOR: Senator Davis, Senator Katz						

Quarterly Listing of Audit Requests for GOC Consideration

#	Topic Area	Possible Areas of Focus	Rough \$ estimate	Covered by other topic?	Past or current efforts in this area?	Additional Info (OPEGA has conducted very limited research on this topic)
3	Maine Power Options— Administered by the Maine Municipal Bond Bank and the Maine Health and Higher Education Authority	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Effectiveness of program in meeting its intent Effectiveness and transparency of Request For Proposal and contractor selection process for electricity supply Public transparency of MPO activities and decisions 	500 million kilowatt hours purchased by members per year	No	2013 review of MPO by the Maine Office of Policy and Management (OPM)	<p>In August 2013, OPM reported the results of its review of MPO to the Governor's Office in a Draft Advisory White Paper. OPM concluded that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> MPO could not provide evidence demonstrating cost savings for participating members; Oversight of the program was weak; the electricity supply contract was a concern; and MPO participants had numerous alternatives other than MPO available for procuring energy.
<p>Additional Info (cont.)</p> <p>In 1999, the Legislature passed legislation directing the Maine Municipal Bond Bank and the Maine Health and Higher Education Authority to create an aggregation program to purchase electricity, fuel oil and other commodities on behalf of governmental units (such as municipalities, schools, and sewage and water districts) and other not-for-profit entities in the State. Maine PowerOptions (MPO) was created as an energy-purchasing consortium that serves as an aggregator for Maine's local governmental and non-profit organizations. Maine PowerOptions group-purchasing programs are designed to increase the buying power of eligible participant organizations for the purchase of fuel oil and electricity. MPO has approximately 820 members statewide.</p> <p>MPO has an Internal Advisory Committee (IAC), made up of members that periodically provide suggestions and recommendations for improvements to the program. There is a competitive bid process conducted every three years to select an electricity provider who will offer the best choice of options for the term, and is open only to licensed energy suppliers in Maine. The members of the IAC participate in the interview process for selection of the energy supplier. A single electricity supplier has won the contract since the program's inception. The contracted supplier pays MPO a monthly fee for the expenses of running the program.</p> <p>LEGISLATIVE SPONSOR: Senator Gratwick</p>						

Quarterly Listing of Audit Requests for GOC Consideration

#	Topic Area	Possible Areas of Focus	Rough \$ estimate	Covered by other topic?	Past or current efforts in this area?	Additional Info (OPEGA has conducted very limited research on this topic)
4	Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) Department of Health and Human Services Office of Children and Families	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reasons for decline in TANF enrollment Possible correlations between declines in TANF enrollment and trends in: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> infant mortality, childhood poverty, childhood food insecurity, drug affected newborns, and housing problems Adequacy of Federal and State resources supporting TANF 	Governor's Proposed Budget for FY18 TANF program includes: \$21.9 million in State General Fund and \$53.6 million in Federal Block Grant Funds	No	Unknown	<p>The TANF Program is a financial assistance program for needy families with dependent children who are deprived of parental support or care because of the death, continued absence, incapacity of a parent, or the under employment of a parent who is the principal wage earner. Maximum assistance provided to a family (with the possibility of extensions) is 60 months in a lifetime.</p> <p>Applicants must meet age, relationship, deprivation, citizenship, alien status, residency, and cooperation requirements, as well as remain within the income and resource limits of the program in order to be eligible to receive TANF benefits.</p> <p>Recent newspaper articles indicate that TANF enrollment in Maine has dropped by more than 60% since 2012 while statewide poverty rates have not improved.</p> <p>An initiative in the Governor's Proposed Budget for FY18 and FY19 reduces proposed amount for TANF by about \$105 million from prior years to adjust allocation between TANF program and the Child Support program within the same fund to align activities with the appropriate program. Also to reduce allocation in TANF program to align with existing resources.</p>

LEGISLATIVE SPONSOR: Senator Gratwick

Quarterly Listing of Audit Requests for GOC Consideration

#	Topic Area	Possible Areas of Focus	Rough \$ estimate	Covered by other topic?	Past or current efforts in this area?	Additional Info (OPEGA has conducted no new research on this topic)
5	Guardians ad litem Judicial Branch	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Judicial Branch progress in implementing the requirements of PL 2013 Chapter 406 Effectiveness of actions taken in addressing past issues with GALs 	Unknown	No	2006 OPEGA report on Guardians ad litem	The requirements of PL 2013 Chapter 406 addressed some of the key recommendations from OPEGA's 2006 report that had not been implemented.
<p>Additional Info (cont.) PL 2013 Chapter 406, "An Act To Improve the Quality of Guardian ad Litem Services for the Children and Families of Maine", from the 126th Legislature used existing requirements for guardians ad litem as a base, and included some of the recommendations of the reports to the Supreme Judicial Court, "Recommendations for an Improved Process for Complaints Regarding Guardians Ad Litem," dated September 21, 2012, and "Recommendations for Amending the Maine Rules for Guardians Ad Litem," dated January 14, 2013, by the Guardian Ad Litem Stakeholders Group. Under the new chapter, guardians ad litem appointed under the Maine Revised Statutes, Title 18-A are subject to the general provisions and rules adopted by the Supreme Judicial Court, including the complaint process. Guardians ad litem appointed under Title 19-A and Title 22 are subject to the general provisions and the rules, as well as specific provisions for the different types of cases.</p> <p>The Chapter:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Directs the Family Division within the Judicial Branch to assist the Chief Judge of the District Court to roster guardians ad litem and in the administration of guardians ad litem appointed under Title 19-A and Title 22. It also requires the family division to collect, maintain and report data about the appointment of guardians ad litem, reports, caseloads and other information. Clarifies the process of rostering guardians ad litem, although the details were to be established by rules adopted by the Supreme Judicial Court. The rules must include criminal background checks. Establishes in statute the role of a guardian ad litem and requires compliance with standards of conduct, which were to be adopted by rule by the Supreme Judicial Court. Requires the Supreme Judicial Court to provide by rule for a complaint process concerning guardians ad litem. The complaint process is in addition to the right of a party to file a motion to remove the guardian ad litem while the case is pending. Directs the Judicial Branch to include guardian ad litem elements in its request for proposals for the new case management system for the courts. Specifies that the order of appointment must specify the duties of the guardian ad litem. A guardian ad litem has no authority to perform and will not be expected to perform any duties beyond those specified in the order, unless subsequently ordered to do so by the court. Specifies that the order appointing a guardian ad litem in a case under Title 18-A and Title 19-A must also specify the hourly rate or flat fee for the guardian ad litem, the timing of the payments to be made and by whom and the maximum amount of fees that may be charged for the case without further order of the court. <p>The entire chapter is repealed October 1, 2017, although there is currently a bill before the 128th Legislature to remove the repeal language.</p> <p>LEGISLATIVE SPONSOR(S): Rep Sampson, Rep Sutton, Rep Malaby, Rep Seavy, Rep Bradstreet</p>						

Quarterly Listing of Audit Requests for GOC Consideration

#	Topic Area	Possible Areas of Focus	Rough \$ estimate	Covered by other topic?	Past or current efforts in this area?	Additional Info (OPEGA has conducted very limited research on this topic)
6	Commission on Indigent Legal Services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Effectiveness of the Commission in meeting its mission Economical use of resources 	Annual budget approximately \$17 Million	No	Unknown	<p>The Maine Commission on Indigent Legal Services was established by the Legislature in 2009 to provide high quality representation to Maine citizens who are entitled to counsel at state expense under the United States Constitution or under the Constitution or statutes of Maine. The Commission's mission is to protect the rights of Maine's indigent citizens in courts throughout the State by providing oversight, support, and training to assigned private counsel and to contract counsel. The Commission assumed responsibility for providing indigent legal services on July 1, 2010.</p> <p>Concerns expressed in the request relate to application of financial eligibility requirements in assigning court-appointed attorneys, attorney billing practices, and billing and collection efforts for citizens with assigned attorneys who are required to pay a portion of the attorney fees.</p>
LEGISLATIVE SPONSOR: Rep Pierce						