

## Committee Process & Who We Are

### 1) Why do we have joint standing committees?

- To develop and refine legislation for consideration by the full Legislature.
- To provide a forum that allows members to discuss issues formally and informally.
- To allow members to gain expertise on matters within the jurisdiction of their committees.
- To provide a public process for attendance and participation from the public, which gives members an opportunity to learn about important policy issues.

### 2) What do joint standing committees do?

- Review and report out bills (biggest role in the legislative process is to thoroughly examine the bills assigned to them and recommend if these bills should become law).
- Conduct budget reviews.
- Conduct studies to examine and report on policy issues.
- Hold confirmation hearings on gubernatorial appointments.
- Provide agency and program evaluation and oversight through departmental briefings, information sessions, the Government Evaluation Act process and reviewing major substantive rules.

### 3) Who staffs joint standing committees?

**Committee Clerks.** Each joint standing committee is assisted by a committee clerk who provides clerical support to the committee. Committee clerks maintain bill files for committee members, record committee votes, keep attendance and answer phone calls and emails from the public.

**Legislative Analysts.** Nonpartisan legislative analysts from the Office of Policy and Legal Analysis (OPLA) and the Office of Fiscal and Program Review (OFPR) provide direct professional staffing services for each joint standing committee. OPLA analysts staff all joint standing committees except for Taxation and Appropriations and Financial Affairs which are staffed by OFPR analysts. OFPR analysts provide support to all committees and provide direct staffing services to the Health and Human Services Committee and the Transportation Committee for budgetary matters. OFPR and OPLA analysts collaborate to ensure that committees and individual legislators have the policy, legal and fiscal analysis that they need for decision making.

### 4) What do legislative analysts do?

- Conduct **NONPARTISAN** research and analysis of legal, policy and fiscal issues related to legislation and other matters that come before the committee. Our nonpartisanship means that legislative analysts support all legislators regardless of party or political opinion.
- Draft committee bills and other legislation, amendments and reports; assist legislators in filing bill requests.
- Assist the committee in its review of legislation, budgets, program evaluations and agency rules.
- Assist the committee chairs in scheduling, organizing and planning the committee workload.
- Respond to questions related to committee matters from individual legislators and others.
- Staff interim committee meetings and legislative commissions and draft related reports and recommended legislation.

Legislative analysts are governed by a strict legislative confidentiality policy. Requests for assistance, advice or information, including bill drafts and amendments, may not be divulged by nonpartisan staff unless authorized by the requestor.

**Please note that there will be a comprehensive orientation with your legislative analyst in committee prior to your first public hearings and work sessions on bills. Additional information will be presented prior to other matters, such as budgets and rule reviews, that come before committee.**