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MAINE STATE LEGISLATURE  
GOVERNMENT OVERSIGHT COMMITTEE

Review of Maine Commission on Indigent Legal Services

The Government Oversight Committee (GOC) first voted a review of the Maine Commission on Indigent Legal Services (MCILS) onto OPEGA's Standby List on February 17, 2017.

On April 12, 2019, the GOC voted to move a review of MCILS to OPEGA's Approved Projects List with a scope limited to financial oversight and economic use of resources.

Following a period of preliminary research, OPEGA submitted a project recommendation statement in December 2019.

On December 10, 2019, the GOC voted to continue with a more detailed review of MCILS and approved the following scope of work:

1. Adequacy of systems and procedures used by MCILS staff to process payments and expenditures associated with providing legal representation to clients who have been determined to be indigent or partially indigent.
2. Reasonableness of and consistency in the application of standards, criteria and procedures which inform the determination of whether a defendant/client is indigent.
3. Reasonableness of and consistency in the application of criteria and procedures used in determining, ordering and monitoring payments towards counsel fees by those who have been determined to be partially indigent.
4. Sufficiency of response by MCILS, or MCILS staff, to internally identified concerns and to recommendations made in reports which examined or evaluated the operations of the Commission regarding financial oversight.
5. Adequacy of the oversight structure of MCILS in ensuring that operations align with and accomplish the organization's purpose.

On January 10, 2020, the GOC voted to expedite two elements of the scope of work, items 1 and 5 above. With this direction, OPEGA will publish two reports: Part I, to include items 1 and 5, and Part II, to include items 2, 3, and 4. Prior to the early adjournment of the Second Regular Session of the 129<sup>th</sup> due to COVID-19, Part I of the report was scheduled to be presented in April 2020.