Program Review & Investigations

Objective Evaluations and Public Policy Solutions May 2016

COST SAVINGS & REVENUE MAXIMIZATION

Commission on Enhancing Agency Outcomes (CEAO) - Staffed by PRI, generated a comprehensive report that identified the potential for **$470 million** in savings.

Medicaid: Improper Payments – Recommended ways to prevent certain Medicaid payment errors. **Public Act 13-293** required a joint agency annual report on the state's efforts to prevent and control fraud, abuse and errors in the Medicaid payment system and to recover overpayments.

Regional Cooperation Between Local Boards of Education - Identified many cost-saving cooperative ventures for school districts to adopt including the sharing of special education programs, cooperative purchasing agreements, and professional development opportunities.

Federal Revenue Maximization – Led to changes in OPM management of federal grant applications, including streamlined centralization of the grant process.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Apprenticeship Programs and Workforce Needs - Found the apprenticeship website within CTDOL lacks basic information on apprenticeships, employers, and coursework providers. Recommendations contained in the committee's bill (SB 169) were incorporated into **HB 5423**, which was adopted at the end of the 2016 session.

Reemployment of Older Workers – Found that some Connecticut programs have higher reemployment rates than others. Summarized the estimated costs and reemployment outcomes for 13 Connecticut programs. Report recommendations were adopted in **P.A. 14-59** and **P.A. 14-225.**

Criminal Justice

Prison Overcrowding – Helped lay foundation for the state's offender re-entry strategy and reducing recidivism, to save money and enhance successful transitions back to society. **P.A. 04-234**

The Value of Oversight

Program and Agency Savings

Cost savings are often the most visible product of legislative oversight studies. In some instances, changes may result in more spending to achieve greater effectiveness.

Improved Efficiency and Effectiveness

Achieving efficiency means finding ways to accomplish the same tasks at reduced cost; achieving effectiveness means finding ways to better accomplish program and agency objectives. The existence of oversight also stimulates agency self-evaluation, which may bring about improved operations.

An Informed Legislature

PRI reports provide information and recommendations that may be useful to legislators during deliberation on legislation, during committee hearings, and in responding to constituent questions or requests for assistance.

Compliance with Legislative Intent

The oversight function helps ensure that laws are being carried out as the legislature intended.

EDUCATION

Higher Education Certificate Programs - Found a lack of certificate program cost and outcome information for potential and current students for valid comparisons among schools and colleges. Higher Education raised legislation in 2016 that contained most of the PRI recommendations and the bill (**HB 5072**, as amended) was adopted.

University of Connecticut's Affordability to Students – Found UConn's affordability had declined as tuition had risen beyond inflation and income growth and course transferability among the state institutions was lacking. Recommendations included proposals to stabilize tuition costs; ways to better inform the legislature about UConn's financial aid, credit acceptance policies and graduate employment outcomes; and options to enhance college affordability.

HUMAN SERVICES

Transitional Services for Youth and Young Adults with Autism Spectrum Disorder – Addressed needed improvements in education, employment, and agency reporting areas, and to assist Connecticut families with financial planning for the care and support of individuals with disabilities (**P.A. 15-209** and **P.A. 15-80)**.

Provision of Selected Services for Clients with Intellectual Disabilities – Found average costs of residential services were 2.5 times higher in publicly operated community residences than ones supported by private nonprofit agencies, even when controlling for client level of need. After the study, several major changes have occurred in service delivery to residents with intellectual disabilities and the pace to move more clients from the public system to a private-provider system of services has been accelerated.

INSURANCE

Access to Substance Use Treatment for Insured Youth - Recommendations regarding utilization review, mental health parity, and state oversight were incorporated into **P.A. 13-3**, as part of the comprehensive legislative response to the Sandy Hook school shooting in Newtown, Connecticut.

Medical Malpractice – Assessed factors contributing to rising medical malpractice premiums. Several recommendations were adopted in a comprehensive act **(P.A. 05-275)** addressing reforms to the litigation process, insurance regulation, and physician oversight.

PUBLIC SAFETY

Drone Use Regulation - Recommended a prohibition on weaponized drones and balancing safety and privacy when incorporating this emerging technology.

State Police Staffing Standards - Identified specific standards with the goals of responding to 911 calls quickly, fully meeting resident state trooper obligations, adequate staffing of patrols, and a two-officer minimum response for particular events to ensure trooper and citizen safety.

VETERANS

Department of Veterans' Affairs: Office and Advocacy and Assistance - Recommended requiring nursing homes and assisted living facilities to notify the office of resident veterans or eligible family members (in **HB 5416,** as amended - awaiting governor's signature**).** Savings will be achieved to the extent that these individuals are enrolled in the federal VA health care system (100% federally funded) instead of Medicaid (50% state/50% federal).