



STATE OF CONNECTICUT

OFFICE OF POLICY AND MANAGEMENT

Testimony of
Karen Buffkin, Deputy Secretary
Office of Policy and Management
Before the Appropriations Committee
February 21, 2013

Good afternoon Senator Harp, Representative Walker and members of the Appropriations Committee. My name is Karen Buffkin and I am here today to discuss the Governor's recommended FY 2014 - FY 2015 biennium budget for the Office of Policy and Management (OPM).

OPM's recommended general fund budget of \$213.3 million for FY 2014 is \$50.1 million, or 19%, less than the FY 2013 appropriation of \$263.4 million. The FY 2015 recommended general fund budget of \$196.7 million is \$66.7 million, or 25.3%, less than the FY 2013 appropriation.

The Governor's priorities over the last two years have included protecting aid to Connecticut's towns and cities; investing in education; and streamlining state government. The net decrease in OPM's general fund budget is reflective of these priorities. The recommended general fund budget includes a new grant program to ensure that every municipality is, overall, held harmless, transfers State Owned PILOT funding to the Education Cost Sharing grant, and transfers the Tax Relief for Elderly Renters program to the new Department of Housing.

In addition, the recommended general fund budget transfers statewide human resources functions from the Department of Administrative Services to OPM, and eliminates funding for the Innovation Challenge grant, revenue maximization, administration of the Main Street Investment fund, and operating grants to regional planning agencies. Operating grants to regional planning agencies will be funded from the Regional Performance Incentive account to continue to support work related to the plan of conservation and development, requests from state agencies and day to day operations.

OPM's recommended insurance fund budget increases from \$353.6 thousand in FY 2013 to \$398.3 thousand for FY 2014 and \$466.2 thousand for FY 2015. The increase represents funding for a Connecticut Partnership for Long-Term Care position previously supported with private funds.

OPM's recommended Mashantucket Pequot and Mohegan fund budget of \$5.4 million for each year of the biennium is \$56.4 million less than the FY 2013 appropriation of \$61.8 million. The decrease is offset by an increase in funding in the amount of \$56.4 million for the Local Capital Improvement Program. The balance remaining in the Mashantucket Pequot and Mohegan fund in the amount of \$5.4 million will be used to preserve funding for the towns directly impacted by the presence of the casinos.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify before you today. My staff and I would be happy to answer any questions that you might have.