



STATE OF CONNECTICUT
OFFICE OF GOVERNMENTAL ACCOUNTABILITY

OFFICE OF THE EXECUTIVE ADMINISTRATOR

Appropriations Committee Testimony
David Guay, Executive Administrator
Office of Governmental Accountability
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Senator Harp, Representative Walker, Senator Kane, Representative Miner and esteemed members of the Appropriations Committee – my name is David Guay, Executive Administrator of the Office of Governmental Accountability. Thank you for the opportunity to speak to you today in favor of the Governor's proposed biennial budget for the Office of Governmental Accountability (OGA).

Governor Malloy's proposed budget:

1. Saves Connecticut taxpayers money (The non-partisan Office of Fiscal Analysis says savings will be \$187,000 in FY 2014 and \$198,000 in FY 2015) and
2. Maintains the public's interest by streamlining the OGA programs.

The proposed changes related to the Governor's budget do not impede the independent decision-making authority of the three major watchdog divisions in the OGA: the Offices of State Ethics, the State Elections Enforcement Commission and the Freedom of Information Commission.

As the Administrator for the ten divisions within the OGA, I will continue to work with the divisions to submit a budget that effectively supports operations for each one of the divisions. It continues to be up to the Governor and the Legislature to reach agreement on a final appropriation.

This budget would implement efficiencies not found in the current model by completing the restructuring of fiscal, legal and information technology functions to streamline the OGA and strengthen enforcement and compliance with greater information and knowledge-sharing.

It further permits the Governor's budget to make recommended spending changes as it does with other Executive branch agencies and for the Legislature to consider and either adopt or modify those recommendations. The budgets of the three watchdog divisions would have their budget requests reflected in budget documentation, but the Governor could make recommended changes (so the Legislature would have the benefit of both as they make their decisions).

The proposed changes will not undermine the improvements the General Assembly has made to make elections cleaner, contractors and lobbyists more accountable, and to keep government operations open and accessible.

Instead, these changes will align the OGA operations with models already working well in Connecticut, in both the Department of Consumer Protection (DCP) and in the OGA itself. DCP has a number of professional boards and commissions under its administrative umbrella. While each of the professional licensing entities has autonomous boards, they still have to operate within the state's budgetary rules. Thus, while the boards license and regulate within a reasonable set of budget expectations; their operations and independence are not compromised. Instead, the budget is a framework for unleashing innovations that would never even have been contemplated with infinite resources.

With fiscal planning centralized in the OGA, the divisions will operate more like the DCP model, within a framework of budgetary accountability to Connecticut taxpayers.

In the OGA itself, the Office of State Ethics (OSE) serves as a reminder that a legal staff can effectively enforce state statutes even if they are split from the main part of the entity with which they serve. OSE's regulations divide the division into two distinct parts: a general counsel and legal enforcement. Governor Malloy's budget proposal to create the Office of Hearings builds upon the OSE model by consolidating all of the enforcement staff under the administrative OGA leadership; however, they still would receive direction and answer to the respective commissions.

The information technology functions were not completely consolidated and restructured under PA 11-48. The budget will secure this consolidation.

I believe the General Assembly wants the OGA to succeed. In order for the OGA to succeed, changes are needed to:

1. Complete the consolidation of Information Technology and fiscal programs
2. Initiate the missed opportunity to maximize the legal resources within the OGA and
3. Adjust the OGA structure and budget processes