

## Questions for Office of Policy and Management Secretary Nominee

By: Rute Pinho, Chief Legislative Analyst  
January 23, 2023 | 2023-R-0034

### Secretary of the Office of Policy and Management (OPM) ([CGS §§ 4-65a, 4-66](#))

The OPM secretary is responsible for (1) all aspects of state staff planning and analysis for budgeting, management, energy policy, intergovernmental policy, criminal and juvenile justice planning, and program evaluation; (2) maintaining financial records, examining agencies to determine their effectiveness, and recommending ways to improve state agencies; and (3) serving as the employer representative in collective bargaining between the state and most state employee unions.

### Questions

1. What will be your top initiatives and objectives as secretary? How do you plan to accomplish them?
2. Have you reorganized any responsibilities and functions within OPM? How does the agency's current configuration help accomplish your goals for the agency?
3. OPM's most recent Fiscal Accountability Report indicates that although revenue growth is projected to outpace fixed cost growth in FYs 25 and 26, the reverse is expected for FY 24. What factors are contributing to these trends?
4. Staffing levels in the state's executive branch are about 22% lower than they were 15 years ago. Which agencies have the greatest staffing shortages? Do these shortages compromise the state's ability provide services to its residents?

5. Does the state face any particular challenges in attracting and retaining staff? How do you propose to address these challenges?
6. The Office of Fiscal Analysis (OFA)'s latest [Agency Overtime Report](#) shows that the state spent 11.3% more in General Fund overtime payments through the first quarter of FY 23 when compared to the same period last fiscal year. What is driving this trend? Do you expect it to continue?
7. Can you explain how the cost of fringe benefits at UConn and UConn Health make the university's faculty less competitive in attracting research grants? How do you propose to tackle this problem?
8. OPM's Fiscal Accountability Report estimates that the state's long-term liabilities are down \$7.1 billion from levels reported last year. What additional steps, if any, do you think the state should be taking to reduce long-term liabilities?
9. As OPM secretary, you have served as the co-chairperson of the Municipal Accountability Review Board (MARB). Do you think the board's fiscal oversight powers are adequate?
10. What are your views on the "guardrails" or fiscal controls that limit state spending and borrowing (e.g., the volatility and revenue caps)? Do you support extending the bondholder pledge that "locks" these fiscal controls to future fiscal years?
11. What is your assessment of the state's fiscal safety net? Do you think the state's reserves are sufficient to weather a future recession?
12. How would you characterize the condition of the state's buildings and capital assets? How do rising construction costs affect the state's ability to keep up with capital management and deferred maintenance? Do you have a plan to address these issues?
13. What do you see as the state's biggest upcoming capital needs? How can the state leverage its recent bond rating increases to ensure these needs are met?

RP:rr