

**MINORITY REPORT:**  
**LEGISLATIVE PROCESS ADVISORY COMMITTEE**

**November 19, 2004**



*Submitted by: Rep. Pamela Sawyer, Rep. John Hetherington & Sen. Thomas J. Herlihy*

The Joint Committee on Legislative Management established the bipartisan Legislative Process Advisory Committee. This committee was charged with improving the legislative process for the Connecticut General Assembly. The committee recommended numerous changes that, if acted upon, will result in improvements to the legislative process. However, we strongly believe that several meaningful recommendations were not included, so we respectfully submit this minority report.

Prior to the issuance of the committee's final recommendations, the House Republican caucus (HRO), the League of Woman Voters (LWVCT), Lieutenant Governor Kevin Sullivan, Rep Robert Godfrey and other elected officials offered recommendations to the committee. Again, while we believe the recommendations set forth by the committee will have a valuable impact on the way the legislature operates; we strongly believe more substantial recommendations should have been included in the final report.

Listed are recommendations that we believe will shine a light on the committee process, specifically when dealing with the state's biennial budget.

#### **Budget Recommendations:**

- Budget deliberations shall be conducted out in the open, (*HRO\* & SRO\* Recommendation*)
- New taxes and tax increases shall receive a public hearing before coming to a vote in the legislature, (*HRO & SRO Recommendation*)
- Require every state agency annually to re-justify and report qualitatively and quantitatively on the effectiveness and efficiency of every major state expenditure that's been ongoing for 5 years or more, (*Lt. Gov. Sullivan Recommendation*)
- No bills, other than those in the first fiscal year of a biennium, shall be submitted that propose expenditures for a new program or service unless a budget reduction of an equivalent amount is proposed, (*Lt. Gov. Sullivan Recommendation*)

#### **Committee Action:**

- All legislative committee agendas shall be publicly available in the committee room and on the Internet before every committee meeting, (*HRO & Lt. Gov. Sullivan Recommendations*)
- Reduce and combine the legislative committees. This will simplify the cumbersome committee process, make it more understandable to the public and be cost effective, (*HRO, LWVCT\*, Rep. Godfrey & Lt. Gov. Sullivan Recommendations*)
- Consolidate the select committees and create temporary committees that fall under the committees of cognizance, (*Rep. Godfrey Recommendation*)
- Reduce the size of the committees and have the House committee chairs, vice chairs and ranking members sit on just one committee, thus creating less conflicts of scheduling, (*Rep. Godfrey Recommendation*)
- Expand the committee categories by two, A, B, C, & D and give each committee its own day. Thus spreading out the workload and leaving the extra day for those committees with an extra workload, (*Rep. Godfrey Recommendation*)

- Create a Ways and Means Committee (combining the roles of the Finance and Appropriations Committees) that shall consider what revenues are available as well as how the money is spent, *(HRO & SRO Recommendation)*
- Encourage committees to hold hearings jointly where the subject matter will require multiple committee action, *(SRO & Lt. Gov. Sullivan Recommendation)*

**Floor Action:**

- Legislative sessions shall end at midnight, *(HRO & SRO Recommendation)* or seek unanimous support of the members present and voting to extend the session past midnight,
- Emergency-certified (e-certs) bills must be available publicly, via the Internet, at least 72 hours prior to a vote, *(HRO & SRO Recommendation)*
- All e-certs must be passed by a legislative committee of cognizance before coming to a vote by the full House or Senate, *(HRO Recommendation)*
- Prohibit action (including emergency certification but excluding inclusion in the principal appropriations, revenue and bond bills) on any amendment the content of which has either previously rejected by vote of the primary committee of cognizance or not been subject to public hearing, without the consent of 60% of the members present and voting. *(Lt. Gov. Sullivan Recommendation)*

Thank you for this opportunity to share with you some of what we believe are the more pertinent recommendations that should have been addressed in the Legislative Process Advisory Committee's final report.

Sincerely,

Rep. Pamela Z. Sawyer  
R-Bolton

Rep. John W. Hetherington  
R-New Canaan

Sen. Thomas J. Herlihy  
R- Simsbury