

State's Long-term Planning Efforts

Broadly stated, long-term planning establishes a framework for states to take a visionary, proactive approach to setting and implementing fiscal and public policy. Periodically, the way Connecticut performs long-term planning comes into sharp focus for legislators and other policymakers. In 1993, the legislature created the Connecticut Progress Council comprised of members of the legislative and executive branch as well as public members representing various organizations and entities. The purpose of the council was to develop a long-range vision for the state and define benchmarks for achieving the vision. Since that time, the legislature has statutorily created other boards, councils, and divisions to develop long-range plans in such areas as criminal justice, energy and child poverty.

AREA OF FOCUS

The study would examine the effectiveness of the state's long-range planning efforts, including the establishment of a vision for the state, comprehensive long-range goals, a strategic plan to achieve them, and methods and ability to measure progress, and how these are used in directing fiscal and public policy for the state.

AREAS OF ANALYSIS

1. Define the term "long-term planning" as it applies to state government.
2. Identify the state agencies responsible for conducting long-range planning in Connecticut, including their statutory and regulatory authority.
3. Identify the scope and breadth of areas covered in these long-range planning efforts, including but not limited to:
 - a. the state's Housing Plan;
 - b. the report issued by the Connecticut Progress Council;
 - c. the Child Poverty and Prevention Plan; and
 - d. the state's Long-term Care Plan.
4. Evaluate how long-range plans are currently used to develop public policy and shape the state's budgetary and strategic direction.
5. Identify how local and regional input is obtained and considered in the development of long-range plans.

6. Evaluate how well the entities charged with planning responsibilities, as well as implementation and oversight, are performing their functions, and compare against “best practices”.
7. Examine the goals, standards and benchmarks that have been developed in the plans to measure progress or results, and assess whether they are being measured, and by whom.
8. Examine how the broad long-range goals are communicated to state agencies to be built into their agency plans and budgets.
9. Identify the state resources, including staffing and expertise, currently allocated to long-range planning efforts.
10. Examine how the planning efforts – collection of data and information, measurement, monitoring, and analysis and reporting – are coordinated and whether there is cooperation among agencies and programs or if there is duplication of effort.
11. Examine how other surrounding states are considered in the development of any long-term planning.

The study would also examine models used in other states for long-range planning and their use in developing public and fiscal policies, and directing a state’s strategic efforts.

Excluded from the Scope. This study would not examine the state’s efforts regarding the Conservation and Development Plan. That plan is covered in the analysis in the committee’s study of Regional Planning Organizations, and staff on both studies will coordinate efforts in this area.