

GOVERNOR'S COMMITTEE ON PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES

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Committee at a Glance

The Governor's Committee on People with Disabilities (committee) is a trustee program within the Office of the Governor that supports opportunities for people with disabilities to enjoy full and equal access to lives of independence, productivity, and self-determination. To achieve this mission, the 12-member committee and its five staff carry out the following key activities with an operating budget of about \$314,000.

- Serving as a source of information and education on the abilities, rights, problems, and needs of people with disabilities.
- Advising the governor and Legislature on matters related to full participation of people with disabilities in all aspects of life, including developing policy recommendations.
- Providing technical assistance to stakeholders and the public on navigating services and laws related to people with disabilities.
- Collaborating with mayor's committees on people with disabilities; federal, state, and local entities; and public and private businesses on issues related to people with disabilities.
- Providing recognition of individuals and organizations that perform exemplary work in improving the quality of life for people with disabilities.

The committee's statutory duties extend beyond what it can realistically accomplish.

Summary

In 1991, the Legislature established the committee in statute and placed it within the Governor's Office. Being a trustee program within the Office of the Governor elevates the committee's status, but the Sunset Commission found that several of the committee's statutory requirements extend beyond what it can realistically accomplish with its current resources, particularly since the committee has operated with significantly less funds than it has been appropriated for several years, resulting in a large unexpended balance. The following material summarizes the Sunset Commission's recommendations on the committee.

Issue and Recommendations

Issue 1

The Statutory Duties of the Governor's Committee on People with Disabilities Do Not Align With Its Current Resources and Capabilities.

Several of the committee's statutory requirements do not align with its primary purpose, duplicate the work of other governmental entities, are no longer necessary, or extend beyond what the committee can realistically accomplish. The committee also needs to ensure that it has the necessary resources to carry out its responsibilities since it has operated with significantly less funds than the Legislature has appropriated it for several years, resulting in an unexpended balance of more than \$641,600 as of fiscal year 2014.

Recommendations

Change in Statute

1.1 Continue the Governor's Committee on People with Disabilities for 12 years.

This recommendation would continue the Governor's Committee on People with Disabilities as a trusted program within the Office of the Governor until 2027.

1.2 Remove provisions from the committee's statute that do not align with the committee's purpose and resources.

Under this recommendation, the committee would no longer be required to:

- collect data and provide reports on the State's compliance with the ADA and other federal and state statutes related to the rights and opportunities of people with disabilities;
- create a long-range state plan for persons with disabilities and recommendations to implement the plan (replaced by Recommendation 1.3); and
- collect and evaluate data on employment of persons with disabilities by state agencies.

Removing these provisions would more clearly define the committee's actual responsibilities and remove requirements to collect data that are not available, thus allowing the committee to focus on the duties it can realistically accomplish.

1.3 Require the committee to maintain and analyze information provided in the State's various long-range plans for people with disabilities.

This recommendation would require the committee to collect and publish the links to all long-range plans for people with disabilities created by state agencies and their associated committees. The committee would also be required to review the long-range plans to identify any gaps in state laws and services for people with disabilities.

Management Action – Nonstatutory

- 1.4 Direct the committee to provide information on disability-related services on its website.**
- 1.5 Direct the Governor’s Office and the committee to work together to re-evaluate the amount of funding necessary for the committee to carry out its functions, and to ensure its legislative appropriations request and budget reflect the actual fiscal needs of the committee.**

Change in Appropriation

- 1.6 The Senate Finance and House Appropriations committees should consider using the committee’s unexpended balance as a method of finance for a portion of the committee’s appropriations for fiscal years 2016–2017.**

Fiscal Implication Summary

These recommendations could result in a small savings to the State. Adjusting the committee’s legislative appropriations request and budget to reflect its actual fiscal needs should result in a decrease in the amount appropriated to the committee, providing a small savings to the State. Using the committee’s unexpended balance as a method of finance for a portion of the committee’s appropriations for fiscal years 2016–2017 would result in a one-time savings of \$641,600 to general revenue.

Governor’s Committee on People with Disabilities

Fiscal Year	Savings to the General Revenue Fund
2016	\$641,600
2017	\$0
2018	\$0
2019	\$0
2020	\$0

