

For the record, Peggy Delaney. Committee Assistant for Senate Judiciary and Committee Services Supervisor

I would like to thank the committee for the opportunity to testify and for including all staff especially seasonal staff in this process as you contemplate changes in the organization that will affect all of us. I applaud leadership for investing the money and resources to obtain the NCSL Report. I think the report does a pretty good job of capturing what we do well, while at the same time putting a spotlight on where there is room for improvement.

My job as Committee Services Supervisor entails hiring and training 20 Committee Assistants who provide administrative support to most of the standing committees. In this role, I have the privilege of working with staff in all the offices that make up the General Assembly as well as many of the legislators and especially the Committee Chairs.

From my perspective, each office seems to function incredibly well on their own and provide a very high level of service, professionalism and support to not only the legislators, but to the staff of the other offices as well. I experience this first hand whether I am working with IT, JFO or Sgt at Arms. As a member of Leg Council office, I am very proud of the work we do. Having said that, I believe that there are opportunities where we can and should work together, when it makes sense. There needs to be clearly defined roles for each office and a more formal chain of command. The current structure lends itself to confusion in these areas. We should also work together when appropriate to become more efficient as an organization.

There are two things that I would like to see accomplished with any restructuring of the organization.  
1) Establish a process for resolution when there are conflicting issues or priorities between different offices  
2) Streamline common functions.

I think the NCLS report addresses many of these issues. I would like to share my thoughts on a few of the recommendations from the report. I will keep my comments brief and try not to repeat things that have already been said by other witnesses.

**HR Director** I agree that we should hire an HR Director for the reasons outlined in the report and the testimony given by Damian. Having 20 people report to me, there are personnel issues that come up every session that in any other organization would be handled by an HR dept. It is important that the HR office is independent from the other offices.

**IT** I agree that the IT Department should be its own separate entity as they truly do support all offices, not just Leg Council.

**Reog** There were two options put forth in the report Option A and Option B. We also now have Option C offered by Secretary Bloomer. In my opinion, a combination of Options A and C makes the most sense. I like Option A but would suggest two changes. One, I would replace the Executive Director role with the Legislative Management Office proposed in Option C. and 2) I would add a third arm to that office

which would be called the Operations Division. I believe having an Executive Director would give too much power to one person and would take away from what is currently working well. We do though. need to have an entity that has final authority when conflicting priorities come up between offices, or when we really should have one shared policy. I believe the Legislative Management Committee should have that ‘Final Say’ but I don’t think that it is feasible for the committee to deal with a lot of the day to day issues that will come up. The Legislative Management Office would be a facilitator to help with conflicts that arise between offices as well as between members and staff. This is something that we don’t currently have, and I think is needed. As an example, on one hand, Committee Assistants are here to support the legislators and specifically the chairs. On the other hand, we are part of a leg Council Office which supports all the legislators. We also get direction from the different offices on policy and procedures. Sometimes there can be conflicting priorities and I envision the Legislative Management Office helping with these issues.

The Legislative Management Office would also oversee all shared services, which would include HR, Finance and Accounting and Operations. Operations is a huge part of shared services. It encompasses things like New Member Orientation, the shut down in November, helping set up security training, staff parties. The list goes on and on. I don’t see where these functions are specifically assigned anywhere in Option A, B or C. It makes sense to make operations part of the Legislative Management Office because Operations supports all the offices of the organization.

The Legislative Management Office would report directly to the Legislative Management Committee and would bring to the committee’s attention any issues that would require your “final say” such as policy changes. I also like Option A because each director has a direct line to the committee should they have conflicts that they are unable to resolve, even after consulting with the Legislative Management Office should they choose to. Each Director could also come to the committee with any issues/concerns or policy changes that need to be addressed within their own office.

On a separate note, the committee also asked for feedback on concerns that are not currently being addressed. I did touch on this briefly, and that is when there are issues between staff and legislators. This is something that I really struggle with as Committee Supervisor. If I could be blunt, I am talking about when committee staff is treated by legislators in a disrespectful or unprofessional manner. Some of my staff have been yelled out, talked down to, publicly blamed for things they may or may not have done, told to use their brain, and made to feel uncomfortable. I am not saying this is a wide spread problem, but it is a problem. I can only speak to the people that work for me, but I know they are the only ones who have been subject to this treatment, I am just hoping that with any reorganization you decide on, there is an avenue to deal with these situations. That could be HR, the Legislative Management Office.

Thank you