

Good morning. For the record, I am Jessica Brumsted, a state representative from Chittenden 7 and I am here as a Member from the joint legislative committee on Government Accountability to ask that you consider sunseting the Government Accountability Committee as created in Title 2, Chapter 28, section 970 and including language in your formal final report that government accountability merits attention by the standing committees of jurisdiction, the respective Government Operations committees. Let me explain...

As you know, the world is vastly different now than it was over a decade ago when GAC was initiated via statute. It is time, perhaps past time, that we look closely at GAC's reason for being; what it is and is not responsible for. We have come to you to place the GAC question in a formalized process, not leaving our recommendation to verbal representation in the new biennium. As you all know, at times it is much easier to start fresh with new legislation then to try and amend the current statute.

It is very important to us, the standing Govt. Accountability Committee that we as a legislature not lose the importance of accountability in government rather raise it to a level where all legislative committees feel some responsibility to go back and look at the laws we pass to make certain the goals we set out to meet, are actually being met and if not, why not? Does the law need to be tweaked a bit, are we collecting the data we need to understand the law's impact? Is the entity charged with doing

the work meeting legislative intent? We owe this sort of review to the people of Vermont.

Over this past year, it became clear to our committee that our role may be misunderstood and some of that is a result of the original legislation itself. The statute was written ten years ago and our ability to collect data and review that information was very limited and expensive. Our recommendation to develop population outcomes as set forth in Title 3, section 2311 are mostly relevant to state government's department by department program level performance measures informing population level indicators. Assessing the effectiveness of population level indicators in measuring progress to achieve population level outcomes, and annually review population level indicators in the context of new data development. Yes, this is jargonny – essentially what I am saying is the

The State Outcomes Report is a picture of “what is”, the conditions of life for Vermonters today – it is not a performance report that can inform the legislature if they are meeting the goals of specific legislation. There is a clear need in today's world for something closer to a performance report, for example, six years ago we passed legislation to address the need for more early education providers, we created programs that included scholarships and loan repayment and then we measured the outcomes and learned that yes these programs are working – then 2 years later we added to the language based on this information, continuously improving upon our work. When we write legislation with performance goals in

mind we need to also think about how will we know if we are meeting those goals, what can we measure to get at that information and how much will it cost to set up those systems? When will the committees of jurisdiction go back and look to see if we are meeting those goals. The good news is, there is a lot already happening for example; Building Bright Futures is collecting data about our child care centers and early educator providers, the Climate Council is collecting data to show us if our work is having the intended outcomes necessary to reduce carbon emissions among many other things, and the Office of Racial Equity, the health department, the list of silo'd information throughout state government goes on and on. Our committee is hoping that the House and Senate Government Operations Committees might look into a way to connect this data in an easily accessible format so that anyone can log on to the Leg Website and click to see how we are doing, what kind of impact we are having on reducing the number of homeless, increasing accessibility to quality child care programs, etc., etc. Presently, Vermonters are unable to access this information and it seems obvious to all of us that that would be incredibly helpful.

In conclusion, I am here this morning to ask that you consider sunseting Title 2, Chapter 28, section 970, the language that created the Government Accountability Committee and in your formal final report ask that the standing committees of jurisdiction, the respective Government Operations committees explore both how we use evidence to inform policy and as a

body look back at our laws to ensure accountability. Thank you.