

MINUTES
Legislative Post Audit Committee
Foster Care Scope Statement Subcommittee
December 22, 2015

Call to Order

Welcome by the Chair. The meeting was called to order by Chair O'Donnell at 9:04 a.m. in Conference Room #1 at the offices of Legislative Post Audit. All members were present by conference call. Subcommittee members present:

Senator Michael O'Donnell, Chair	Representative Peggy Mast
Senator Laura Kelly	Representative Ed Trimmer
Senator Jeff Longbine	

Selection of Audit Questions

Justin Stowe, Deputy Post Auditor, reviewed for subcommittee members potential audit questions developed by LPA staff and submitted by legislators:

- 1. Is DCF following adequate policies and procedures to ensure the safety of children during the removal and placement process?*
- 2. Is DCF systematically discriminating against same-sex couples in regard to foster care and adoption?*
- 3. Do foster care contractors have sufficient capacity to provide necessary foster care services?*
- 4. Does DCF's child placement process ensure that children are placed in foster care or adoptive homes with a sufficient living space and sufficient financial resources?*
- 5. Are DCF's child removal and placement criteria designed to help keep families together as much as possible?*
- 6. Does DCF ensure that all applicable state and federal laws governing the foster care system in Kansas are followed?*

Chair O'Donnell asked whether all members' concerns and questions were included in the list distributed by staff. Members indicated the six questions covered

their concerns.

Senator Kelly suggested looking at whether staff qualifications are adequate and whether that contributes to any problems identified. Mr. Stowe indicated that thought could be accommodated under question #1.

Representative Mast wondered whether any of the questions would duplicate work that has already been done. Mr. Stowe indicated he thought not, but he would review that issue further based on the final audit scope recommended by the subcommittee.

After discussion, Senator Longbine moved to include question #4, dealing with foster homes' sufficiency of living space and financial resources. Senator Kelly seconded the motion. Representative Mast suggested looking at outcomes for children placed in more crowded homes. After discussion, staff was directed to assess whether such an outcomes-based review was feasible and report back at the next meeting. Motion carried.

In response to a question, Scott Frank, Legislative Post Auditor, said staff would look at the questions approved and would combine the questions, and the work they entail, based on the work finally recommended by the subcommittee. Any such consolidation would be reflected in the final scope statement developed for the full committee's review.

Senator Kelly moved approving question 6 as shown. The motion was not seconded.

Representative Trimmer moved approving questions 1, 5, and 6 as shown. Senator Longbine seconded the motion. Motion carried.

Senator Kelly suggested giving staff a week to review an expansion of work in the area of privatization under question #3. Representative Mast seconded the motion. Motion carried.

Regarding question #2, regarding whether DCF systematically discriminates against same-sex couples as foster parents, Senator O'Donnell suggested re-wording the question to be more neutral. Members also asked whether discrimination issues could be dealt with under question #6, on compliance with state and federal law. Mr. Stowe asked for time to research whether discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation is illegal under federal or state law.

Senator O'Donnell suggested meeting again in a week to consider staff revisions to question #2, a new question on privatization, and a determination of

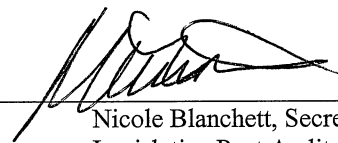
whether discrimination based on sexual orientation is illegal under state or federal law. Senator Kelly made a motion to that effect. Senator Longbine seconded the motion. Motion carried.

Date of Next Meeting

The subcommittee agreed to meet again by conference call in one week at 9:00 a.m. on December 29.

Adjournment

The Chair adjourned the meeting at 10:03 a.m.



Nicole Blanchett, Secretary
Legislative Post Audit Committee

1-7-16
date

All handouts and other documents referred to in these minutes are on file with Legislative Post Audit. Unless specifically noted, the individual remarks recorded herein have not been transcribed verbatim and have not been submitted to the individuals appearing before the committee for editing or corrections.