

## 2017 Legislative Interim Studies

Now that the First Session of the 56th Legislature is over, House and Senate members are making requests for interim studies to gather more information on a variety of topics that did not get accomplished this session, need more work, or developed new ideas. The topics range from education, healthcare, veteran's affairs, taxation, budget apportionments, criminal justice reform, drones, and many more.

The House requested 136 interim studies which is an increase from the 122 requested last year. On July 7<sup>th</sup>, Speaker McCall approved 63 of the studies. He combined several, disapproved 26 and created two new committees to handle the criminal justice reform studies. Senators have until July 14<sup>th</sup> to make their requests. Pro Tempore Schulz will assign the studies to a standing committee. It will be up to the chairman of the standing committee to hear the study request or not.

If you are unable to attend any of the meetings in the House of Representatives, you can follow the committee hearings online at [www.oklegislature.gov](http://www.oklegislature.gov). Select "Video" up top and scroll down to House Meetings Audio to hear the meeting as it is happening. You are also welcome to attend any of the meetings at the capitol. We will post the agendas as they are published on the OML website at [www.oml.org](http://www.oml.org).

We will continue to identify those studies which may impact municipal operations. We welcome your input on these issues.

### Summary of Interim Studies with Municipal Impact

#### **Affordable Housing**

**H17-082** by Rep. Forrest Bennett will examine the challenges of affordable housing in both urban and rural communities.

This study will provide a broad overview of housing challenges throughout the state including availability, cost, and anticipated future needs. Specific emphasis will be placed on policy objectives that they Legislature can pursue to incentivize housing construction and promote the reuse of vacant residential property.

#### **Agency Consolidation**

**H17-026** by Rep. Bobby Cleveland will study state agencies, evaluation of their policies, and possibility of consolidation.

#### **Condemnation**

**H17-015** by Rep. Scooter Park that will study the use of eminent domain was combined with **H17-025** by Rep. Steve Vaughan that will study the improvement of county permitting processes for oil and gas drilling and pipeline crossings.

#### **Construction Standards**

**H17-120** by Rep. Regina Goodwin will examine the construction standards as they relate to driveways, sidewalks, curbs, and drainage and how they affect senior mobility.

### **Contractors**

**H17-069** by Rep. Glen Mulready seeks to study the ratio of contractors to journeyman for mechanical (HVAC), electrical and plumbing trades.

### **Criminal Justice Reform**

**H17-023** by Rep. Justin Humphrey will review the concept that will create true community corrections which will be self-funding. The plan also creates funding for all community criminal justice agencies. The Plan incorporate stream lining the release of inmates from the Department of Corrections. This proposal creates hundreds of new jobs in criminal justice, takes no money from the current system, changes and prevents criminal behavior, reduces drug use and reduces incarceration numbers. This study is combined with **H17-106** by Rep. Scott Biggs that will review of Justice Reform Programs in other States - the positive impacts, negative impacts and what to look for.

**H17-038** by Rep. Scott Biggs will look at each crime in an attempt to ensure the public is protected in this new round of justice reform measures, because violent criminals should not be receiving lower sentences or early release.

**H17-130** by Rep. Mickey Dollens will examine criminal justice reform.

### **Department of Corrections**

**H17-030** by Rep. Bobby will review and study of all property currently owned by the Department of Corrections and its current use and cost.

### **Drones**

**H17-094** by Rep. Casey Murdock will study the regulations regarding the use of drones.

### **Economic Development**

**H17-006** by Rep. Scott Fetgatter will review issues to understand why rural communities in Oklahoma are not attracting industry. The study will also look at the economic impact and employment rate it has on the state. What legislation will be required to attract business to rural areas? What incentives are required to attract business in rural areas as well as what legislation is currently on the books that hinders economic development in rural areas. This study is combined with **H17-017** by Rep. Rhonda Baker to study rural economic community development.

**H17-073** by Rep. Jon Echols will Study on how to diversify Oklahoma's economy.

### **Electric Distribution**

**H17-039** by Rep. Josh West to explore the current moratorium on municipal condemnation of electric distribution facilities and whether additional studies exploring electric restructuring and consumer choice are warranted.

### **Electric Vehicles**

**H17-024** by Rep. Steve Vaughan will study at the Kay County Electric Co-Op request the ability to use blue and red flashing lights on their vehicles for emergency purposes. The yellow lights now in use on their vehicles for emergency situations are not being recognized by drivers as emergency lights.

## **Energy**

**H17-037** by Rep. Claudia Griffith, Rep. Ben Loring, Rep. Cyndi Munson and Rep. Forest Bennett will study on economic benefits of solar energy to Oklahoma. This study is combined with **H17-132** by Rep. Mickey Dollens to study the state's energy resources.

## **Health Insurance**

**H17-046** by Lewis Moore will study what Oklahomans do to control the high cost of health insurance. For government health insurance and health care costs:

How much does healthcare and health insurance costs rise each year?

What can be done and is being done to control those costs?

What is being done by the State of OK to reduce indigent health care costs?

What options does the State have in providing a market for individual health insurance?

## **Military Airfields**

**H17-031** by Rep. Mike Sanders will examine the impacts of tall structures near our state's military airfields. This study will convene interested parties and experts from the military, impacted communities, landowners, structure owners, and others to examine the impacts of wind turbines, radio towers, and other structures on military flight training and operations. The study will also examine current state and federal procedures regulating the placement of these structures and make recommendations on ways to enhance those processes to ensure the long-term economic viability of our state's military bases.

**H17-099** by Rep. Charles Ortega will study the impact of tall structures in military training airspace.

## **Municipal Fines and Fees**

**H17-080** by Rep. Forrest Bennett will take a critical look at how different cities and municipalities impose fines and fees and how the revenue generated is utilized.

This study will present perspectives on how cities and municipalities impose, collect, and enforce fines and fees in relation to health and safety ordinances. The intent is to include information on fine and fee structure and how that structure incentivizes compliance, funds city government services, and whether compliance can be achieved through non-monetary penalties.

## **Natural Guard**

**H17-016** by Rep. Tammy West will study the overall economic effects of the National Guard in Oklahoma and emerging changes within Air National Guard in Oklahoma. This study was combined with **H17-064** by Reps. Chuck Hoskin and Claudia Griffith to study the state approving agencies in the administration of GI Bill benefits.

## **Pensions**

**H17-032** by Rep. Randy McDaniel will examine the rules and procedures of implementing fiscal proposals.

**H17-033** by Rep. Randy McDaniel will discuss best practices for pension plans and the financial performance and condition of the state retirement systems.

## **Police**

**H17-110** by Rep. Monroe Nichols to review community policing standards, laws, best practices and training programs regarding the use of deadly force in Oklahoma.

## **Public Transit/Railroads/Transportation**

**H17-081** by Rep. Forrest Bennett will study how the state and cities can leverage funding to increase access.

Public Transit: a comparative look at how the state and cities can leverage funding to increase access to public transportation.

Public transportation has been shown as a key to economic development in densely populated, metropolitan areas. As Oklahoma's urban centers continue to grow, it is important to establish both inner city and connective means of public transportation. This study will examine the feasibility of both while considering cost, efficiency, and availability of funding.

**H17-020** by Rep. Dell Kerbs will study the investment of money from short line sales on infrastructure for job growth and ROI.

**H17-107** by Rep. Monroe Nichols to study the passenger rail commuter service and the coastal access to see the economic and social benefits of pending expansions.

## **Prosperity**

**H17-116** by Speaker Charles McCall and Rep. Lewis Moore will review what role the government has in creating a prosperous Oklahoma.

- What can the State Government do to create prosperity or the clear the way for Prosperity? Reduce regulations
- What role do government agencies play?
- What role does statutes, regulations, rules, permits and codes play?
- What are the costs of laws, regulations, rules, permits and codes to consumers, wage earners and business owners in Oklahoma?
- How do citizens and legislators know what government and agency actions should be reduced or eliminated?
- What are the fundamentals of prosperity?
- What are the building blocks of creating an environment that fosters prosperity?

## **Revolving Funds**

**H17-058** by Rep. Marcus McEntire seeks to understand the structure of revolving funds, where the money comes from and revolving funds utilization in the budgeting process.

## **Rural Fire Departments**

**H17-041** by Rep. Jeff Coody will provide an opportunity for all interested parties to provide additional information, clarification, an opportunity for discussion, as well as suggestions for clarifying legislation regarding rural fire department subscription dues verification and related issues.

## **Taxation**

**H17-012** by Rep. Kevin West will study what are some incentives to increase energy production in the state? What are the current tax rates for different energy sectors in Oklahoma? How do our current tax rates compare to neighboring states? What are the current tax breaks for energy companies? When are they set to sunset?

**H17-018** by Rep. Rhonda Baker will review the State Tax Credits and subsidies compared to other states in our region.

**H17-043** by Rep. Lewis Moore and Sen. Roger Thompson will explore if every citizen should pay an income tax and the case for the Flat Tax.

**H17-050** by Rep. Harold Wright will look at alternatives and approach to taxation of liquor and beer with the modernization of liquor laws that take effect in October 2018.

**H17-088** by Rep. John Michael Montgomery will look at comprehensive tax reform. The study looks to compare and contrast regional, national, and international tax regimes at the state and provincial level to Oklahoma's.

-Analyze tax policy differences for tax incidence equity, the broadness of tax bases, the effect of "sin taxes" in relation to the informal market, and the overall ability of Oklahoma's tax structure to provide revenue for core services.

-Consider the ability of tax reform to be part of a larger package of reform which develops a long term strategy to eliminate reliance on one or several major revenue sources.

-Discuss ability to collect revenue at various levels of the economy and which might be most effective.

**H17-095** by Rep. Cyndi Munson to study the Impact of Oklahoma's Taxation Patterns and Policy,

1. Is our current tax structure helping or harming Oklahomans?
2. What is the impact of regressive and progressive tax policies on our state budget?
3. What combination of tax policies would be best for all Oklahomans while funding core functions of government?
4. How do regressive taxes hurt working Oklahomans?

## **Transportation Funding**

**H17-008** by Rep. Dustin Roberts will study and try to better understand the Appropriations to DOT and County transportation funds

**H17-010** by Rep. Kevin West will study to find if there are some opportunities to increase funding to roads & bridges? What is a fiscally responsible way to generate more revenue for

roads & bridges? What are some plans offered in neighboring states that generate revenue for roads & bridges? What are laws in other states that take into account more fuel efficient vehicles, hybrid, etc.?

### **Workers Compensation**

**H17-013** by Rep. Kevin West will study what current reforms are being reviewed. What are some of the biggest concerns from the Worker's Comp. Commission? What are some concerns from businesses that are participating? What are some reasons some businesses do not participate? What are ways to make Worker's Comp. more affordable for business? What are ways to reduce fraud with Worker's Comp?