

Commission on Streamlining Government

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STREAMLINING GOVERNMENT COMMISSION ACCEPTS FIRST RECOMMENDATIONS TO MAKE STATE GOVERNMENT MORE EFFICIENT

CITIZENS URGED TO COMMENT ON PROPOSALS

The Commission on Streamlining Government accepted the first list of recommendations to make Louisiana government more efficient and less costly. The Advisory Groups on Duplicative and Non-Essential Services, Outsourcing, Privatization and Risk Management, and Efficiency and Benchmarking which have been working with the full commission over the last two and half months submitted the formal recommendations to the commission. The next step is to allow time for the public to comment on the proposals.

"It is important that we hear from citizens about these recommendations before taking formal action on the proposals. We want to hear from stakeholders, concerned citizens, anyone with thoughts or ideas about the streamlining plans," Sen. Jack Donahue, chair of the Streamlining Government Commission said. "There is no doubt that we are going to have to reduce state spending not only to deal with our short-term budget limitations, but also to move toward a more prudent and focused use of taxpayers' dollars. We want to move in that direction with the public's help."

The first list of 35 recommendations accepted by the commission are wide-ranging in scope. Among the suggestions are proposals to reduce the number of state employees and the number of state vehicles; plans to increase the employee-to-management ratio in the Department of Social Service; efforts to consolidate and/or outsource certain state services and operations in the areas of social services, mental health, public health units and accounts receivables across state agencies. Some of the recommendations include specific expected cost savings. Others do not. Commission members want to have specifics on planned cost savings and the information to back up those projected savings before acting on the recommendations.

The commission did not accept a recommendation relative to changes in the way the state's four-year colleges and universities are governed, deciding the issue is outside the authority of the commission. Another commission created in state law, the Louisiana

Postsecondary Education Review Commission, is charged with examining the state's higher education system.

Citizens can view the full list of accepted recommendations at the Streamlining Government Commission website <http://senate.legis.state.la.us/streamline/>. The public may also submit comments and ideas regarding these initial recommendations at the website or mail written comments to Commission on Streamlining Government, P.O. Box 44481, Baton Rouge, LA 70804.

"We will refer the public comments received back to the appropriate advisory groups for consideration. The advisory groups may or may not decide to revise their recommendations to the full commission," Sen. Donahue said. "We plan to start acting on these initial recommendations at the commission's October 27th meeting and will continue to consider other recommendations in a free and open process until our work is complete."

Beginning next week, the Streamlining Government Commission plans to meet at least weekly with additional meetings to be scheduled as needed. The 10-member commission is facing a December 15th deadline to submit its initial recommendations to the governor and the legislature. With the state facing a \$1 billion shortfall in the 2010-2011 state budget year, Governor Jindal has charged the Streamlining Government Commission to identify \$802 million worth of savings in those recommendations.

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