

Checklist for Considering Topics for an OPEGA Review

Part I – Does it make sense to consider an OPEGA review of the topic at this time?

- | | YES | NO |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| 1. Is the topic outside of the GOC's mission and OPEGA's statutory authority? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 2. Is the subject matter already addressed by an OPEGA review planned, or in progress, or covered by a topic already on the stand-by list? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 3. Has the issue(s) been satisfactorily covered by a recent audit, investigation or review by any other administrative body, judicial entity, or legislative study committee such that the GOC is satisfied the issue warrants no further study? Is there such an effort currently in progress that addresses the issue(s)? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 4. Are there other appropriate avenues for addressing the issue(s) that have not yet been pursued and the GOC would like to see pursued first? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |

These four points represent guidelines for the Government Oversight Committee to weigh as they consider whether it makes sense to consider the topic for an OPEGA review at this time. If the answer to all of the above questions is “No,” the topic is suitable for further consideration. However, the GOC reserves the right to act on each request individually as the Committee deems appropriate.

- | | YES | NO |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| Does the GOC want to further consider this topic for possible addition to the Plan for Program Reviews and Projects for OPEGA or placement on the stand-by list | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |

If YES, proceed to Part II of this checklist to assess the topic's priority. This prioritization may be scheduled for a subsequent meeting, if needed, to allow OPEGA time to gather information helpful to determining the topic's priority status. Before OPEGA spends resources gathering that information the GOC may consider:

- a. Whether the topic could be satisfactorily addressed with limited hours and may, therefore, be appropriate for OPEGA to conduct limited research and respond to requestor.
- b. Whether the topic is defined at an appropriate level for further consideration.

If NO, the Committee might consider referring the topic to another entity or decide there will be no further action at this time.

Part II – Is the topic a high enough priority to warrant addition to the Stand-by List or Plan for Program Reviews and Projects by OPEGA at this time?

The GOC may choose to use the checklist below to assess prioritization criteria for each topic. Additional information needed to assess the criteria will be obtained as needed at the direction of the Committee. The GOC may specify what information it requires, and whether it wants to receive the information from OPEGA, directly from the agency or from other legislators.

Financial Impact

If yes, check the box

- 1. Total expenditures or revenues associated with the topic approaches \$1 million annually?
- 2. At least 50% of expenditures or revenues are from non-federal funds?
- 3. At least 25% of expenditures or revenues are from the General Fund?
- 4. There are multiple and/or complex funding streams?
- 5. Other financial considerations as determined by the GOC

Public Impact

- 1. Affects indirectly a significant portion of Maine's citizens?
- 2. Directly impacts more than 5,000 citizens or 100 businesses?
- 3. Impacts on citizens are potentially severe in terms of health, safety, welfare or finances?
- 4. Other public impact considerations as determined by the GOC

Legislative Impact

- 1. Legislative committee has concerns or desires information on the topic?
- 2. Perennially discussed or considered in the Legislature?
- 3. Associated with frequent constituent complaints or frequent requests for OPEGA reviews?
- 4. Elicits frequent, or recent and significant, media coverage?
- 5. Other legislative impact considerations as determined by the GOC

Severity of Concerns

- 1. Involves potential risk of serious harm to citizens or State employees?
- 2. Involves potential fraud or significant misuse of State resources?
- 3. Involves potential violations of law?
- 4. Involves potential gross mismanagement, misconduct, negligence or incompetence?

Total number of criteria met (i.e. count of checked boxes in Part II):

After considering the number of criteria met by the topic (i.e. points assigned above), the GOC may compare this topic to other topics already on the Stand-by list or Plan for Reviews and Projects by OPEGA. The Committee will then decide what action to take on the topic. Options include:

- a. No further action at this time
- b. Refer to another entity
- c. Authorize OPEGA to conduct limited research and respond to requestor
- d. Place topic on Stand-by list
- e. Place topic on Plan for Program Reviews and Projects by OPEGA
- f. Initiate Rapid Response Review

Note: In selecting topics the GOC may want to consider keeping the Stand-by list to a manageable size and working to ensure the list is not limited to topics associated with only one department.
