

MEMORANDUM

January 14, 2014

TO: Members of the House Public Health Care and Human Services Committee

FROM: Representative Dianne Primavera, Chair

SUBJECT: General Committee Procedural Items

In order to expedite committee business and help eliminate the need for additional committee hearings, you will need to be aware of the following procedures during the session.

General Committee Procedural Items

Committee Meetings

- The House Committee on Public Health Care and Human Services meets on Tuesdays at 1:30 p.m., and Fridays upon adjournment of the House in House Committee Room 0107.
- I will attempt to conduct committee business on Tuesday afternoons and meet on Fridays only when the committee's bill load or legislative deadlines make such meetings necessary. Consequently, Tuesday afternoon meetings may occasionally run past 5:00 p.m. Committee members should anticipate this and not schedule conflicting engagements.
- Committee meetings and bills scheduled for consideration are published in the daily House calendar. Announcements of committee meetings by the chairman or vice-chairman also occur while the House is in session.
- Meeting cancellations are announced while the House is in session.
- Committee members are responsible for bringing copies of bills (bill folders) scheduled to be considered by the committee to meetings. Committee members are expected to have read the bill prior to the committee meeting.

- Members should use discretion when using laptops and other electronic devices during committee meetings. It is expected that members will use these devices *solely* for committee-related work or emergencies and in such a way that does not disrupt the committee or reflect disrespect to the witnesses who are testifying. The use of electronic devices during testimony may negatively affect the public's impression of the committee and the legislature as a whole. Therefore, if the use of electronic devices becomes overly apparent and distracting, the chair will ask that those devices be disabled. Members should turn off or silence cell phones and pagers.

Joint Committee Meetings

- Joint meetings with the House Health Insurance and Environment and Senate Health and Human Services Committees may be scheduled from time to time. Traditionally, joint meetings are held for SMART Government Act briefings from the executive departments and the Joint Budget Committee.
- The joint health committees are required by statute to hear a number of presentations throughout the course of the session. Additional informational briefings may be scheduled when appropriate.

Committee Deadlines

- The first committee deadline is February 6, when all House bills introduced on or before the sixth day of the session and assigned to the committee must be reported out. All remaining House bills must be reported out by February 20.
- The next committee deadline is March 21, which is the deadline for committees to report bills originating in the other house.

Attendance

- **Be prompt.** A majority of the members of each committee of reference constitutes a quorum. It is a matter of courtesy that we start committee meetings at the time listed in the House calendar. If you are sponsoring a bill in other committee meetings or need to be out of the room during the meeting, please inform the chairman or staff of your whereabouts.
- Attendance is recorded at every meeting and these records are available for public inspection.
- **Consistent tardiness or absence will be noted and reported to the floor leader of the party to which the member belongs.** Members are required to inform the chair or the committee staff person if they will be late or absent from the committee meeting. If you are absent at the beginning

of a committee hearing and have not previously informed the chair or staff person, the chair will mark you absent on the committee roll call.

Calendaring of Bills

- Bills are scheduled by the committee chair within the applicable deadlines and usually with the concurrence of the sponsor. The chair determines the order of business for each committee meeting.
- As bills are calendared, sponsors receive notice from committee staff concerning the date, time, and location that his/her bill will be considered.
- Sponsors need to be flexible about the scheduling of their bills. Scheduling bills early within the applicable deadlines may allow more time for committee consideration.
- Bills of committee members will be scheduled last at each meeting unless circumstances require a different order.

Testimony

- The chairman may limit opposing sides on any issue to a set amount of time or limit the number of individuals who may testify if it appears the committee will not be able to hear all of those who wish to speak.
- The chair will attempt to work with bill sponsors who expect a large number of witnesses or a large amount of public interest to schedule the bill appropriately and accommodate witness schedules. Generally, the chair will allow the bill sponsor to determine the order of the testimony. However, the chair will make the final decision on the order of witnesses and amount of time allotted for testimony.
- Committee members are to be polite, engaged, and courteous to those who are testifying. Citizens have often taken off work or traveled long distances to appear before the committee. Committee members are to give their attention to witnesses by minimizing their use of electronic devices and trips outside of the committee room during witness testimony. **Above all, I ask that members be courteous in their questioning of witnesses.** The chair will end questioning or dialogue that is disrespectful or overly aggressive. The appropriate time for members of the committee to express their opinions on policy matters is not during the questioning of witnesses. Members will be given ample opportunity to express such opinions before voting.

Amendments

- The chair strongly discourages conceptual amendments other than those that make minor changes or technical corrections. Conceptual amendments will be drafted by legislative staff and approved by the originator before the committee report is signed by the chair.
- Any amendment that exceeds one page in length or strikes everything below the enacting clause should be made available to all committee members and the bill sponsor as soon as possible prior to the bill hearing. The chair reserves the right to lay over a bill to give committee members the opportunity to adequately study any such amendments that are offered.