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MEMORANDUM

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FROM: Charle

Charley Pike, Director

Office of Legislative Legal Services

DATE:

TO:

July 8, 2009

SUBJECT: Policy on Interim Committee Timetable for Requesting Draft

Legislation

Since the 2001 interim, the Executive Committee has adopted deadlines and guidelines for requesting and finalizing interim committee bills. These deadlines have been implemented by the chairs of the interim committees.

We respectfully request that the Executive Committee adopt similar deadlines and guidelines for the 2009 interim. Interim committees are formed with the goal of devoting significant time and consideration to a specific topic, culminating in the recommendation of one or more pieces of often complex legislation. Several years of experience in working with interim committees and preparing interim committee bills suggests that, in many cases, committees face a great challenge in allowing sufficient time to thoroughly consider and give adequate debate and discussion to interim bills and to ensure the bills clearly reflect the committee's intent. This challenge is compounded by the need to allow members of the Legislative Council sufficient time to review and consider proposed interim committee bills prior to approving them at the annual fall meeting. Implementation of these deadlines and guidelines seems to assist interim committee members in working with the Office of Legislative Legal Services, resulting in improved timeliness and quality of interim committee bills.

For the 2009 interim, the Office of Legislative Legal Services suggests the following deadlines and guidelines be adopted by the Executive Committee for interim committee bills:

- 1. a. No later than August 3, 2009, or the first meeting of the interim committee, whichever is later, the chair of the committee shall set a date by which all bill requests, along with the information necessary for drafting the bills, must be submitted to the Office of Legislative Legal Services and the meeting date at which the bill drafts will be considered and/or approved by the committee.
 - b. In setting such dates, the chair and committee shall ensure that no fewer than twenty-one (21) days separate the deadline date for making bill requests and providing drafting information and the date for committee consideration and/or approval. The twenty-one-day period is for the purpose of allowing sufficient time for bill drafting, mailing of drafts to committee members in advance of meetings, and consideration of drafts by members prior to the meeting date for committee consideration and/or approval.
- 2. In addition, the committee chair shall establish specific guidelines for the making of bill requests and, to the extent possible, shall ensure that any bill request is made during a committee meeting and has the support of a majority of the members of the full committee prior to the request being put in bill draft form.
- 3. Interim committees are encouraged to consider bill drafts at one meeting and approve final proposed legislation at a subsequent meeting in order to allow committee members to see final drafts that have incorporated all changes requested by the committee. The chair and committee shall also ensure that the meeting date at which the bill drafts will be considered and/or approved is no fewer than fourteen (14) days prior to the tentatively scheduled November 13, 2009, meeting date for the full Legislative Council.

This suggested timetable and these procedures are designed to ensure that interim committees have sufficient time to fully debate proposed legislation, review the actual wording of bill drafts, and satisfy themselves that the interim committee bills that are introduced accurately reflect the conclusions and recommendations adopted by the committees. These suggestions will also assist the Office of Legislative Legal Services in providing the highest degree of professional drafting and advice and allow time for Legislative Council staff to copy and distribute the drafts.

With your approval, and with the assistance of Legislative Council Staff, we can prepare a memorandum from the Executive Committee to the chairs of the 2009 interim committees and the statutory committees, commissions, and task forces directing those chairs to implement the above policy and directives, with appropriate modifications for dates, for the 2009 interim committees and deliver the memorandum to each of these chairpersons.

If our Office can answer any questions you may have about this suggested directive, please do not hesitate to contact Charley Pike or Dan Cartin at (303) 866-2045.

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First day for committees to schedule dates for making bill requests and for committee approval of bills.

Last day for committees to make bill requests and provide drafting information.

Last day for committees to approve final proposed legislation.

Tentative meeting date for the full Legislative Council.

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