

Joint Legislative Audit & Review Committee 2018 Legislative Auditor Annual Report

Innovating to provide in-depth, objective answers to complicated questions

Message from Legislative Auditor Keenan Konopaski

The Joint Legislative Audit and Review Committee (JLARC) is a bicameral, bipartisan committee with a staff of professional analysts working under my direction.

JLARC's non-partisan professional staff produce a body of high-quality work that evaluates a diverse set of state government functions. I'm pleased to share the highlights with you.

- **Application of advanced methods for analysis.** Some studies require advanced analysis, such as economic modeling or statistical tools like multivariate regression analysis. JLARC staff uses these analytical methods as needed, and was recognized for excellence in methodology by the National Legislative Program Evaluation Society (NLPES). NLPES is a professional association within the National Conference of State Legislatures (NCSL).
- **Innovation in data collection and report delivery.** In 2018, JLARC staff fulfilled a new role – collecting data from public agencies that annually spend \$100,000 or more fulfilling public records requests. We worked with stakeholders and LEG-TECH to build a new online system to answer the Legislature's questions. JLARC staff also made greater use of tools like Tableau to give readers a more comprehensive look at the data we use.
- **Work plan that addresses critical issues of today and the future.** In 2018, JLARC staff completed studies of services for people with developmental disabilities, select tax preferences, state service delivery options, and low-income housing development. At the



same time, staff began the analysis for studies due in 2019 and laid the groundwork for future studies.

As in the past, our work has made an impact. All recommendations to state agencies have either been implemented or are in progress. JLARC staff were invited to present at national conferences of NLPES, the non-partisan Pew Charitable Trusts, and the American Evaluation Association.

Each session, the Legislature assigns new studies to reflect the top concerns of the members. These studies become part of our [biennial work plan](#). Over the next year, our work will answer questions about topics such as scholarship programs, infrastructure, and aerospace incentives. You can stay informed through [our web site](#) and by [following us on Twitter](#).



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ABOUT JLARC

Bicameral, bipartisan committee

Bicameral, bipartisan committee works to make state government operations more effective, efficient, and accountable

The Joint Legislative Audit and Review Committee (JLARC) is composed of an equal number of House and Senate members, Democrats and Republicans.



Note: JLARC members as of December 31, 2018 are pictured. Senator John Braun also served during 2018.

Audit authority

JLARC studies are conducted in accordance with Generally Accepted Government Auditing Standards

The Joint Legislative Audit and Review Committee (JLARC) works to make state government operations more effective, efficient, and accountable. The Committee is comprised of an equal number of House and Senate members, Democrats and Republicans. JLARC's authority is established in [Chapter 44.28](#) Revised Code of Washington.

JLARC pursues its mission by conducting performance audits, program evaluations, sunset reviews, and other analyses. Assignments to conduct studies are made by the Legislature and the Committee itself. Based on these assignments, JLARC's non-partisan staff auditors, under the direction of the Legislative Auditor, independently seek answers to audit questions and issue recommendations to improve performance.

Work by JLARC staff is conducted using Generally Accepted Government Auditing Standards.

- These standards ensure audit conclusions are independent, objective, and accurate.
- These standards require auditors to plan and perform audits to obtain sufficient, appropriate evidence to provide a reasonable basis for findings and conclusions based on the audit objectives.
- The evidence obtained for any JLARC report provides a reasonable basis for the findings and conclusions.

INNOVATIVE WORK & METHODS

Application of advanced methods for analysis

JLARC staff use economic modeling and statistical analysis to answer complex questions

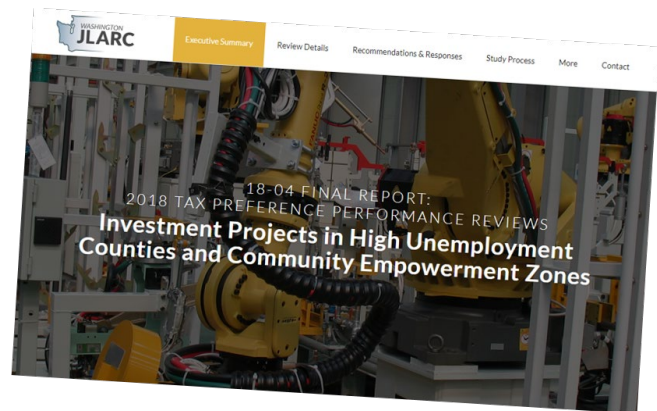
JLARC staff use the most rigorous analysis possible, taking into account each study's scope and resources

While every study requires careful analysis and evidence to support findings and conclusions, some also require advanced analysis. The following examples show how the Joint Legislative Audit and Review Committee (JLARC) staff recently have used economic modeling, statistical analysis, and or tools to manage extremely large data sets to help us answer the Legislature's questions.

Economic modeling estimates the range of employment changes from a tax preference

In 2010, the Legislature passed a sales and use tax deferral for qualifying businesses that invested in facilities, machinery, or equipment in distressed areas. One of its two stated objectives was to promote and stimulate new employment opportunities in distressed areas.

While data indicated that employment increased by 131 jobs, it was difficult to objectively determine how many of these new jobs were a direct result of the preference. So, JLARC staff developed a REMI¹ simulation to estimate the range of net employment² changes (including direct³, indirect⁴, and induced⁵ jobs) under three different scenarios. These scenarios can help the Legislature consider the extent to which the preference has affected job growth.



	New jobs assumed to be a direct result of the preference	Net employment change statewide
Scenario 1	None (0 jobs).	Net loss of 29 jobs.
Scenario 2	All (131 jobs).	Net gain of 429 jobs.
Scenario 3	Break-even point (8.5 jobs).	Net change of 0 jobs. Net gain is offset by net loss.

Source: JLARC staff analysis of Department of Revenue data.

¹ REMI is a tool to model fiscal and economic impacts

² Jobs gained at project sites minus jobs lost due to reduced tax revenues for public sector spending

³ Changes in industry employment following a change in tax policy

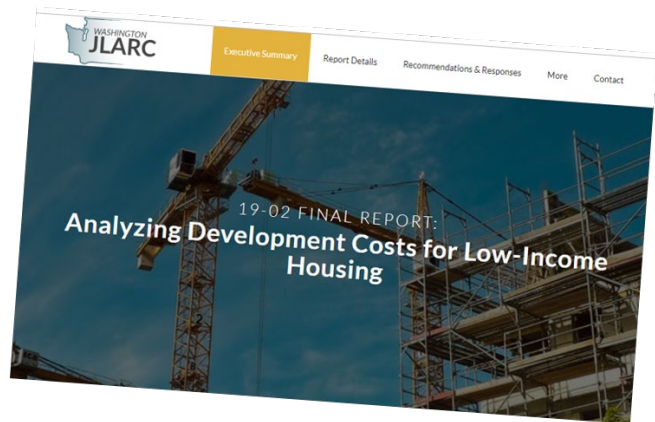
⁴ Changes in employment and spending in the targeted industry's supply chain

⁵ Changes resulting from in-state spending of employees in targeted and related industries

Multivariate regression analysis assesses factors that may affect development costs for the Low-Income Housing Tax Credit (LIHTC) program

JLARC staff used multivariate regression analysis to assess factors that may affect development costs for 241 LIHTC projects. This was the first complete analysis of Washington's LIHTC data.

When there are many factors that affect an outcome, researchers can use regression analysis to "control for," or take into consideration, those other factors.



- For example, a regression analysis can measure how a building's size affects its development costs while separately taking into consideration other factors such as the building's location and its developer type.
- While a regression analysis cannot determine what caused costs to be different, it can help identify cost drivers and actions that are likely to contribute to costs.
- A [detailed explanation of our methods](#) is in the report.

The analysis showed that location, developer type, and project characteristics (e.g., number of units or bedrooms) affect costs.

All else being equal:	Predicted development cost per bedroom is:	For example, a development that costs:
If a developer is a nonprofit or a housing authority	15-28% more than if the developer were a for-profit.	\$100K/bedroom if developed by a for-profit <i>predicted to cost</i> \$115K/bedroom if developed by a nonprofit \$128K/bedroom if developed by a housing authority
If the development is located in Seattle/King County	More than a project in the Non-Metro region ⁶ . (The regression found no significant relationship when comparing costs for the Metro region and the Non-Metro regions.)	\$100K/bedroom in Non-Metro region <i>predicted to cost</i> \$123K/bedroom in Seattle/King County region
If the development is a project with more units	Less than a project with fewer units.	\$100K/bedroom for project with 100 units <i>predicted to cost</i> \$96K/bedroom for project with 150 units

⁶ The Commission divides the state into three geographic regions: Seattle/King County, Metro (Clark, Pierce, Snohomish, Spokane, and Whatcom counties), and Non-Metro (all other counties).

Using R to organize data for analysis

In our study, *Employment and Community Inclusion Services for People with Developmental Disabilities*, we needed to review the services received by individuals over time. The agency's data tracked each time a client was authorized for a new service, but was not designed to reflect service history.

JLARC staff removed identifying data and used a program called R to turn 2.2 million data points from the original dataset into a longitudinal service history for each individual. This involved aggregating data, and creating an algorithm to identify when each individual left one program and entered another.

The resulting data set allowed the Legislature to better understand the services clients did or did not receive from the Developmental Disabilities Administration.



Innovation in data collection and report delivery

Data collection and interactive reports provide comprehensive answers

Public records data collection: a new role with fresh challenges for JLARC staff

In 2018, the Joint Legislative Audit and Review Committee (JLARC) staff began providing information to the Legislature in a new way. As directed, we developed a system to collect public records data from public agencies that annually spend \$100,000 or more fulfilling public records requests ([RCW 40.14.026](#)). This effort is focused on data collection, and JLARC staff do not independently verify the information that agencies submit.

JLARC staff and consultants from Sightline, LLC worked with an advisory committee that included state and local agencies, as well as other stakeholders, to implement the statute. The



work included developing an online reporting system, writing guidance documents, publishing standard definitions, giving public presentations, and providing telephone and email support.

JLARC staff identified 2,310 public agencies that are subject to the public records act.

- 858 agencies (37%) either submitted information or indicated that they did not meet the \$100,000 threshold (see graphic).
- JLARC staff analysis indicates that many non-responsive agencies likely did not meet the reporting threshold.



Source: Information reported by public agencies.

Note: "Reported information" includes all agencies that provided data to JLARC. Of these, 127 met the threshold, while 58 reported voluntarily.

JLARC staff presented data with interactive online tools to enhance the Legislature's experience and access to information

In 2018, most JLARC staff members received basic training in using Tableau for analysis and presentation. And, our reports have improved as a result.

- A tax report used a Tableau map to show [changes in eligibility](#) over 10 years. The report also included a dashboard allowing legislators to review [similar preferences](#) in other states.
- Our report, *Employment and Community Inclusion Services for People with Developmental Disabilities*, included graphs that [allowed legislators and other readers to filter data by specific services and populations](#).
- Our report on low-income housing included a [Tableau dashboard](#) that allows legislators and other readers to learn more about projects, developers, and development costs by county.
- Our [Public Records briefing report](#) used multiple Tableau dashboards that allow legislators and other readers to learn more about specific legislative metrics and public agency responses to records requests.

Work plan that addresses critical issues of today and the future

Staff are completing studies for 2019 and planning methods for complex studies due in the future

Joint Legislative Audit & Review Committee (JLARC) staff complete performance audits and studies on behalf of the Legislature. Our assignments often come through legislative provisos in the budgets and policy bills. You can find the [work plan for the current biennium](#) on our web site. Here are a few highlights.

10 reports due by January 2020

July 2019

Tax Preference Reviews: Aerospace, Multi-Unit Urban Housing, and Hog Fuel

JLARC staff review tax preferences according to a schedule developed by the Citizen Commission for Performance Measurement of Tax Preferences. We started the 2019 reviews in the fall of 2018. This year's report will include [Aerospace](#) tax preferences, a property tax exemption for [Multifamily Housing in Urban Areas](#), a sales and use tax exemption for [Hog Fuel](#) used to produce energy, and [more](#).

Questions? Contact [Eric Thomas](#)

Review of Capital Budget Staffing

This is a complex assessment of how agencies, including higher education institutions, account for [staff paid for with funds from the capital budget](#). Thirty-six agencies received a combined \$6.6 billion in funding from the 2015-17 capital budget. For the 2015-17 capital budget, we will address the following:

1. How many state FTEs were paid for, and what functions did they perform?
2. What were the salary and benefit costs, and what funding sources were used to pay those costs?
3. What approaches do state agencies use to account for and monitor these positions and costs?

Questions? Contact [Stephanie Hoffman](#)

September 2019

Follow-up WSDOT Bridge Preservation Cost Estimating

[In a 2015 report](#), JLARC found that the Washington State Department of Transportation (WSDOT) did not use best practices to develop long-term estimates for bridge maintenance and preservation. The Legislative Auditor recommended that WSDOT improve bridge estimates. JLARC will evaluate the actions WSDOT has taken to improve the reliability of its bridge estimates.

Questions? Contact [Aaron Cavin](#)

Opportunity Scholarship and Expansion Programs

The Opportunity Scholarship and Opportunity Expansion programs were created to mitigate the impact of tuition increases, increase the number of certain baccalaureate degrees, and invest in programs and students to meet labor market demands. These fields include science, technology, engineering, math, and health care. JLARC staff [began the evaluation in 2018](#).

Questions? Contact [Casey Radostitz](#)

Aerospace Technology Innovation Sunset

JLARC is to complete a [formal sunset review](#) of the Joint Center for Aerospace Technology Innovation.

Questions? Contact [Amanda Eadrick](#)

December 2019 and January 2020

Evaluation of the Effectiveness of the Local Infrastructure Financing Tool

The local infrastructure financing tool (LIFT) program was created to help local governments promote economic development. JLARC must evaluate the effectiveness of the program.

Questions? Contact [Ryan McCord](#)

Public Records: AG Consultation / Archivist Training and Grants

Under the law, the Attorney General must establish a consultation program to help local governments with best practices for managing public records. Further, the State Archivist must establish a competitive grant program to improve local technology public records management and provide records retention training. JLARC has begun evaluating these programs.

Questions? Contact [Suzanna Pratt](#)

Impact of Tourism Marketing, Study Design/Briefing Report

The 2018 Legislature created the Washington Tourism Marketing Authority, a public-private partnership intended to increase tourism in Washington. JLARC must evaluate the extent to which the Authority has contributed to the growth of the tourism industry and economic development of the state. In January 2020, JLARC staff will present options for designing the study, which is due in 2023.

Questions? Contact [Rebecca Connolly](#)

Annual non-audit reports due in 2019

Lodging Tax Expenditures Reported by Municipalities

Municipalities must annually report their use of lodging tax revenues to JLARC, which makes this information available publicly through an on-line reporting system. The [most recent lodging tax information](#) reported by municipalities is on our web site.

Questions? Contact [Ashley Elliott](#)

Public Records Data Reporting

Certain state agencies, municipalities, and other public entities will annually report data about the characteristics of public records requests and the costs and timeliness of responding to them. Data could be submitted by over 2,000 governmental entities. [Click here](#) for the most recent information about this project.

Questions? Contact [Ashley Elliott](#)

Preparing for future studies

Each of the following studies is due in the future. However, given the complexity of the assignments, JLARC staff have started working with agencies and stakeholders to develop study methods and identify data sources.

Breakfast After the Bell

The 2018 Legislature passed the Washington Kids Ready to Learn Act of 2018. The Act requires high-need schools to offer breakfast after the bell for each student, and encourages other schools to do so. JLARC must analyze the effect on metrics such as attendance and graduation rates. This report is due in 2026.

Questions? Contact [Josh Karas](#)

Medicaid Reimbursement for Community Assistance Referral and Education Services

The 2017 Legislature directed the Health Care Authority to reimburse fire departments that provide services to Medicaid clients, in lieu of transporting the clients to the emergency room. Such programs are called CARES programs, and are authorized under a separate statute. JLARC staff must evaluate the cost effectiveness of the reimbursement standards by December 2021.

Questions? Contact [Rebecca Connolly](#)

AWARDS & IMPACT

Excellence in Research Methods Award

JLARC report "Fees Assessed for Forest Fire Protection" wins 2018 NLPES Excellence in Research Methods Award

The Joint Legislative Audit and Review Committee (JLARC) staff received the 2018 Excellence in Research Methods award from the National Legislative Program Evaluation Society (NLPES) for the study of [Fees Assessed for Forest Fire Protection](#). We were the only office in the nation to receive this competitive award.

In commending JLARC's work, NLPES noted that **"this study illustrates the superior program evaluation work being provided to state legislatures."**

About the study and methods

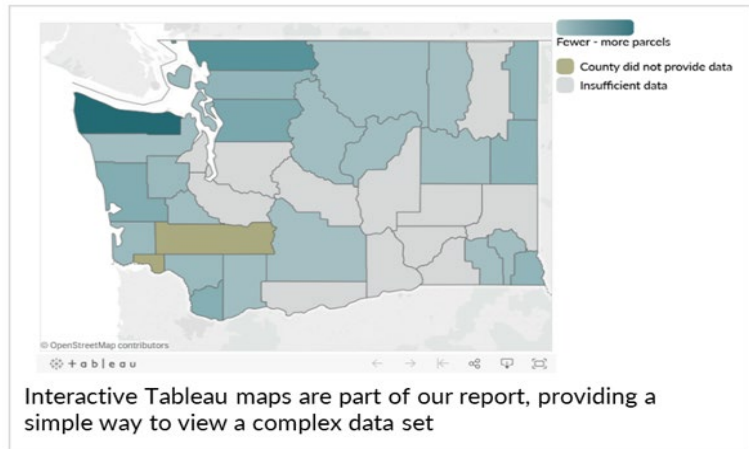
At the request of the Legislature, JLARC staff reviewed assessment fees paid by forest landowners for wildfire protection activities such as preparedness and training. Legislators expressed particular interest in fairness. For example, they wondered if some landowners received protection without paying the assessment fees.

JLARC staff created a database of 2.8 million land parcels from 32 different sources to answer the study questions. This approach required use of data coding, statistical analysis, and geographic mapping:

1. Combined parcel records with county assessors' lists of parcels paying the assessment.
2. Compared the total parcels and acreage given in the Department of Natural Resource's (DNR) 2009 jurisdiction to current county data.
3. Searched recent county levy books and reports for tax code areas in each county that were not within a city or paying into a fire protection district.
4. Identified parcels with Department of Revenue codes indicating forest or open space.
5. Excluded tax-exempt parcels – including state, county, federal, and tribal lands – and parcels matching DNR's list of direct billings.
6. Used fuzzy text matching to match more than 90% of the bills on DNR's exempt list to a county parcel record.

Our methodology allowed our report to the Legislature to:

- Identify 20,135 parcels that do not pay the assessment but likely receive protection.
- Identify 5,455 parcels that were taxed as forest but do not pay the assessment.
- Determine that there was no spatial pattern of the non-paying parcels.



- Demonstrate the inconsistent application of the assessment across the state.

This analysis was the first of its kind in the state. It supported our audit recommendation that the Department of Natural Resources develop procedures to consistently apply the assessment across the state.

Other NLPES awards

JLARC report on Unaccompanied Homeless Youth wins NCSL Legislative Research Librarians Notable Documents Award and 2018 NLPES Impact Award

JLARC staff received two awards for our study of [Unaccompanied Homeless Youth Performance Measures and Population Estimates](#)

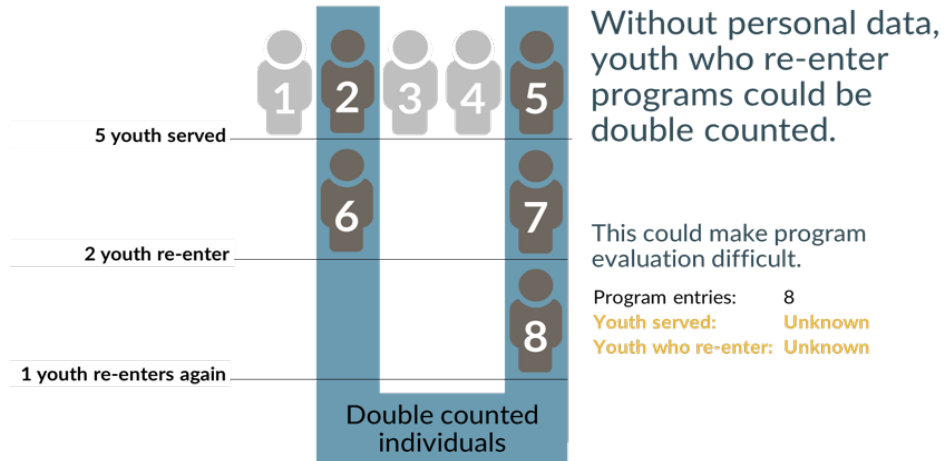
The report received a 2018 Notable Documents Award from the Legislative Research Librarians section of the National Conference of State Legislatures (NCSL). The report was independently nominated for this award by the Washington State Library. The Legislative Research Librarians commended the report as “innovation in providing substantive information on contemporary issues of interest to legislatures.” The report included the web report, a one-page summary, and a video presentation.

The Joint Legislative Audit & Review Committee (JLARC) staff also received a 2018 Certificate of Impact from the National Conference of State Legislatures’ Legislative Program Evaluation Society (NLPES). The office was recognized for demonstrating a “significant impact on state government.”

About the study

At the direction of the Legislature, JLARC staff reviewed state-funded programs and services provided to unaccompanied homeless youth under age 18. In addition to a web-based report, JLARC staff also presented findings and recommendations in a [one-page overview](#) and a brief [video](#).

The Legislative Auditor concluded that the state's ability to evaluate program outcomes for homeless youth is hindered by limits on collecting personal data.



Legal advice to state agencies indicated that unaccompanied minors could not give consent to provide personally identifiable information. Without this information, the state was not able to accurately monitor and evaluate the outcomes for youth it served.

The 2018 Legislature passed [HB 1630](#), allowing minors age 13 or older to give consent for providers to collect their personally identifiable information for the state's database. The bill received broad bipartisan support, and testimony to legislative committees referenced the JLARC study.

Recommendations improve government performance

All recommendations to state agencies have been implemented or are in progress

Our audits offer recommendations to improve agencies' performance or respond directly to questions posed by the Legislature. Between 2014 and 2017, the Joint Legislative Audit & Review Committee issued 27 recommendations to state agencies to improve the efficiency, effectiveness, and accountability of their operations.



In addition, the Legislature implemented the recommendation to reauthorize the alternative contracting processes for University of Washington patient care facilities. The process would have ended under the Sunset Act.

Status of Agency Recommendations

Report Title	Agency	Recommendation	Implementation Status
Competency to Stand Trial Report 14-1	Department of Social and Health Services	The Behavioral Health and Service Integration Administration should provide accurate, consistent, and timely reporting on the number of defendants referred for competency evaluations, the number of evaluations completed, and the timelines in admitting defendants to the hospitals.	Action in Progress
Competency to Stand Trial Report 14-1	Department of Social and Health Services	After collecting and analyzing descriptive data about its current operations, the Department of Social and Health Services should hire an independent, external consultant to develop 1) a service delivery approach that enables the Behavioral Health and Service Integration Administration (the Administration) to meet the statutory targets, and 2) a staffing model to implement the new approach.	Action in Progress
Competency to Stand Trial Report 14-1	Department of Social and Health Services	The Behavioral Health and Service Integration Administration should take actions to comply with additional statutory requirements from SSB 6492.	Partially Implemented
Competency to Stand Trial Report 14-1	Department of Social and Health Services	The Behavioral Health and Service Integration Administration, its primary judicial system partners, including the Administrative Office of the Courts, and other stakeholders should meet to develop an approach to assure collaboration and communication among the partners.	Implemented
Competency to Stand Trial Report 14-1	Department of Social and Health Services	The Behavioral Health and Service Integration Administration should work with its judicial system partners, including the Administrative Office of the Courts and other stakeholders, to develop training specific to their professions, as well as training material appropriate for cross training.	Action in Progress
UW Alternative Public Works Sunset Review Report 14-3	University of Washington (UW)	UW should identify opportunities to reduce the time to select contractors for Harborview projects. UW should report the results of its review to the Legislature and the Capital Projects Advisory Review Board.	Implemented
UW Alternative Public Works Sunset Review Report 14-3	University of Washington (UW)	UW should track use of woman- and minority-owned subcontractors on projects using the alternative process to determine whether it is meeting its internal goal.	Implemented

Report Title	Agency	Recommendation	Implementation Status
UW Alternative Public Works Sunset Review Report 14-3	University of Washington (UW)	UW should review the other contracting steps that follow contractor selection to identify opportunities to reduce the time to begin constructing Harborview projects. UW should report the results of its review to the Legislature and the Capital Projects Advisory Board.	Implemented
Gas Vapor Regulations Report 14-4	Department of Ecology, Puget Sound Clean Air Agency, Southwest Clean Air Agency	The Department of Ecology and the local clean air agencies should estimate and publish when Stage II requirements will begin to increase emissions. This analysis should determine whether keeping Stage II systems helps the regions meet Environmental Protection Agency's current ozone standard and the costs and cost effectiveness associated with keeping these systems.	Implemented
Highway Maintenance and Preservation Needs Report 14-5	Department of Transportation (WSDOT)	WSDOT should use best practices to make its bridge estimates as reliable as its pavement estimates.	Action in Progress
Highway Maintenance and Preservation Needs Report 14-5	Office of Financial Management (OFM), Department of Transportation (WSDOT)	WSDOT and OFM should develop a process to improve stakeholders' confidence in its highway estimates.	Action in Progress
State Recreation and Habitat Lands Report 15-1	Recreation and Conservation Office, Department of Natural Resources, Department of Fish and Wildlife, Washington State Parks and Recreation Commission	The Legislative Auditor recommends that the five agencies develop a single, easily-accessible source for information about proposed recreation and habitat land acquisitions, including detailed outcomes and future costs.	Action in Progress
Workers' Compensation Claims Management Report 15-4	Department of Labor and Industries (L&I)	L&I should expand its pilot programs and enhance its claims management support systems (training, performance measures, and technology) with a focus on return to work. L&I should provide a plan to JLARC for how and when it will expand pilot programs and enhance support systems and should provide annual progress reports describing actions taken to complete the plan.	Action in Progress

Report Title	Agency	Recommendation	Implementation Status
Unemployment Insurance Training Benefits Report 16-1	Employment Security Department	The Employment Security Department should prepare a plan to identify reasons why outcomes improve for some training benefits participants and not others, and determine whether there are opportunities to change the Program to improve outcomes for all participants.	Action in Progress
Unemployment Insurance Training Benefits Report 16-1	Employment Security Department	The Employment Security Department should develop a plan and associated cost estimate to improve its administration of the Training Benefits Program, to include: improving the application form, improving guidance to its Program partners, improving the timeliness of its decisions, establishing quality assurance review, and improving its performance measures.	Action in Progress
Second Sunset Review of UW's Alternative Process for Selecting Medical Facility Construction Contractors Report 17-1	Legislature	The Legislature should continue the UW's alternative process for selecting medical facility construction contractors because overall timeliness and contractor performance ratings have improved.	Implemented
Second Sunset Review of UW's Alternative Process for Selecting Medical Facility Construction Contractors Report 17-1	University of Washington (UW)	The UW should establish timeliness goals for selecting a contractor and beginning construction, and annually monitor its progress in meeting its goals. The UW should report this information to the Capital Projects Advisory Review Board (CPARB) by September 2017, and in its subsequent biennial reports.	Action in Progress
Second Sunset Review of UW's Alternative Process for Selecting Medical Facility Construction Contractors Report 17-1	University of Washington (UW) and Office of Minority and Women's Business Enterprises (OMWBE)	In consultation with the Office of Minority and Women's Business Enterprises, the UW should identify the barriers it believes impede its use of certified minority and woman owned firms and suggest remedies to those barriers. The UW should report this information to the Capital Projects Advisory Review Board (CPARB) by September 2017, and in its subsequent biennial reports. CPARB can then determine whether or not to recommend policy changes to the Legislature.	Action in Progress
Unaccompanied Homeless Youth Report 17-3	Department of Commerce (Commerce) and Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI)	Commerce and OSPI should issue joint guidance to counties and school districts, and clarify how they can work together to improve estimates of the unaccompanied homeless youth population.	Partially Implemented

Report Title	Agency	Recommendation	Implementation Status
Governor's Interagency Coordinating Council on Health Disparities Report 17-4	The Council	The Council should submit action plan updates every two years with content that reflects the entire prioritized list of health disparities.	Partially Implemented
Governor's Interagency Coordinating Council on Health Disparities Report 17-04	The Council	The Council should include the status of all recommendations and all diseases, conditions, and health indicators from the prioritized list in its progress reports.	Action in Progress
Puget Sound Partnership 2016 Report 17-05	Puget Sound Partnership and Office of Financial Management	The Partnership should submit a plan to the Legislature that identifies and addresses needed revisions to the planning and recovery timeframes.	Implemented
Puget Sound Partnership 2016 Report 17-05	Puget Sound Partnership (Partnership) and Office of Financial Management (OFM)	The OFM and the Partnership should submit a plan to the Legislature that details how they will create a more complete inventory of recovery actions and funding.	Action in Progress
Puget Sound Partnership 2016 Report 17-05	Puget Sound Partnership (Partnership) and Office of Financial Management	The Partnership should submit a plan to the Legislature that details how it will address the deficiencies in its ability to meet the essential requirements for a monitoring program, as identified by JLARC staff. The plan should also address how the Partnership will improve and clarify links between monitoring and planning.	Partially Implemented
Fees Assessed for Forest Fire Protection Report 17-06	Department of Natural Resources (DNR)	DNR should clarify the definition of forest land and implement a process to consistently apply the definition across the state.	Action in Progress
Fees Assessed for Forest Fire Protection Report 17-06	Department of Natural Resources (DNR)	DNR should coordinate with county officials to create consistent policies for administering the assessment DNR should develop consistent guidance for county officials to address parcel changes that impact the assessment. DNR should solicit input from county officials to ensure that they can efficiently and effectively implement the guidance. In addition to guidance, DNR should develop a policy regarding communications with county officials.	Action in Progress

SHARING OUR EXPERTISE

Participation at national conferences

In addition to presenting all of our study results at public Joint Legislative Audit & Review Committee (JLARC) meetings, we also were invited to make presentations to four other committees of the Washington State Legislature in 2018.

JLARC staff shared expertise at NLPES conference

Seven JLARC staff members moderated panels, presented reports, or shared research and communication methods at the National Legislative Program Evaluation Society (NLPES) professional development seminar in September 2018. This seminar is the only national training event designed exclusively for state legislative staff who work in program evaluation and performance auditing. NLPES is a professional association within the National Conference of State Legislatures (NCSL).

JLARC staff invited to participate at Pew/NCSL conference

JLARC staff were invited to participate in a conference hosted by the non-profit Pew Charitable Trusts (Pew) and NCSL. JLARC staff spoke about efforts to improve data quality for tax preference reporting. JLARC staff have been invited to participate in Pew conferences since 2012.

In 2010, JLARC staff reviewed the motion picture competitiveness program (MPCP) and found that while data was collected through surveys, they were not reviewed for completeness or accuracy. This data prevented JLARC staff from providing a lot of detail in its 2010 and led to a recommendation that if the Legislature wants more information on revenue and economic impacts of the tax credit, it should require more stringent reporting and clarify the entity responsible for verifying the information.

In 2012, the Legislature extended the MPCP and included requirements for MPCP to collaborate on a new survey with JLARC staff and others. Its aim was to gather data that better measured program effectiveness and transparency ([RCW 43.365.040](#)). When JLARC re-studied the MPCP in 2015, we found much improved data.

JLARC staff invited to participate at AEA 2018 annual conference

JLARC staff were invited to participate in a roundtable discussion at the 32nd American Evaluation Association's (AEA) annual four day conference. This discussion featured representatives from state evaluation offices around the country and highlighted innovative efforts, to develop, implement, and maintain strong state-level evaluation policies and practices that result in effective evaluation support for institutionalizing evidence-informed policy making in state governments.

The AEA is a professional association of evaluators devoted to the application and exploration of program evaluation, personnel evaluation, technology, and many other forms of evaluation. Evaluation involves assessing the strengths and weaknesses of programs, policies, personnel, products, and organizations to improve their effectiveness. AEA has approximately 7300 members representing all 50 states in the United States as well as over 80 foreign countries.