

# Joint Legislative Audit and Review Committee (JLARC)



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## SENATORS

Randi Becker  
 John Braun, *Vice Chair*  
 Sharon Brown  
 Annette Cleveland  
 David Frockt  
 Jeanne Kohl-Welles, *Secretary*  
 Mark Mullet  
 Ann Rivers

## REPRESENTATIVES

Larry Haler  
 Ed Orcutt  
 Gerry Pollett  
 Derek Stanford, *Chair*  
 J.T. Wilcox  
 Hans Zeiger, *Assistant Secretary*

April 29, 2015

## JOINT LEGISLATIVE AUDIT AND REVIEW COMMITTEE REGULAR COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES

### COMMITTEE BUSINESS

- Representative Derek Stanford, JLARC Chair, called the meeting to order at 10:00 a.m.
- *Representative Orcutt made a motion to approve the minutes from the January 7, 2015, JLARC meeting. Motion was seconded and carried unanimously.* (See the TVW recording at [00:04](#))
- Legislative Auditor Keenan Konopaski introduced new JLARC staff member Amanda Ondrick. Representative Stanford welcomed her to the team. (See the TVW recording at [00:34](#))

### REPORTS, PRESENTATIONS, DISCUSSIONS

#### **JLARC Preliminary Report: Economic Impact of Public Natural Resource Lands**

#### **Legislative Auditor's Conclusion: County economies are influenced more by how public lands are used than by the amount of publicly owned lands**

John Woolley, Stephanie Hoffman, and Rebecca Connolly from the JLARC staff presented the preliminary report for this study. There is wide variation across the counties in the amount of natural resource land owned by state and federal agencies. While the overall percentage of these lands within counties did not negatively affect county economic growth over a 20-year period (1990-2010), specific sites may have positive or negative net impacts on local jobs and business output. Estimating impacts is highly dependent on the data available, the assumptions made, and whether or not land use at a specific site has changed enough to cause a measurable change in the economy. Economic impact analyses can inform decisions about public lands but may not capture broader impacts. JLARC staff worked with economists from Washington State University to conduct this study. Staff will present the proposed final report in July 2015. (See the TVW recording at [01:36](#))

#### **Sunset Review of the Medicaid Fraud False Claims Act—Scope and Objectives**

Mark Fleming from the JLARC staff presented the scope and objectives for this study. The purpose of the Medicaid Fraud False Claims Act is to root out significant areas of fraud and help recover state money that could be used to support the state's Medicaid program. This sunset review will examine if the Act has complied with legislative intent, is providing efficient and economical oversight of Medicaid providers, is achieving expected performance goals and targets, and is duplicating the activities of another agency or the private sector. Staff will present the preliminary report in September 2015. (See the TVW recording at [24:53](#))

#### **Unemployment Insurance Training Benefits—Scope and Objectives**

Ryan McCord and Amanda Ondrick from the JLARC staff presented the scope and objectives for this study. The Training Benefits Program provides extended unemployment payments for certain unemployed workers who need training for a new career. This study will assess whether the Training Benefits Program is complying

with legislative intent, is effective in re-employing people into high-demand occupations, and is operating in an efficient manner. Staff will present the preliminary report in December 2015. (See the TVW recording at [32:30](#))

**Purchase of School District Employee Health Benefits—Scope and Objectives**

John Bowden and Steven Meyeroff from the JLARC staff presented the scope and objectives for this study. Currently health benefits and coverage for K-12 employees are negotiated in each of the 295 school districts, and costs vary between, and even within, school districts. This study will report on the progress school districts and their benefit providers are making toward legislatively established goals for the K-12 health benefits system. If adequate progress is not being made, the report will review what legislative and agency actions might help to remove barriers to progress. The study will also examine options for consolidating purchasing systems for K-12 employees. Staff will present the preliminary report in December 2015. (See the TVW recording at [39:43](#))

**Washington Health Benefit Exchange: Understanding Options for Part-Time K-12 and Higher Ed Employees—Scope and Objectives**

Eric Thomas from the JLARC staff presented the scope and objectives for this study. Currently K-12 employee health benefits, eligibility, and employee cost-sharing are locally negotiated at each school district, and part-time K-12 employee coverage varies across districts. The state covers health benefits through the PEBB for part-time higher education employees if the employees work at least a minimum number of hours. This first phase of a two-phase study will review what data is available and what analysis staff can complete to understand the coverage and cost of existing benefit packages for part-time K-12 and higher education employees, as well as the feasibility of having these part-time employees purchase insurance on the Washington Health Benefit Exchange. Staff will present the Phase One report in December 2015. (See the TVW recording at [44:28](#))

With no further business before the Committee, the Chair adjourned the meeting.

**ATTENDANCE**

JLARC Members Present: Senator John Braun, Senator Sharon Brown, Senator David Frockt, Senator Jean Kohl-Welles, Senator Mark Mullet, Senator Ann Rivers; Representative Larry Haler, Representative Ed Orcutt, Representative Gerry Pollet, Representative Derek Stanford, Representative JT Wilcox, Representative Hans Zeiger.

JLARC Staff Present: Keenan Konopaski, Legislative Auditor; John Woolley, Deputy Legislative Auditor, John Bowden, Linda Byers, Rebecca Connolly, Mark Fleming, Stephanie Hoffman, Ryan McCord, Steven Meyeroff, Amanda Ondrick, Eric Thomas, Suzanne Kelley, Ashley Elliot, Mallory Jennings.

**ADJOURNMENT**

The meeting was adjourned at 10:50 am.

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CHAIR

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VICE CHAIR