

Budget Overview Discussion with House Dems Staff

Thursday, March 14, 2024 at 8:00am on Zoom

Attendance: Assistant Majority Leader Bacon, Majority Leader Duran, Representatives Vigil, Kipp, Garcia, McLachlan, Hamrick, Clifford, Mabrey, Velasco, Amabile, Parenti, Ricks, Titone, Joseph and Carl Plant, Karlin Gray, and Jarrett Freedman

Minutes:

- 8:05AM: Assistant Majority Leader Bacon convened the meeting asking Carl Plant, Budget Policy Analyst, to provide a high level overview of the status of budget decisions before JBC.
- 8:07AM: Carl Plant reviewed individual department requests, available resources, and the status of ARPA stimulus funds as provided in [the General Fund and ARPA Breakdown memo](#).
 - Assistant Majority Leader Bacon asked for an update on Higher Education.
 - Representative Kipp asked for an updated General Fund table after JBC has finished figure-setting
 - Representative Garcia asked if there is an opportunity to utilize ARPA funds for technology upgrades needed for the implementation of pending legislation.
 - Representative Parenti asked why the state share of K-12 funding is being reduced.
- 8:31AM: Carl Plant reviewed funding requests by the Governor and institutions for Higher Education.
 - Assistant Majority Leader Bacon asked if JBC staff makes funding recommendations based on a balanced budget.
 - Representative Garcia asked if the JBC has always comprised of 6 members.
- 8:44AM: Representative Garcia opened a conversation about how other members of the General Assembly can engage in the budgeting process.
 - Representative Joseph asked if JBC documents could be released ahead of the scheduled hearings.
- 8:53AM: Carl Plant reviewed some big decision items before JBC:
 - Funding for competency restoration
 - HCPF targeted rate increases for providers and MPRAAC recommendations
 - Health School Meals For All (also known as Prop FF)

- Salary increases from the COWINS agreement, and the step-light proposal for non-COWINS employees
- Capital recommendations from the Capital Development Committee and the Joint Technology Committee
- Workforce housing projects for the Department of Corrections
 - Representative Joseph asked why there was no Comeback for this request.
- Funding for caseload increases and prison population forecasts within the Department of Corrections
- Funding for high-acuity crisis
- Short-term rental property tax reimbursements
- Employment Support Fund enterprise modifications and reserve adjustments
- Office of the State Public Defenders requests for attorneys, social workers and support staff and future year increases
 - Representative Joseph asked how the budget request would meet the current needs of public defenders.
 - AML Bacon asked how bigger budgeting decisions, like competency funding, can be approached more holistically.
- Department of Public Safety requests including funding for auto theft
 - Representative Parenti asked about the need for additional funding for auto theft.
 - Representative Joseph asked how bills associated with a line-item in the governor's budget request are funded.
 - Representative Velasco asked how legislation with tax credits is factored into the budget decisions.
 - Assistant Majority Leader Bacon asked how some individual bills coincide with the Governor's department requests.
 - Assistant Majority Leader Bacon asked for a chart to compare the Governor's budget request and JBC decisions.
 - Representative Ricks asked if ARPA and General Funds can be used for legislation drawing from the Marijuana Tax Cash Fund.
- Reduction of federal funding from the Victims of Crimes Act and corresponding requests and recommendations to backfill the dropoff of federal funding.
- 9:52AM: Representative Joseph asked if there is funding set aside for bills that came from the Child Welfare interim committees.
- 9:54AM: Meeting adjourned.