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# Research Report

September 2007



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## **Florida Government Has Unprecedented Opportunities to Increase Accountability and Achieve Cost Savings**

Florida government has unprecedented opportunities now and in the coming years to increase its accountability, effectiveness, and efficiency to benefit taxpayers. These opportunities arise from the convergence of:

- ▶ A state planning and budgeting process constitutional amendment, approved by voters on November 7, 2006, that requires quadrennial appointment of a Government Efficiency Task Force commencing this year.
- ▶ A Council on Efficient Government, created by 2006 legislation, that directs agencies to contract with private sector vendors if “outsourcing” is determined to be more effective and efficient in providing services and reducing the cost of government.
- ▶ A legislatively approved 2006 Florida Government Accountability Act that requires systematic review of the performance of entire state agencies and their advisory bodies at least every eight years and, if warranted, abolishes them.
- ▶ The constitutional 2007-09 Taxation and Budget Reform Commission, whose purview includes government productivity and efficiency.
- ▶ A Savings Sharing Program enacted by the 2001 Legislature to provide incentives to state agencies and employees to implement proposals and programs that increase operational efficiency and/or eliminate or reduce state expenditures.
- ▶ Continuous scrutiny of government performance by Florida’s Auditor General, the Office of Program Policy Analysis and Government Accountability, legislative committees, and the Governor’s Office of Policy and Budget. These entities annually produce millions of dollars of cost savings, effectiveness, and efficiency recommendations.

This Florida TaxWatch report describes the above opportunities, provides historical perspective by listing noteworthy Florida government improvement initiatives of the past four decades, and summarizes more than a dozen reasons why cost-saving proposals often die. An appendix provides examples from the work of several organizations to help maximize accountability and

money-saving opportunities. The report's objective is to support and encourage continuous improvement of Florida government effectiveness and efficiency to increase taxpayer value.<sup>1</sup>

## **Four Decades of Florida Government Improvement**

The constitutional, statutory, and ad hoc commissions, councils, task forces, and committees cited in this report can and should build on four decades of initiatives to improve state taxpayer service delivery, productivity, and cost-effectiveness.

These efforts have helped Florida stand out as an innovative leader on numerous fronts, from modernization of the Constitution and streamlining the three branches of state government in the late 1960s and early 1970s, to recent first-in-the nation reforms to restructure delivery of family services and contain Medicaid costs. In addition, since 1989, a nationally unique public/private recognition program, the Prudential Financial-Davis Productivity Awards, has showcased dozens of first-in-the-nation state government achievements, plus more than 500 accountability and efficiency improvements in 60 operational areas that can be replicated within and across agencies.

### **History of Florida Government Improvement Initiatives**

- Constitutional revision and government reorganization in the late 1960s and early 1970s created a legislative branch recognized as one of the nation's best, an executive branch limited to not more than 25 departments, and a state courts system that is viewed as a model of efficiency relative to most other states.<sup>2</sup>
- A Management and Efficiency Study Commission made recommendations to Governor Reuben Askew's administration (1971-78) on ways to improve the general efficiency and economy of state government.
- A voter-approved 1972 constitutional amendment to unify the state courts system has resulted in Florida being recognized for efficiency and timeliness in processing a large volume of cases.
- A structured productivity improvement program in Governor Bob Graham's administration (1979-86) used performance agreements between the Governor and agency heads, plus legislative budget requests for goal setting and accountability.<sup>3</sup>
- A public/private "Partners in Productivity" initiative created and promoted during Governor Bob Martinez's administration (1987-91) was sponsored by Florida TaxWatch and The Florida Council of 100 to identify cost savings, develop performance measures, and promote continuous quality improvement.<sup>4</sup>
- The 1990-92 constitutional Taxation and Budget Reform Commission recommended that

each state agency adopt an annual productivity plan with standards and measures to assess the quality and cost-effectiveness of its operations.

- Governor Lawton Chiles campaigned to “rightsize” state government, and his first act following the 1991 inauguration was to establish a Commission on Government by the People.<sup>5</sup>
- A constitutional amendment proposed by the Taxation and Budget Reform Commission, and approved by 83% of the voters in November 1992, required state agencies to develop quality management and accountability programs.
- The 1994 Legislature implemented the 1992 constitutional amendment via a Government Performance and Accountability Act that focused on performance-based budgeting and performance measurement.<sup>6</sup>
- The 1994 Act created a legislative Office of Program Policy Analysis and Government Accountability (OPPAGA) that has issued hundreds of reports identifying more than \$1.5 billion worth of government savings opportunities.<sup>7</sup>
- Governor Jeb Bush’s “Service First” civil service reform initiative, enacted by the 2001 Legislature, has improved accountable management of the state workforce.<sup>8</sup>

## **Accountability and Efficiency Bodies**

### **Government Efficiency Task Force**

A constitutional amendment approved by voters on November 7, 2006 created this task force. Commencing in 2007 and every four years thereafter, 13 legislators and private sector members (five each to be appointed by the Speaker of the House and President of the Senate, and three by the Governor) will meet at least quarterly for one year. Assisted by legislative and gubernatorial staff, each quadrennial task force is required to develop recommendations for improving governmental operations and reducing costs.

### **Council on Efficient Government**

The Florida Efficient Government Act of 2006 directs agencies to focus on their core missions and deliver services by contracting with private sector vendors whenever vendors can more effectively and efficiently provide them. The Act establishes a Council on Efficient Government, which consists of five state agency heads and two private sector executives appointed by the Governor.<sup>9</sup> The Act requires business cases for outsourcing to be evaluated by the Council before agencies contract with outside entities.

The Council is also required to report annually to the Legislature on innovative ways to improve efficiency, effectiveness, and competition in delivery of government services. The report will summarize each agency’s outsourcing efforts, including the number of business cases and

solicitations, the number and dollar value of contracts, an explanation of progress on achieving a legislatively prescribed cost-benefit analysis schedule, and a description of performance results.

### **Joint Legislative Sunset Advisory Committee**

The 2006 Legislature passed the Florida Government Accountability Act to help increase the effectiveness and efficiency of state government. This act establishes a sunset process that automatically terminates agencies and advisory bodies on a certain date unless reauthorized. In addition, a Joint Legislative Sunset Advisory Committee is established and will consist of five members of the Senate, one public member appointed by the President of the Senate, five members of the House of Representatives, and one public member appointed by the Speaker of the House.

The Committee is required to provide a report on the agencies and advisory committees scheduled for review each year. The report will include findings on the efficiency and effectiveness of programs and activities in achieving objectives, and compliance with various state and federal requirements. It will also identify and evaluate activities not specifically authorized in statute, or those that overlap or duplicate activities performed by other agencies; consider the accuracy of agency accountability measures; and consider the impacts on federal funding if the agency were to be abolished.<sup>10</sup>

### **Taxation and Budget Reform Commission**

This constitutional panel was re-established in February 2007. The new Commission's predecessor met during the 1990-92 period and recommended a change to Florida's Constitution that introduced a performance and productivity measurement system for state government.

The Commission consists of 25 private citizens, eleven of whom were appointed by the Governor and seven each by the Senate President and House Speaker. No appointee is a member of the Legislature, but four legislators (two Democrats and two Republicans) serve as non-voting Commission members.

The new Commission may consider improvements, in addition to those prescribed by the 2006 Florida Government Accountability Act, to better integrate performance outcomes into the budgeting process. The Commission can also offer recommendations for legislative consideration and, with a two-thirds affirmative vote, put proposed constitutional amendments on the general election ballot for voter consideration as early as November 2008.

### **Key Fiscal and Performance Assessment Agencies**

Year in and year out, Florida's Auditor General (AG), the Office of Program Policy Analysis and Government Accountability (OPPAGA), House and Senate standing committees, and the Governor's Office of Policy and Budget (OPB) monitor, evaluate, and recommend program improvements throughout state government. Together with authoritative, independent groups, including Florida TaxWatch, millions of dollars of cost savings, effectiveness, and efficiency measures are proposed annually.<sup>11</sup>

While many of these entities' recommendations have been implemented over the years, others have not received the careful consideration they deserve. This report suggests reasons why recommendations have not gained traction, and suggests ways to improve government-wide consideration and implementation of good ideas.<sup>12</sup>

### **State Agency Savings Sharing Program**

The 2001 Service First statute created a Savings Sharing Program to recognize and reward employees for proposing ideas that reduce state expenditures. All Career Service and Selected Exempt Service employees, plus employees of the judicial branch are eligible. Each state agency can submit written recommendations for awards to the Legislative Budget Commission for evaluation, including documentation that achievements recommended for cash awards actually eliminated or reduced state expenditures. Agencies retain up to 25% of the savings to reward individual employees and teams.

State agencies may be able to increase the number of Savings Sharing Program submissions by reviewing nominations submitted for Prudential Financial - Davis Productivity Awards for Savings Sharing Program eligibility. For example, a Fixed Capital Outlay management system that received a 2003 Prudential Financial – Davis Productivity Award was also recognized and rewarded under the Savings Sharing Program, with team members receiving combined salary increases of nearly \$8,000. A systematic review of selected Prudential Financial - Davis Productivity Awards can determine if it should be considered for the Savings Sharing Program.

### **Top Level Executive, Legislative, and Judicial Branch Initiatives**

In addition to the above constitutional and statutory entities, several top level executive, legislative, and judicial branch initiatives can prompt accountability and cost-saving improvements:

► Governor-elect Charlie Crist appointed nine Citizen Review Groups, consisting of private and public sector individuals, to conduct agency-by-agency fact-finding to identify opportunities and challenges within each operation.<sup>13</sup>

► House Speaker Marco Rubio's *100 Innovative Ideas for Florida's Future* includes at least 18 items whose implementation could positively impact government and state-funded, public education system effectiveness and efficiency to increase accountability and yield cost savings.<sup>14</sup>

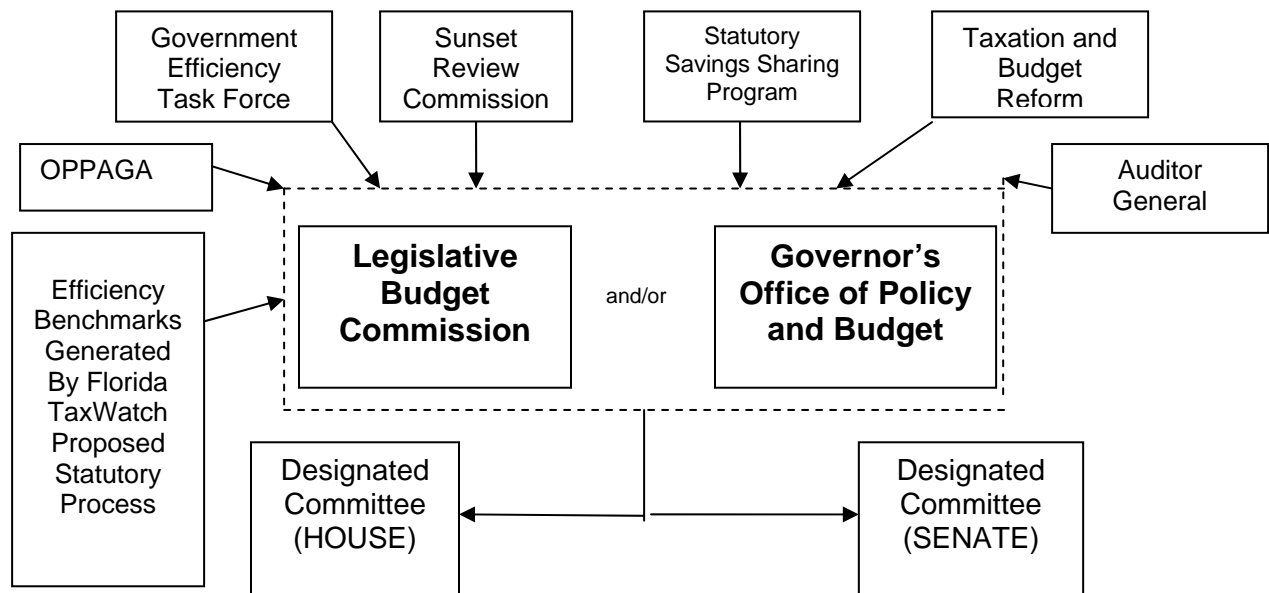
► The State Courts System's Performance and Accountability Commission, over the next two years, is charged by the Supreme Court to make recommendations on effective and efficient management of due process services, including: court-appointed counsel, digital recording technology, and court reporting services; monitoring the management of dependency and termination of parental rights and post-conviction motions and appeals; and, as time and resources permit, developing recommendations to implement a performance and accountability system, beginning with circuit criminal cases.<sup>15</sup>

## Conclusion and Recommendations

Through enactment of laws and changes to our constitution, Florida now has more organizational entities dedicated to improving the efficiency and effectiveness of state government than at any time in its history. However, there is no formal process to help ensure that recommendations developed by the constitutional and statutory entities described in this report are systematically considered and acted upon. In the absence of accountability and results-oriented procedures, processes, and mechanisms, it is likely that ambitious legislative and executive agendas, inertia, the press of time, and constituencies opposed to specific recommendations will continue to cause many good ideas to die, at the expense of the public good.

To help ensure that recommendations to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of state government receive due consideration, a coordinated process is required. Florida TaxWatch suggests that the Legislative Budget Commission (LBC) and the Governor’s Office of Policy and Budget (OPB) can serve in this capacity as depicted in Figure One below.<sup>16</sup> The LBC and OMB can help ensure that agencies consider recommendations with a significant fiscal impact by including them in its long-range financial outlook and Legislative Budget Request Instructions. Legislative Budget Request Instructions, which provide guidance for agencies to use in the development of their annual Legislative Budget Requests, are developed jointly by the Governor and the appropriations committees of the Legislature. The OPB and LBC could be assigned responsibility for reviewing the various cost saving recommendations submitted by the various public and private entities and for incorporating them into the Legislative Budget Request Instructions. For cost saving recommendations that also identify statutory changes, the LBC and OMB can help guarantee due consideration by ensuring that each recommended statutory change is referred, in bill format, to the appropriate standing committee for consideration.

**Figure One**  
**Proposed Coordination of Accountability and Cost Savings Recommendations**



Source: Florida TaxWatch

## **Organically Growing Cost Savings in Florida**

For several years, Florida TaxWatch has been attempting to get legislative traction on the concept of creating incentives for implementing government cost savings and innovations. However, recent initiatives to mandate reductions in agency spending have been met with little success because they are not tied to verifiable measures of efficiency or effectiveness. When tasked to identify areas to reduce costs, agencies often include politically popular activities and services, so as to dissuade legislators from enacting any cuts. In addition, agencies have avoided previous cost reduction mandates by reporting that they cannot reduce overall costs because of increased demand for services.

Florida TaxWatch recommends a statutory requirement that each agency plan, budget and report quarterly to the Legislative Budget Commission on its progress of achieving costs savings and efficiencies of 1% in year one, 2% in year two, 3% in year three, 4% in year four and 5% in year five and at least one percent annually thereafter for redirection to higher priorities and demands of today and tomorrow, not merely those of yesteryear. Ideas for cost savings would originate from agencies individual employees and teams, from suggestions from legislators, legislative analysts and auditors, or from research institutes such as Florida Tax Watch, and the Prudential Financial-Davis Productivity Awards Program.

The approach to manage this vehicle is to require improvements in efficiencies, i.e. 1-5% each year, as measured by reductions in the unit cost to produce each activity or service that a state agency provides. The unit cost of an activity, which represents the average total cost of producing a single unit of output, currently is reported in each agency Legislative Budget Request. The unit cost method captures improvement in efficiency in a verifiable manner. Increases in demand for services are reflected in the number of units produced and can be eliminated as a possible excuse for not meeting prescribed improvements in operating efficiencies.

Florida TaxWatch recommends that each quarter, agencies should be required to explain, for better or worse, how well they achieved or missed their target cost reductions. To provide incentives, bonuses and/or raises could be connected to such accomplishments, together with increased flexibility and management discretion. This is an essential way to keep our public institutions more responsive and productive and create a culture of efficiency and increasingly better public stewardship.

To ensure that this process has accountability, Florida TaxWatch also recommends that state agency Inspector Generals include an attestation with each quarter report relative to the accuracy of the information. In addition, OPPAGA should be tasked with performing an annual compilation of agency savings results. Finally, as part of its regularly scheduled operational audit of each agency, the Auditor General should be required to validate each agency's reports cost reductions.

To help ensure that mandated cost savings are established in a fair and equitable manner among each organizational unit within an agency, Florida TaxWatch also recommends that each agency establish efficiency benchmarks based on the inflation adjusted cost-incurred in FY 2001-02 for

each of its budget entities. Specified reductions in expenditures for each budget entity would vary and be based on the difference between the actual expenditure in the previous year and the FY 2001-02 inflation-adjusted amount. This methodology would not punish those budget entities that had produced efficiencies in recent years, but would demand greater reductions for those budget entities that have experienced cost increases that substantially exceed the inflation-adjusted amount. Exceeding their benchmarks would be entitled to a percentage of the above-targeted savings achieved to be dispersed as merit pay for excellence in performance.

## **Appendix A**

### **Selected Examples of Accountability and Cost-Saving Opportunities**

#### **Office of Program Policy Analysis and Government Accountability**

Under Joint Rule Six of the Florida Legislature, OPPAGA annually submits a list of recommendations to the presiding officers and the Joint Legislative Auditing Committee that can increase state program effectiveness and efficiency, and produce savings or other positive fiscal impacts. Examples from the December 2005 report include:

- ▶ Reform the process used in transportation right-of-way condemnation cases to limit payments for landowners' litigation costs and business damages, and bring Florida's process closer to those used by other states. Estimated annual fiscal impact: \$45 million.
- ▶ Deter commercial motor carriers from deliberately overloading vehicles and ensure that those who overload pay their fair share of state road resurfacing costs. Estimated annual fiscal impact: \$33 million.
- ▶ Provide incentives for community colleges and students to reduce costs associated with students taking credit hours in excess of those needed to earn degrees. Estimated annual fiscal impact: up to \$80 million.
- ▶ Charge university students a higher cost per credit hour beyond what is needed for graduation. Estimated annual fiscal impact: up to \$37 million.
- ▶ Consider policy options that would increase Florida Lottery earnings and subsequent transfers of proceeds to the educational enhancement trust fund. Estimated annual fiscal impact: up to nearly \$2 billion.

#### **Florida Auditor General**

Section 11.45(7)(h), Florida Statutes, provides in part: "The Auditor General shall transmit to the President of the Senate, the Speaker of the House of Representatives, and the Legislative Auditing Committee by December 1 of each year a list of statutory and fiscal changes recommended by the Auditor General." Examples from the Fiscal Year 2005-06 report include:

- ▶ Amend section 218.39 Florida Statutes to encourage local governments to take timely and appropriate action to address audit findings.
- ▶ Amend Section 255.29, Florida statutes, to require, for construction contracts, the execution of written affirmations of independence.
- ▶ Amend Section 283.58, Florida statutes, to address issues that have been introduced through Web-based publications and commerce.

## **Florida TaxWatch Recommendations**

- ▶ Establish a Government Efficiency, Productivity, and Innovation Trust Fund funded by enacted state government cost savings and productivity enhancements. The trust fund would be phased in to equal 5% of general revenue.
- ▶ Require state agencies to consider cost-savings and productivity improvements applicable to their agencies, generated by the annual Florida TaxWatch Prudential Financial-Davis Productivity Awards. More than 500 achievements from the 2003 - 2006 awards cycles are posted on the Florida TaxWatch website. This is a practical, common sense suggestion that could save countless millions of dollars by checking FTW's website before setting out to, perhaps, “reinvent the wheel” (see examples in following section).
- ▶ Require the Governor and Legislature to report to citizens on the performance of state government and efforts to increase the effectiveness of government programs, such as an annual report card on productivity.
- ▶ Mandate appropriate legislative committee consideration of OPPAGA and Auditor General cost-saving recommendations, as required by the 2006 Florida Government Accountability Act.

### **Recommendations extend to the local level:**

- ▶ Require a local project competitive process and review to qualify for state appropriations.
- ▶ Prohibit spending of non-recurring revenue on recurring expenses.
- ▶ Require competitive bidding of non-instructional services by school districts, which could ultimately save up to 10%.

### **Prudential Financial–Davis Productivity Awards Adaptable Achievements**

- ▶ **Increase Productivity by Eliminating Internet Misuse.** A content filter that reduced internet traffic not related to job functions recovered lost bandwidth, virtually eliminated web-borne virus infections, and increased productivity among 20,000 employees at the Department of Corrections for an estimated annual added value of up to \$39 million.
- ▶ **Reduce Spam Email.** Reduction of spam email messages resulted in an estimated annual added value of \$2.7 million in work time not spent reading these messages at Florida State University.
- ▶ **Security Awareness Training.** State employees who use a computer in their jobs are required to complete information security training annually. A web-based program that is highly adaptable to other government agencies allows Department of Juvenile Justice staff to take this training at their own pace, saving an estimated \$200,000.

► **Disaster Relief Deployment.** A hurricane relief process for over 15,000 Department of Health employees centralizes recruitment, coordinates lodging, and tracks activities throughout deployment.

► **Response to Telephone Requests.** Seamless consumer assistance developed by the Department of Financial Services helped respond to nearly 40,000 telephone requests during the 2004 hurricane season, saving approximately \$300,000 worth of public and private sector time. This initiative may be useful to other agencies engaged in consumer assistance.

► **Unemployment Compensation Review Process.** A process for reviewing employee claims for unemployment compensation that helps assure its integrity and saved the Department of Revenue \$180,000 in 2003-04 may be useful to other agencies.

► **Fraud Detection.** An automated methodology that searches the state's information warehouse of accounting data can help identify potential or actual fraud. Department of Financial Services investigators used it to detect an organized ring that filed over \$700,000 in fraudulent claims.

## Endnotes

<sup>1</sup> It should be noted that Florida's state government compares favorably with other states on indices such as ratio of employees to state population, state taxes as a percentage of personal income, and state spending per capita. The most recent Department of Management Services Annual Workforce Report, published in 1999, prior to Bush Administration privatization initiatives, listed Florida third (behind California and Illinois) in the ratio of state employees to citizens - 145 per 10,000 residents versus a national average of 176 per 10,000. Florida's cost of state payroll per citizen was ranked 50<sup>th</sup> among the states.

<sup>2</sup> Florida TaxWatch research, conducted for a report on the 2006 Florida Government Accountability Act, shows that Florida's state government is noticeably more streamlined, with fewer autonomous boards, commissions, councils, and other entities, than other states.

<sup>3</sup> Transition briefing material (forerunner of the Florida TaxWatch-sponsored *Governor's Transition Decision Handbook* series initiated in 1998), prepared at Florida State University for incoming Governor Bob Martinez, stressed that a lesson learned from the previous eight years was the need for "...continuous attention and commitment at all levels of the government...if the promise of productivity improvement is to be realized."

<sup>4</sup> "Partners in Productivity", which documented \$715 million of savings in the four largest state agencies, proposed performance measures for all agencies, and advocated Total Quality Management for improved service delivery and savings.

<sup>5</sup> Governor Chiles' initiative described in "Rightsizing Florida Government To Improve Citizen Confidence, Boost Performance & Productivity", Florida TaxWatch, August 1991.

<sup>6</sup> "1994's Landmark Government Performance and Accountability Act: A Beginning for Taxpayer-Driven Reforms", Florida TaxWatch, December 1994.

<sup>7</sup> OPPAGA is a "nuts and bolts" unit that performs evaluations and justification reviews of state programs according to a schedule set by the Legislature. The reviews include the cost and purpose of agency programs, why agencies do or do not achieve projected results, whether programs could be administered more efficiently by other public or private entities, and the consequences of discontinuing programs.

<sup>8</sup> During development of a 2005 Florida TaxWatch report on quality improvement initiatives in state government, an agency head commented that exempting more mid-level managers from job protection under Service First has made them more accountable to implement top management initiatives.

<sup>9</sup> The Council's mission is specified in subsections 287.0573(8) and (9), Florida Statutes. Agency-required cost-benefit analyses are prescribed in subsection 287.0574(4)(h), F.S. Council membership is governed by subsections 287.0573(2) through (7), F.S.

<sup>10</sup> Florida TaxWatch recently published a report on the Sunset Review Process. This report summarizes the 2006 Florida Government Accountability Act, compares Florida's new and previous sunset laws, summarizes government accountability lessons learned, and suggests ways to effectively implement Florida's new law.

<sup>11</sup> A 2003 OPPAGA report stated that since its inception, it had made recommendations with a potential annual impact for state agencies of \$1.5 billion. At that time, the estimated annual impact of OPPAGA recommendations that had been implemented was \$443 million.

<sup>12</sup> Fortunately, the Florida Government Accountability Act directs the Sunset Advisory Committee to utilize analyses of agency compliance with accountability measures to be produced by the AG, OPPAGA, and OPB.

<sup>13</sup> Each Citizen Review Group is charged with gathering information on administrative policy, legislative priorities, budget and funding priorities, organizational issues, and federal law and policies. For more information, go to <http://www.cristtransition.com>.

<sup>14</sup> See ideas 13, 16, 28, 34, 47, 50, 57, 68, 71, 74, 77, 78, 80, 82, 84, 93, 94, and 100.

<sup>15</sup> Supreme Court Administrative Order No. AOSCO6-54.

<sup>16</sup> The Legislative Budget Commission was created in 2000 primarily to consider budget amendments proposed by the Governor and conduct zero-based budget review of state agencies. Since then, its authority has been expanded to encompass other actions requiring legislative review during the interim between sessions. 2006 legislation confirmed statutes concerning the commission to constitutional amendment one, approved by voters on November 7, 2006. For more information, see House and Senate staff analyses for HB 1823 and SB 2146, Spring 2006.

17. As specified in s 216.23 *Florida Statutes*

This Florida TaxWatch *Research Report* was written by  
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## *About Florida TaxWatch*

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Florida TaxWatch is a statewide, non-profit, non-partisan taxpayer research institute and government watchdog that over its 27 year history has become widely recognized as the watchdog of citizens' hard-earned tax dollars. Its mission is to provide the citizens of Florida and public officials with high quality, independent research and education on government revenues, expenditures, taxation, public policies, and programs, and to increase the productivity and accountability of Florida Government.

Florida TaxWatch's research recommends productivity enhancements and explains the statewide impact of economic and tax and spend policies and practices on citizens and businesses. Florida TaxWatch has worked diligently and effectively to help state government shape responsible fiscal and public policy that adds value and benefit to taxpayers.

This diligence has yielded impressive results: in its first two decades alone, policymakers and government employees implemented three-fourths of Florida TaxWatch's cost-saving recommendations, saving the taxpayers of Florida more than \$6.2 billion -- approximately \$1,067 in added value for every Florida family, according to an independent assessment by Florida State University.

Florida TaxWatch has a historical understanding of state government, public policy issues, and the battles fought in the past necessary to structure effective solutions for today and the future. It is the only statewide organization devoted entirely to Florida taxing and spending issues. Its research and recommendations are reported on regularly by the statewide news media.

Supported by voluntary, tax-deductible memberships and grants, Florida TaxWatch is open to any organization or individual interested in helping to make Florida competitive, healthy and economically prosperous by supporting a credible research effort that promotes constructive taxpayer improvements. Members, through their loyal support, help Florida TaxWatch bring about a more effective, responsive government that is accountable to the citizens it serves.

Florida TaxWatch is supported by all types of taxpayers -- homeowners, small businesses, large corporations, philanthropic foundations, professionals, associations, labor organizations, retirees -- simply stated, the taxpayers of Florida. The officers, Board of Trustees and members of Florida TaxWatch are respected leaders and citizens from across Florida, committed to improving the health and prosperity of Florida.

With your help, Florida TaxWatch will continue its diligence to make certain your tax investments are fair and beneficial to you, the taxpaying customer, who supports Florida's government. Florida TaxWatch is ever present to ensure that taxes are equitable, not excessive, that their public benefits and costs are weighed, and government agencies are more responsive and productive in the use of your hard-earned tax dollars.

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