

JLBC MEETING

At the September 28th meeting, the Committee considered the following issues:

Arizona Department of Administration – Consider Approval of Mileage Reimbursement – The Committee approved increasing the mileage reimbursement rate from 37.5 cents per mile to 40.5 cents per mile for motor vehicles as recommended by the Arizona Department of Administration. ADOA estimates that the increase in reimbursement rates will cost the General Fund \$66,000 and Other Funds \$237,000 annually, excluding the universities.

Department of Economic Security – Review of Arizona Specific Child Protective Services Caseloads – The Committee gave an unfavorable review to the Department of Economic Security's (DES) Child Protective Services Caseload standards. 2003 legislation required DES to develop Arizona-specific caseload standards. DES' proposed caseload standards are 10 cases per month for investigators, 19 cases per month for families receiving in-home services and 16 children per month in out-of-home care.

The Committee gave an unfavorable review to the report, indicating that the proposed standards submitted by DES reflect only current workload and procedures and do not attempt to address what is the most appropriate level of staffing. In addition to the unfavorable review, the Committee asked that: 1) DES reevaluate the standards and report back to the Committee by September 1, 2006 and 2) DES and the Attorney General resolve their differences in the reporting of the number of children awaiting placement by December 31, 2005.

The Committee also asked that the statutorily required semi-annual Financial and Program Accountability Report include performance measures that would assist in evaluating DES' success in moving children from temporary to longer-term or permanent placements.

Finally, the Committee requested information on actual caseloads in each service category if all funded positions were fully staffed and how DES' methodology compared to how CWLA standards were established.

Arizona Board of Regents – Review of Operational and Capital Plans for the Phoenix Medical Campus – The Committee gave a favorable review to the operational and capital plans for the Phoenix Medical Campus. The FY 2006 Higher Education Budget Reconciliation Bill directed the University of Arizona (UA) to establish a medical campus at the former site of Phoenix Union High School. The bill appropriated \$7 million from the General Fund for this purpose. Half of this funding was made available on July 1. The other half became available upon the Joint Legislative Budget Committee's (JLBC) September 28th favorable review of the Arizona Board of Regents' operational and capital plan. The favorable review by the Committee contained the provision that the favorable review did not constitute endorsement of any level of General Fund appropriations for the Phoenix Medical Campus.

The Committee discussed a number of issues, including how the creation of a medical school would solve the physician shortage in the state, the number of residencies in Arizona and how a new medical school would increase that number, how the creation of a medical school would address physician shortages in rural areas of the state, and whether or not the medical school could flourish without a teaching hospital.