

HB 2029 -- Legislative Budget Office

Sponsor: Muschany

This bill establishes the Legislative Budget Office within the Joint Committee on Legislative Research. The budget office will be responsible for preparing fiscal notes and for preparing and presenting budgetary projections and budget alternatives to members of the General Assembly. The joint committee may organize a subcommittee to supervise the budget office. The subcommittee will be composed of at least six members with half of the members appointed by the chair of the joint committee and the other half appointed by the vice-chair. The budget office director will be responsible for employing personnel to carry out the duties of the budget office and will serve a four-year term beginning on January 1 of the year following the election of the Governor. The individual serving on August 28, 2008, will serve as director for the first term following the date and may be removed by either chamber of the General Assembly by resolution.

The budget office will provide the General Assembly at least once every year a cash basis financial projection similar in format to the general revenue summary of the executive branch.

The responsibility of preparing fiscal notes is transferred from the Oversight Division to the budget office. The bill also repeals the provisions that prohibit members of the General Assembly, lobbyists, and other interested parties from participating in the preparation of fiscal notes without a written disclosure included with the fiscal note.

The bill changes the terms "management audit" and "program audit" to "program evaluation" and changes the requirements for program evaluations. The Oversight Division retains the responsibility of executing and preparing program evaluations. Employees of the Oversight Division will be bound by oath and subject to criminal penalties of imprisonment of at least five years, a fine of at least \$100 or imprisonment in the county jail of at least 12 months, or both for any violation of his or her oath of office.

The provisions regarding the preparation of fiscal notes become effective January 1, 2009.