



# Focus Group Summary

Presentation to LBO Oversight Commission

August 1, 2019

# Purpose

- To gather information on:
  - current fiscal note practices and procedures
  - what works in the fiscal note process
  - challenges related to the fiscal note process
  - recommended changes
- Information gathered informed the LBO Standards and Procedures.

# Methodology

- Focus groups from June 18 – July 30
- Over 200 individuals invited
- 60 participants
- Participant Groups:
  - Agency CFOs
  - Agency Fiscal Note Coordinators
  - Finance Committee Administrators
  - House and Senate Fiscal Analysts
  - House Research and Senate Analysts & Counsel
  - MMB Budget Division

# Methodology

- Questions were asked on the following topics:
  - Timeliness
  - Communication (especially in regards to sharing assumptions and clarification of bill language)
  - Common Costs

# Discussion Topics

- Prevalent discussion topics:
  - The paramount role of communication
  - Prioritization of fiscal notes
  - Communicating bill language changes
  - Fiscal note assumptions and clarifying bill language
  - The importance of consistency and clarity in fiscal estimates

# Discussion Topics (cont.)

- Prevalent discussion topics (cont.):
  - Challenges with standardization
  - Expectations, opportunities and challenges for the LBO
  - The volume of fiscal notes and its impact on timeliness
  - Unofficial fiscal notes
  - Training and education gaps

# Findings

- Three concepts woven throughout discussions:
  - **the importance of communication**
  - **establishing and maintaining trust**
  - **building awareness of the fiscal note process and Standards and Procedures**

# Recommendations

- Each of the three concepts that emerged (communication, trust, and building awareness) were used to frame recommendations that informed:
  - draft Standards and Procedures
  - practices of the LBO
  - items for future consideration