



LEGISLATIVE TASK FORCE ON GOVERNMENT EFFICIENCY

Tuesday, September 29, 2026
Harvest Room, State Capitol
Bismarck, North Dakota

Representative Nathan Toman, Chairman, called the meeting to order at 10:00 a.m.

Members present: Representatives Nathan Toman, Glenn Bosch, Robin Weisz; Senators Kyle Davison, Kathy Hogan, Chuck Walen; Citizen Members Jonathan Casper,* Joshua C. Gallion, Rosalyn Leighton, Joe Morrisette

Members absent: None

Others present: Senator Kristin Roers
Emily O'Brien, Department of Health and Human Services; Reice Haase, Department of Water Resources; Michael Howe, Secretary of State
Allen H. Knudson, Legislative Council
**Attended remotely*

It was moved by Representative Bosch, seconded by Representative Weisz, and carried on a voice vote that the minutes of the June 30, 2026, meeting be approved as distributed.

Mr. Michael Howe, Secretary of State, and Chairman, Boards Review Task Force, presented information ([Appendix A](#)) regarding a report ([Appendix B](#)) on recommendations for minimizing and streamlining government operations through the consolidation or elimination of boards, commissions, committees, councils, and task forces pursuant to North Dakota Century Code Section 54-07-14. He noted:

- The Boards Review Task Force (BRTF) held 11 public meetings between October 2025 and September 2026 and considered federal and state law and the purpose and value of each board, commission, committee, council, and task force to taxpayers before making recommendations.
- The BRTF considered opportunities to modernize outdated statutes, reduce unnecessary board membership, eliminate obsolete entities, consolidate overlapping advisory committees, improve transparency through regular reporting, and strengthen administrative coordination.
- The BRTF recommends that of the 172 boards, commissions, committees, councils, and task forces reviewed, 102 entities be retained, 22 entities be retained with amendments to entity responsibilities, 29 entities be merged, and 19 entities be eliminated.
- Recommendations provided by the BRTF are not intended to be considered the only option for each reviewed entity.
- Most of the proposed recommendations would require action by the Legislative Assembly.

In response to questions from task force members, Mr. Howe noted:

- Most of the reviewed entities do not include legislative membership.

- There may be value in having legislators on some boards, commissions, committees, councils, and task forces, but only if the legislator has expertise in the area the entity regulates or advises.
- There is a transfer section included in the report. This section includes recommendations to dissolve the listed entities and transfer the duties to other existing entities.

In response to questions from task force members, Senator Kristin Roers, member of the Boards Review Task Force, noted:

- The recommendations included in the report likely will be included in four to six bill drafts during the 2027 session.
- Section 54-07-14, which establishes the BRTF, will expire effective December 2, 2026. The BRTF did not discuss if an additional review process should be conducted but that requirement could be included in one of the bill drafts that may be introduced during the 2027 session.
- Some states provide that every board, commission, committee, council, and task force expires at regular intervals unless renewed by the state legislature. The BRTF did not consider this option as a recommendation for the report.

Ms. Emily O'Brien, Deputy Commissioner, Department of Health and Human Services, presented information ([Appendix C](#)) regarding the department's program integrity, performance and data metrics, and internal audit efforts. She noted the department:

- Conducts a biennial fraud risk assessment of major programs, including child care assistance programs, Medicaid, Children's Health Insurance Program, Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program, Temporary Assistance for Needy Families Program, Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program, and behavioral health programs.
- Partners with the Medicaid Fraud Control Unit under the Attorney General's office to conduct audits, investigations, and prosecution related to the Medicaid Program.
- Started the 2027-29 biennium budget process with a zero-based budget rather than starting at the base budget in order to establish clearly defined program objectives, justify program funding levels, allocate resources based on value, and remove unnecessary, duplicative, or low-impact expenditures.

In response to a question from a task force member, Ms. O'Brien noted employees of some human service zones have been working overtime to reduce Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program error rates and that communication between the department and the human service zones has improved in recent months.

Mr. Reice Haase, Director, Department of Water Resources, presented information ([Appendix D](#)) regarding the department's recent government efficiency efforts and the process of evaluating water projects. He noted:

- The department regularly reviews statutes and policies, develops models, templates, and documents for use across multiple programs, and uses best available data to inform responsible decisionmaking.
- The department established an internal Process Efficiency Task Force, also referred to as the Pet Project, during the 2025-26 interim, which has resulted in 26 comprehensive reviews of permitting and section processes, 140 program efficiencies and future initiatives being identified, and 98 tasks started or completed through September 2026.
- Efficiencies identified through the Process Efficiency Task Force include standardizing permitting application processes for all programs, automating permitting dashboards for real-time permitting statuses, developing flowcharts, and establishing clear guidelines for all applications.
- The department is using a life cycle cost-analysis process to evaluate water supply project costs over the life of the infrastructure and identify the least costly alternatives.

- The department uses an economic analysis process to evaluate flood control and water conveyance project benefits to project costs with varying assumed levels of risk to determine project efficiency.

In response to questions from task force members, Mr. Haase noted:

- The department is working with the Cash Management Board established under Section 54-11-18 on investment strategies for funding deposited in the Resources Trust Fund.
- As a result of the Legislative Assembly authorizing the department access to a \$260 million Bank of North Dakota line of credit, the department anticipates the amount of carryover funding needed to be continued into upcoming bienniums should decrease but it is likely that some carryover funding will be needed due to construction season limitations.

Mr. Allen H. Knudson, Legislative Budget Analyst and Auditor, Legislative Council, presented a memorandum entitled [Performance Measures - History of Use in North Dakota State Government](#). He noted:

- Beginning in the 1993-94 interim, the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) selected 12 state agencies to identify service efforts and accomplishments to use to evaluate agency performance for a program-based performance budgeting pilot project. The pilot project was reduced to 7 state agencies during the 1995-96 interim.
- The 1999 Legislative Assembly directed OMB to discontinue the pilot project.
- Performance measures were again considered during the 2003-04 interim and the 2005 legislative session; however, legislative involvement with performance measures was minimal after the 2005-06 interim.
- OMB continued to request that agencies include performance measure data in their budget requests and OMB made available a performance measure report to the Legislative Assembly through the 2015-17 executive budget.
- OMB has continued to include areas in the agency budget request forms for agencies to provide information on their goals and objectives, performance measures, major accomplishments, and statistical data. Overall, the performance data is general, limited, and varies significantly by agency.
- Based on prior history of collecting data on state agency programs, evaluating program performance, and time constraints for legislators during legislative sessions, it may be beneficial to begin any new state program performance measure evaluation processes with a limited number of agencies as a pilot program.

In response to a question from a task force member, Mr. Knudson noted it may not be possible to evaluate all one-time funding items if an item is infrastructure based or is a project rather than a program.

Mr. Levi Kinnischtzke, Senior Fiscal Analyst, Legislative Council, presented a bill draft [\[27.0217.01000\]](#) relating to state program performance measures and outcomes. He noted the bill draft provides:

- For the Appropriations Committees to select new or expanded programs administered by state agencies for legislative monitoring for the following interim.
- State agencies would be required to provide information on the selected programs to the Legislative Council.
- The Legislative Council would be required to evaluate program results to program expectations and provide reports on the evaluation results to the Legislative Assembly or the Legislative Management.

It was moved by Senator Davison, seconded by Senator Walen, and carried on a roll call vote that the bill draft [27.0217.01000] relating to state agency program performance measures and outcomes be approved and recommended to the Legislative Management. Representatives Toman, Bosch, and Weisz; Senators Davison, Hogan, and Walen; and Citizen Members Gallion, Leighton, and Morrisette voted "aye." No negative votes were cast.

It was moved by Representative Weisz, seconded by Senator Davison, and carried on a voice vote that the Chairman and the Legislative Council staff be requested to prepare a report and the bill draft recommended by the task force and to present the report and recommended bill draft to the Legislative Management.

No further business appearing, Chairman Toman adjourned the meeting at 2:07 p.m.

Levi Kinnischtzke
Senior Fiscal Analyst

ATTACH:4