MONITORING THE STATUS OF STATE AGENCY AND INSTITUTION APPROPRIATIONS - BACKGROUND MEMORANDUM

Beginning with the 1975-76 interim, a Legislative Council interim committee has been assigned the responsibility of monitoring the status of major state agency and institution appropriations. The Budget Committee on Government Services has been assigned this responsibility for the 1999-2000 interim.

As in previous bienniums, the committee's review could place emphasis on expenditures of major state agencies such as the institutions of higher education, charitable and penal institutions, the appropriations for elementary and secondary education, the appropriations to the Department of Human Services for medical assistance and economic assistance grants, and other appropriations the committee might select. The expenditures of the selected state agencies and institutions would be monitored by having the agencies prepare six-month estimates of expenditures and then comparing actual expenditures for each six-month period to the estimates. The Legislative Council staff would then prepare reports for presentation to the committee comparing actual expenditures to estimates and discussing the major variances.

Also completed and presented the last four bienniums were reports on the status of agency compliance with legislative intent. These reports include the status of state agencies and institutions implementing budget/programmatic changes and legislative directives contained in appropriation bills and other legislation and identify budget concerns of agencies.

The committee, if apprised of special budget problems, can conduct detailed reviews of the problem areas.

The type of reporting outlined above will provide the committee with early information on problem areas needing either interim legislative consideration and action or may be the basis for legislation to be introduced to the 2001 Legislative Assembly. In addition, the information will assist the 2001 Legislative Assembly to analyze the 2001-03 Governor's budget.