

Testimony to the Employee Benefits Programs Committee
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HRMS has reviewed the proposed bill drafts and offers the following comments.

Drafts 90242.0200 and 90243.0200

Service Awards

- HRMS agrees that the state should clearly provide authority for all entities to establish such a program.
- Putting detail into statute to include the incremental dollar values would make it much more difficult to periodically update the program.
- Rather than require agencies to report to OMB, we recommend that, if required to report, agencies report directly to Legislative Council

Employer Paid Tuition Assistance

- If repayment is required at all, it should be prorated. However, there have been times when it was in the best interest of the agency not to require repayment. We think this should be an agency decision based on the benefit to the state.
- Rather than require agencies to report to OMB, we recommend that, if required to report, agencies report directly to Legislative Council.

Employer-Paid Professional Organization Membership and Service Club Dues

- Rather than require agencies to report to OMB, we recommend that, if required to report, agencies report directly to Legislative Council.

First Draft 90244.0100

State Employee Performance Bonus Program

- The exception authority may be problematic in that the statute applies to all agencies and institutions including agencies and positions expressly excluded from HRMS jurisdiction. Evaluating exceptions where HRMS has no overall authority or involvement would be very difficult. HRMS would not have full understanding or base information for making the decision. An alternative might be to have those entities not under HRMS jurisdiction report their exceptions to Legislative Council or an assigned legislative committee.

First Draft 90245.0100

State Employee Recruitment and Retention Bonus Programs

- The proposed language does mirror the rationale agencies have been using to consider their recruiting and retention bonuses under this section. However, if another reason is later identified and not listed in statute, the detail could be counterproductive. We wonder if permissive language such as "or other unique recruitment or retention issue identified and documented by the appointing authority" could be added. We are in very difficult times regarding recruitment and retention of staff. If detail is to be identified, then we prefer broad permissive language.