

Working Group to Study Payments by Insurance Companies

into the Insurance Fund

MEETING MINUTES

Monday, December 9, 2024

10:00AM in Room 1E and via Zoom

The meeting was called to order at 10:05AM by Chairman Representative Wood.

The following working group members were present:

Members: Sen. Osten C. 19, Susan Halpin, Chris Davis, Eric George, Rep. Walker T. 093, Jane Callanan, Jim Carson, Rep. Wood K. 029

Absent were: Sen. Cabrera J.17

The meeting began with a discussion on insurance fund allocations, highlighting \$451,000 designated for contracts with Bridges Health, Inc. and Youth Continuum, Inc., which support mental health access centers for young adults. Members emphasized the importance of continuing these services. Updates on the Behavioral Health Advocate position revealed that the role was posted in September, closed in October, but remains unfilled. The Department of Aging and Disability Services shared details about its Fall Prevention Program, which provides balance training to over 300 participants annually. Members raised questions regarding program effectiveness metrics and its geographic reach, requesting further evaluation of statewide coverage and success measurements.

The Special Homeowner Advocate role, funded through the Department of Housing, was discussed in relation to addressing crumbling foundations and related issues, with the position expected to remain active for another 20–25 years. Clarifications were sought regarding the role's oversight and scope of duties, as it does not report directly to the Civic Board. Members proposed further investigation into its connections and broader responsibilities.

There was extensive dialogue on the use of the insurance fund versus the general fund

for various programs, including a historical review of funding sources, program outcomes, and assessment mechanisms. Recommendations included gradually phasing out certain insurance fund assessments over five years and instituting a moratorium on new assessments. Members also emphasized the need for data on the demographics of program beneficiaries and the overall impact of these initiatives.

Programs under the Department of Public Health, such as AIDS services, asthma programs, and needle exchange initiatives, were reviewed. The discussion centered on whether these programs align more with general public benefit and should transition back to the General Fund over time. Members requested additional details to better understand the programs' reach and impact.

To conclude, members endorsed exploring a phased approach to assessment reductions, establishing sunset clauses for new assessments, and carefully evaluating expansions of state agencies like the Office of Health Strategy. Next steps include gathering requested data and reconvening to discuss findings. The meeting was adjourned with unanimous agreement.

Without further business, the meeting adjourned at 10:37AM.

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Minutes Prepared by

