



OKLAHOMA STATE SENATE

For Immediate Release: July 19, 2017

Office of the President Pro Tempore Senator Mike Schulz

Oklahoma Senate Pro Tem Announces 2017 Interim Studies

OKLAHOMA CITY – President Pro Tempore Mike Schulz, R-Altus, announced approval of interim studies requested by members of the Oklahoma Senate. A total of 44 interim study requests were approved.

Schulz's own request for an interim study will examine apportionments, which are tax dollars siphoned "off the top" rather than being deposited into the General Revenue Fund for appropriation by lawmakers. The look at apportionments is part of the overall effort of Schulz and Senate Republicans to implement long-term reforms in the budget process to yield more stability and reliability in the appropriation process.

"Hundreds of millions of dollars in taxes and fees paid by Oklahomans are being spent via apportionment. It's time we take a serious look at apportionments and what changes, if any, are needed," Schulz said. "Apportionments act like automatic paycheck deductions and are useful to ensure priority expenses are paid reliably. But they also greatly reduce the flexibility to shift resources away from lesser priorities because of unexpected or unforeseen costs like a home repair, or in the case of state government, budget shortfalls brought on by economic contraction. If the Legislature were able to control more of the tax revenue collected by the state, lawmakers would have greater ability to avoid or mitigate the impact of budget shortfalls."

The interim studies have been assigned to the Senate committee with jurisdiction over the subject matter contained within the request. The committee chairs will be responsible for scheduling committee meetings on the requests. Interim studies assigned to the Senate Appropriations Committee will be assigned to appropriations subcommittees.

"Interim studies give lawmakers more time to discuss in-depth and learn more about issues facing the state. Our members are committed to making this an even greater state and I appreciate their willingness to research these important topics to formulate policies that will help our government better serve the citizens of Oklahoma," Schulz said.

Senate Appropriations Committee

- Examining apportionments and whether changes are necessary to provide more reliability in the budget process requested by Schulz.
- Studying the taxation of energy resources requested by Sen. Kim David, R-Porter.
- Study of automobile license plates and whether plates reside with the owner or the automobile during a sales transaction of the vehicle requested by David.

- Tax reform: examining the possibility of broadening the tax base and lowering rates requested by Sen. Roger Thompson, R-Okemah.
- Study of effective models for preventing the maltreatment of children in state care requested by Sen. AJ Griffin, R-Guthrie.
- Study on the redistribution and selling of excess water from the Arkansas River requested by Sen. Dave Rader, R-Tulsa.
- Study of the tobacco excise tax and how noncompliance affects state revenue requested by Sen. James Leewright, R-Bristow.
- The monetary and nonmonetary ramifications of filing unconstitutional legislation in Oklahoma requested by Sen. Kay Floyd, D-Oklahoma City.
- A study on paid family leave and developing a program for state employees to receive short-term disability benefits requested by Floyd.
- A study on paid family leave and developing a program for state employees to receive short-term disability benefits requested by Sen. J.J. Dossett, D-Owasso.

Senate Business, Commerce and Tourism Committee

- Data breaches in financial institutions: examining Senate Bill 614 and the impact on Oklahomans' financial security requested by Sen. Dan Newberry, R-Tulsa.
- The benefits of electronic notaries requested by David.
- Effectiveness of summer youth employment programs in reducing teen pregnancy and teen crime rates requested by Sen. Kevin Matthews, D-Tulsa.
- A study of the economic impact on state tourism of federal historic designations requested by Matthews.

Senate Education Committee

- Examine teaching tribal histories in public schools requested by Sen. Ron Sharp, R-Shawnee.
- Examining how schools maximize their budgets requested by Sen. Paul Scott, R-Duncan.
- A study on school consolidation requested by Minority Leader John Sparks, D-Norman.
- A study on capping superintendent salaries requested by Sparks.
- Examining the impact of the National Board Certified Teacher program requested by Dossett.
- A study on how other states are managing teacher shortages requested by Dossett.

Senate General Government Committee

- Determining if an updated version of the Public Employees Relations Board is required to meet the future needs of the state requested by Sen. Nathan Dahm, R-Broken Arrow.
- Examining possible legislation amending statutes on county zoning requested by Thompson.
- Examining the structure, appointments and responsibilities of the Oklahoma State Accrediting Agency requested by Sen. Frank Simpson, R-Springer.
- A study of the Oklahoma Open Records Act requested by Scott.
- A study on transferring oversight of the Oklahoma Merit Protection Commission requested by Floyd.

Senate Health and Human Services Committee

- A study on licensure of mid-wives requested by Sen. Ervin Yen, R-Oklahoma City.
- A study on physician supervision of nurse practitioners requested by Yen.
- A study on balanced billing by out-of-network providers requested by Yen.
- A study on deaths and near-deaths from oral surgery requested by Yen.

- A study examining returning to a risk-based managed care model that would utilize health plans to manage the care of Medicaid beneficiaries requested by David.
- A study on implementing a diabetes prevention program requested by Simpson.
- A study of radiologic technologists requested by Scott.
- Examining best practices in preventing overdoses and other forms of suicide to eliminate or reduce the number of suicides in Oklahoma requested by Matthews.
- A study on the cost of infertility treatments requested by Dossett.

Senate Public Safety Committee

- A study on possible reforms to the Pardon and Parole Board requested by Sen. Wayne Shaw, R-Grove.
- A study on the Arkansas model of post-incarceration counseling requested by Shaw.
- A study on reducing recidivism using business plan training in prisons requested by Shaw.
- A study on cost-saving measures for the Department of Corrections requested by Sen. Randy Bass, D-Lawton.

Senate Retirement and Insurance Committee

- A study on insurance business transfer plans requested by Sparks.

Senate Rules Committee

- A study examining state election issues including the election calendar, filing dates, precinct consolidation, primaries and run-offs requested by Sen. Lonnie Paxton, R-Tuttle.

Senate Transportation Committee

- A study on Oklahoma Department of Transportation consulting engineers and quality of projects requested by Sen. Mark Allen, R-Spiro.
- A study on Corporation Commission Transportation Division compliance with federal regulations requested by Allen.
- Exploring the economic benefits of light rail transporting tourists to applicable areas of the state requested by Matthews.

Senate Veterans Committee

- A study to identify current utilization and future opportunities for businesses owned by disabled veterans to do business with the state requested by Matthews.

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