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BUDGET & FINANCE
COMMITTEE
EST. 1959

The LBFC Performance Report

Fall 2023 / Issue 9

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Certificate of Impact Award/911 Report

Merriam-Webster defines “eight” as “one number more than seven.” It is also the number of consecutive years that the Legislative Budget and Finance Committee has been recognized with a “Certificate of Impact” by the National Legislative Program Evaluation Society (NLPES).

The Certificate of Impact is presented to legislative offices that produce evaluations or audit reports that resulted in documented public policy changes, program improvements, dollar savings, or other public impacts. A team of peer reviewers from other state agencies review report submissions against criteria used to determine if the report meets the necessary standards.

The reviewers found that the LBFC’s report pursuant to Senate Resolution 96 – *911 Communication Services* met the necessary criteria, particularly in the areas of impacts to the public, legislature, and program impacts.

Executive Director Latta noted, “I’m pleased that the LBFC has been recognized for the eighth straight year as a recipient of this prestigious award. This report identified issues facing the 911 community as the General Assembly prepares to reauthorize the 911 statute before its expiration in 2024. We’re excited that our peers in other states recognized the quality of this work.”

The NLPES is one of nine professional staff associations connected with the National Conference of State Legislatures. NLPES includes employees of state legislative agencies engaged in program evaluation or performance auditing.

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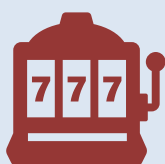
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Released Report News

Since the last newsletter, the LBFC released the following reports:

A Study Pursuant to House Resolution 2021-149: Proposed

Revisions to Biosolids Permits (June 2023), LBFC staff studied the costs associated with proposed revisions to PA's biosolid land application permits, and the ability of permit holders to practically comply with these changes. The study recommended the Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) update the underlying regulations on the beneficial use of biosolids to provide better consistency between the regulations and DEP's general permits.



Annual Report Required by Act 2013-90: The Impact of Tavern Gaming on the Pennsylvania State Lottery (May 2023), LBFC staff studied the impact of tavern gaming on the State Lottery.

A Report on Pennsylvania State Highway Maintenance Funding

(June 2023), LBFC staff analyzed PA state highway maintenance funding for the Pennsylvania Department of Transportation (PennDOT) and its 67 county maintenance offices (CMO).



Department of Corrections Safety-Related Staffing Plans (October

2023), LBFC staff studied the cost of implementing a safety-related staffing plan at state correctional institutions (SCIs) with Level 3 and Level 4 housing units.

For copies of the reports, summaries, and report release testimony, visit our website: lbfc.legis.state.pa.us.

Other Report News

The LBFC officers unanimously adopted the following resolutions on October 18, 2023:

House Resolution 66 directs the LBFC to conduct a study and issue a report on the impact of housing on health in this Commonwealth.

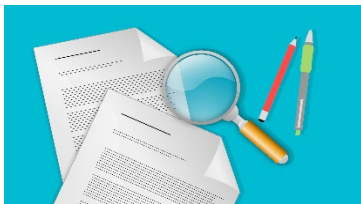
House Resolution 165 directs the LBFC to conduct a study on the effect of workforce shortages on state-supported Medicaid home and community-based services waiver programs and the Pennsylvania Lottery-funded area agency on aging programs and Act 150 services in this Commonwealth.

other report news cont. from the previous page

Senate Resolution 116 directs the LBFC to conduct a study and issue a report on the issue of consolidated billing in the retail electricity and other energy markets in Pennsylvania.

Senate Resolution 120 directs the LBFC to conduct a study on the emergency medical services providers in this Commonwealth and the financial impact of non-reimbursable services for emergency response calls not resulting in a medical assistance beneficiary receiving transportation to a hospital or treatment facility and to issue a report of its findings and recommendations to the Senate.

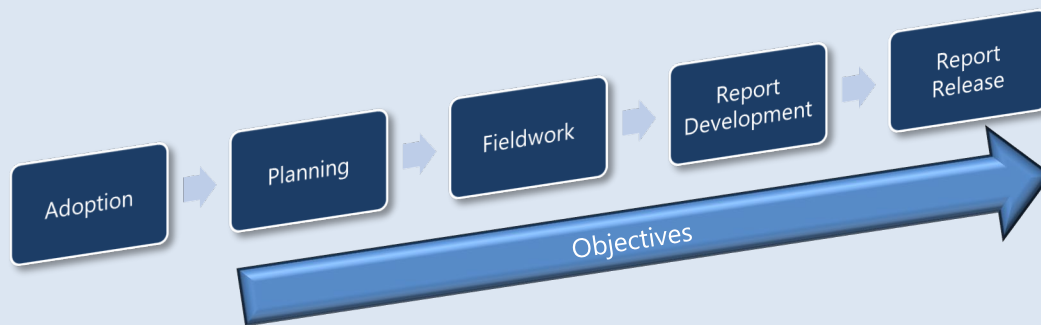
Recommendation Update: In **A Study of Pennsylvania’s Dairy Industry (September 2019)**, LBFC staff made many recommendations, one of which was to change the name of the Milk Marking Board. On November 6, 2023, House Bill 1170 was signed into law as Act 25. HB 1170 implemented LBFC’s recommendation and changed the name from Pennsylvania Milk Marketing Board to Pennsylvania Milk Board.



AUDIT CORNER: *What are audit objectives?*

LBFC projects are typically derived from House/Senate resolutions or statutorily mandated audits. In this audit corner, we discuss “audit objectives” and how they steer the LBFC audit process.

When the LBFC is assigned a project via a House/Senate resolution, or from a statutorily mandated audit, staff immediately set out to reframe the project into workable audit objectives. According to the United States Government Accountability Office (GAO) and its Government Auditing Standards, objectives are “what the audit [or project] intends to accomplish.” For the LBFC, objectives are written in an unbiased manner and reflect the intent of the resolution or law. As an example, in the case of resolutions, the “resolved” statements commonly serve as a basis for writing audit objectives. Once set, the audit objectives guide the remainder of the audit phases from planning through report release.



In the planning phase, objectives serve as the roadmap for what questions need to be answered and how (e.g., identifying data or information that needs to be obtained). In the fieldwork phase, objectives are used to guide data analysis. In the report development phase, objectives play a large role in how the report is written, how data is presented to the reader, and targeting recommendations from the data analysis. Finally, in the report release phase, LBFC staff use the objectives to communicate the report's guardrails to the Committee, interested stakeholders, and the public.

Staff News

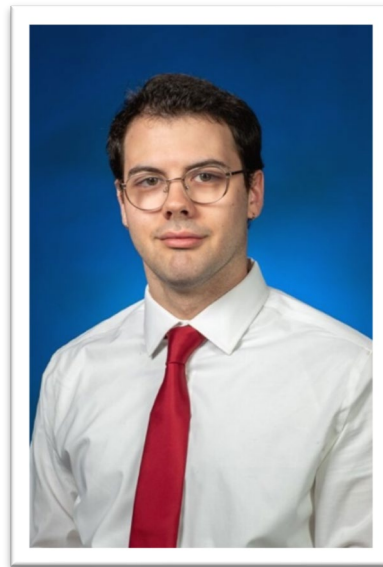
New Staff

After staff retirements in early 2023, LBFC hired two new analysts in June: **Morgan Smith** and **James Wynne**. Both are new to the capital region and state government.

Please help us welcome Morgan and James to Harrisburg and to the LBFC!



Morgan graduated from Grove City College in Spring 2023 with a Bachelor of Science in Business Analytics and Supply Chain Management. Morgan is currently working towards a Master of Science in Business Analytics.



James graduated from Muhlenberg College in Spring 2023 with a Bachelor of Arts in Economics and a minor in Environmental Science.

Staff Birthdays

November 1: James
November 3: Morgan
November 11: Amy
November 21: Shanika
December 4: Chris
December 28: Lauren

Staff Anniversaries

November 26: Stevi – 5 Years

LBFC STAFF

CHRISTOPHER LATTA, MBA
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

STEPHEN FICKES, MPA
DEPUTY EXECUTIVE
DIRECTOR/PROJECT MANAGER

LAUREN BORDNER,
OFFICE MANAGER/COMPTROLLER

JASON BREHOUSE, ESQ.
CHIEF COUNSEL/PROJECT MANAGER

ANNE WITKONIS,
PROJECT MANAGER

STEVI SPRENKLE, MPA
SENIOR ANALYST

AMY HOCKENBERRY,
ANALYST

SHANIKA MITCHELL-SAINT
JEAN, MPH, MPA
ANALYST

MORGAN SMITH,
ANALYST

MATTHEW THOMAS,
ANALYST

JAMES WYNNE,
ANALYST

ERIKA EBERLY,
EXECUTIVE ASSISTANT