

State of Minnesota
Legislative Audit Commission

Possible Evaluation Topics for 2021

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2. Use of Force by State Patrol and DNR Conservation Officers
3. Minnesota Board of Public Defense
4. Lawyers Professional Responsibility Board
5. Guardians ad Litem Board's Data-Practice Requests
6. Mental Impairment in Sexual Conduct Crimes

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NOTE: Topics outlined in blue relate to COVID-19.

CORRECTIONS, PUBLIC SAFETY, AND JUDICIARY

<p>1. Efficacy of Vehicle Forfeiture in Reducing Impaired-Driving Recidivism</p> <p><i>House language of SF 970 Omnibus Judiciary bill would mandate this study</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• What is the efficacy of vehicle forfeiture and the use of ignition interlock in cases involving an alleged violation of <i>Minnesota Statutes 2020, 169A.20</i>, on driving while impaired?• What is the financial impact of the programs, the efficacy in reducing recidivism, and the impact on public safety?
<p>2. Use of Force by State Patrol and DNR Conservation Officers</p> <p><i>Requested by several legislators</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• To what extent have State Patrol officers and Department of Natural Resources' conservation officers used force against individuals engaged in activities that the US Constitution's First Amendment protects?• To what extent have these officers engaged in discriminatory practices while using force, and to what extent do the agencies' policies, training, or supervision reflect racial bias?
<p>3. Minnesota Board of Public Defense</p> <p><i>Requested by a citizen</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• To what extent is the board appropriately funded so that public defenders can provide adequate representation on their cases?
<p>4. Lawyers Professional Responsibility Board</p> <p><i>Requested by a citizen</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• To what extent does this board respond appropriately and in a timely manner to public complaints about attorneys?
<p>5. Guardians ad Litem Board's Data-Practice Requests</p> <p><i>Requested by a citizen; related OLA evaluation released in 2018</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Does this board respond appropriately to requests from the public?
<p>6. Mental Impairment in Sexual Conduct Crimes</p> <p><i>Requested by a citizen</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Is the statutory definition of "mentally impaired" (as related to victims of criminal sexual conduct) sufficiently clear?• How well do diagnostic testing and evaluation by trained personnel identify mental impairments, and to what extent do law enforcement agencies receive training on encounters involving people with such impairments?• What alternatives in law to the term "mentally impaired" might be better?

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT, ENERGY, AND COMMERCE

<p>7. Commerce Department's Real Estate and Insurance Enforcement Divisions</p> <p><i>Requested by Representatives Boe, Burkel, Demuth, Dettmer, Erickson, Hamilton, Jurgens, and Urdahl</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• What proactive measures does the Department of Commerce take pertaining to insurance rates and underwriting factors?• In what cases does the department initiate an investigation, and what direction does the department give when a request to investigate does not fall under its purview?• To what extent are parties provided due process in an investigation?
<p>8. Minnesota's Energy Code</p> <p><i>Requested by Senators Anderson, Draheim, Koran, and Westrom</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Is the process for developing and adopting the state energy code reasonable, consistent, and timely?• To what extent do the Construction Codes Advisory Council and the Department of Labor and Industry provide adequate oversight of the code and its enforcement?

<p>9. Conservation Improvement Program <i>Requested by Representatives Anderson, Robbins, and Scott; related OLA evaluation released in 2005</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To what extent does this program meet the objectives set in statute? • Are conservation programs, such as energy audits and equipment rebates, cost effective? • How much does the program pay in incentive payments and to third-party administrators?
<p>10. Energy Grid <i>Requested by Senator Frentz</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What is the cost and reliability of the state's energy grid? • How well does the Public Utilities Commission oversee these aspects of the state's energy grid?
<p>11. Equity Program Grants <i>Requested by Senator Bakk</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What have been the outcomes of the equity program grants from the Department of Employment and Economic Development? • To what extent have the grants achieved the initial goals of the program, namely to help people of color, women, youth, and people with disabilities overcome employment barriers and to build the capacity of organizations to better serve participants?
<p>12. Unemployment Insurance Fraud <i>Requested by legislative staff</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How does the Department of Employment and Economic Development identify eligible unemployment insurance claims, and to what extent are these processes effective at preventing fraud?

EDUCATION: E-12 AND HIGHER EDUCATION

E-12 Education

<p>13. The Achievement Gap <i>Requested by Representatives Albright, Bennett, Boe, Burkel, Daniels, Demuth, Erickson, Gruenhagen, Heinrich, Kiel, Koznick, Mekeland, Mueller, Nelson, O'Neill, Pfarr, Pierson, Raleigh, Robbins, and Scott</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What state laws require the Minnesota Department of Education (MDE) to assess the achievement gap and assist either schools or families in reducing or eliminating that gap? • To what extent is MDE in compliance with the statutory requirements regarding the achievement gap? • What measures of effectiveness are used to determine whether MDE is successful in assisting schools or families with reducing the achievement gap?
<p>14. Educational Spending During COVID-19 <i>Requested by Senator Westrom and Representative Quam</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How much reimbursement has gone to education purposes during COVID-19 and paid for teachers or other staff not performing full-time work yet getting normal pay? • What additional expenditures have schools incurred—such as special accommodations, staff for cleaning, building modifications, etc.—due to COVID-19?
<p>15. School Nursing Services <i>Requested by Representative Liebling and the School Nurse Association of Minnesota</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How do the accessibility and quality of health services compare between school districts with licensed school nurses and districts with other arrangements? How do they compare with smaller districts, which are not required to employ a licensed school nurse or contract with a public or private health organization? • To what extent does the Minnesota Department of Education provide adequate oversight of school districts' health services for students?

<p>16. Charter School Student Transportation <i>Requested by Representative Hansen</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To what extent do charter schools provide their own student transportation, and to what extent do they rely on local school districts to provide student transportation? • What are the consequences of relying on local school districts for this service? • How is the transportation of charter school students funded, and are the correct funding mechanisms in place?
<p>17. Reimbursement Formula for Online School <i>Requested by Senator Westrom</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What is a better reimbursement formula for teachers or education staff in an online school setting, where the students are not in the classroom? • What are payment options the state should consider as schools shift to more virtual learning?
<p>18. Standardized Testing <i>Requested by Representative Edelson; related evaluation released in 2017</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How effectively does standardized testing of students measure student achievement? • How well does the Minnesota Department of Education oversee the standardized testing?
<p>19. Student Data <i>Requested by legislative staff</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What state and federal laws limit student-data gathering and reporting? • What data are reported to the Minnesota Department of Education (MDE), and how does MDE make those data accessible to lawmakers? • Are these data useful for evaluating state programs? • What additional data should be gathered and reported? • How are concerns about privacy balanced with the desire to develop data-driven policies?
<p>Higher Education</p>	
<p>20. Higher Education Administrative Costs <i>Requested by Representatives Bennett, Daniels, Daudt, Dettmer, Hamilton, Hertaus, Kresha, McDonald, Nash, O'Neill, Pfarr, Raleigh, Schomacker, Urdahl, and West; related OLA evaluation released in 2010</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How do the University of Minnesota and Minnesota State Colleges and Universities define administrative costs? • How do these institutions' increasing administrative costs compare with the rate of inflation? • What percentage of these institutions' budgets is spent on administrative costs, and how does that compare with other areas of spending? • What steps can be taken to reduce administrative costs?
<p>21. Regent Candidate Advisory Council <i>Requested by Representatives Daniels, Dettmer, Hertaus, Koznick, and West</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How well is the Regent Candidate Advisory Council fulfilling its statutory duties? • Has the council been subject to outside or undue influence in nominating candidates to the Joint Committee on Regent Selection?
<p>22. University of Minnesota Consolidated Endowment Fund <i>Requested by Senator Dibble</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Should the University of Minnesota's Consolidated Endowment Fund be brought under the legal and management structure of the University of Minnesota Foundation? • Would this transfer of responsibility result in greater efficiency and less expenditure on administration and overhead?

<p>23. Special State Appropriations for the University of Minnesota <i>Requested by Representative Daniels</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How has the University of Minnesota spent its special appropriations, commonly referred to as “specials”? • Is there sufficient accountability for these expenditures? • Does it make sense for some of the University’s activities—such as Agriculture and Extension Services—to be funded through special appropriations, rather than through “operations and maintenance” appropriations?
<p>24. Minnesota State System Redundancies <i>Requested by legislative staff</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To what extent do Minnesota State Universities and Colleges have administrative and programmatic redundancies? • How can redundancies in the system be centralized or eliminated to streamline services and reduce costs?

ENVIRONMENT, NATURAL RESOURCES, AND AGRICULTURE

<p>25. Outcomes from the Environment and Natural Resources Trust Fund <i>Requested by Representatives Boe, Daudt, Demuth, Erickson, Hertaus, Igo, Koznick, Kresha, Nelson, O’Neill, and Schomacker</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What environmental outcomes have been achieved to date from the Environment and Natural Resources Trust Fund? • Have there been positive, measurable results in the further “protection, conservation, preservation, and enhancement of the state’s air, water, land, fish, wildlife, and other natural resources,” as envisioned in the Minnesota Constitution?
<p>26. MPCA Petroleum Remediation Program <i>Requested by Representative Hansen and a citizen</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Has this program accomplished its goals? • To what extent have sites known to have contaminated drinking water supplies been cleaned up prior to closure? • Does MPCA have adequate policies and practices for assessing risks at contaminated sites and conducting cleanup?
<p>27. State Parks Funding <i>Requested by Representative Hansen</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What are the primary sources of funding for state parks, and what share comes from visitor fees? • How have visitor fees increased over time, and are these increases reasonable and equitable?
<p>28. Outdoor Heritage Funds <i>Requested by Representative Green</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What organizations receive funding from the Outdoor Heritage Fund? • To what extent are the expenditures from the Outdoor Heritage Fund meeting all of the requirements in law, especially regarding the requirement to supplement and not supplant traditional sources of funding?
<p>29. Department of Agriculture’s Bioincentive Payments <i>Requested by Senator Westrom</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What is the return to the state for each dollar that is invested in a biofuel incentive payment?
<p>30. Metropolitan Council Inflow and Infiltration Mitigation Program <i>Requested by Representative Hansen</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What is the need for mitigating inflow and infiltration of clear water into wastewater pipes and treatment systems, and to what extent is this program making a difference? • Should the Metropolitan Council or the Legislature use other strategies to reduce inflow and infiltration?

<p>31. Monitoring and Regulating Pollution <i>Requested by several citizens</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What measures are used to evaluate how Minnesotans are protected from polluting industries? • Are Minnesota departments partnering with industries to reduce regulation while sacrificing public health and safety? • What social, environmental, and economic metrics are used to monitor and regulate pollution?
<p>32. Compliance with Air and Water Quality Permits <i>Requested by a citizen; related OLA special review released in 2021 and related evaluation released in 2002</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Does the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency (MPCA) adequately enforce air and water quality permits? • To what extent is there adequate monitoring of the emissions and discharges allowed by permits? • To what extent does MPCA take appropriate corrective actions when it discovers violations?
<p>33. MPCA Regulation and Oversight of the Lyndale Avenue Corridor Site <i>Requested by a citizen</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Has the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency properly assessed the causes of groundwater and soil vapor contamination in Bloomington's Lyndale Avenue Corridor? • Has MPCA taken appropriate actions to address this contamination?
<p>34. Metropolitan Council Solid Waste Incineration Facilities <i>Requested by a citizen</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Has the Metropolitan Council adequately analyzed alternatives as it has invested in solid waste incineration facilities for the Twin Cities region? • For example, has the Council adequately considered rehabilitation of existing facilities in addition to construction of new facilities?

GOVERNMENT OPERATIONS

<p>35. State Public Disaster Assistance Account <i>Requested by Representatives Akland, Albright, Anderson, Burkel, Daniels, Demuth, Dettmer, Erickson, Green, Hamilton, Heinrich, Hertaus, Igo, Johnson, Jurgens, Kiel, Kresha, McDonald, Nash, Nelson, Pierson, Quam, Raleigh, Schomacker, Theis, Torkelson, and Urdahl; related OLA evaluation released in 2012</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What is the purpose of the State Public Disaster Assistance Account, and what is the history of the use of these funds? • What disasters are eligible for use of the funds, and is the money able to be used for disasters other than natural disasters? • Is there authority in statute to use the funds specifically for damages as a result of civil unrest?
<p>36. State Employee Whistleblower Protections <i>Requested by several legislators and citizens</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Does Minnesota have appropriate provisions in statute to protect state employees who express concerns about wrongdoing or illegal actions on the part of public agencies?
<p>37. IT Consolidation <i>Requested by Representative Elkins</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Should the scope of MNIT's purview be expanded to include state constitutional offices, the Legislature, and smaller boards and commissions? • To what extent would such additional consolidation result in improved data security, cost savings, or improved customer service?
<p>38. Election Spending During COVID-19 <i>Requested by Representative Quam</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What additional expenditures did counties incur during the 2020 election due to COVID-19?

<p>39. Election Software <i>Requested by Senator Kiffmeyer</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To what extent did the Secretary of State and counties comply with state law requiring no internet connection in precincts' polling places?
<p>40. Certification of Targeted Group and Disadvantaged Businesses for Vendor Preferences <i>Requested by legislative staff</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What is the Department of Administration's process for identifying and certifying targeted group businesses (TGBs) and disadvantaged business enterprises (DBEs) to receive preference on the state's vendor list? • To what extent does the department conduct adequate outreach and maintain an up-to-date, complete, and accessible list of certified businesses?
<p>41. Election Integrity <i>Requested by a citizen; related OLA evaluation released in 2018</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To what extent do existing controls ensure the integrity of Minnesota's elections? • To what extent are there adequate controls regarding the entire voting process, from voter authentication through final vote tabulation?
<p>42. Agency Contracts to Examine Equity Issues <i>Requested by a citizen</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To what extent are state agencies creating Requests for Proposals (RFPs) to examine equity issues within their agencies? • How necessary and effective are these RFPs at identifying possible inequities and their root causes?

HEALTH

<p>43. Insulin Safety Net Program <i>Requested in Minnesota Statutes 2020, 151.74, subd. 14</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To what extent are insulin manufacturers reimbursing pharmacies for urgent-need insulin, determining eligibility in a timely manner and notifying individuals, and providing pharmacies with insulin product as required by law? • To what extent is the training program developed for navigators adequate and easily accessible?
<p>44. COVID-19 Death Counts <i>Requested by Representatives Anderson, Baker, Bennett, Boe, Burkel, Daniels, Daudt, Dettmer, Green, Gruenhagen, Hamilton, Hertaus, Igo, Johnson, Jurgens, Koznick, McDonald, Mekeland, Nash, O'Neill, Poston, Raleigh, Schomacker, Scott, Theis, Urdahl, and West; and Senator Benson</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To what extent have Minnesota deaths attributed to COVID-19 been accurately counted? • How many Minnesotans died due to another cause when the death was listed as COVID-19 on the death certificate? • To what extent did a state entity instruct physicians, coroners, or other medical professionals to list COVID-19 as the cause of death?
<p>45. Individual and Small-Group Market Health Insurance <i>Requested by Representatives Anderson, Bennett, Erickson, Haley, Jurgens, Kresha, Nelson, Schomacker, Scott, and Torkelson; related OLA special review released in 2020</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What are the disparities among Minnesota's nine geographic rating areas in health insurance rates for individual and small-group markets, and what causes these disparities? • How can individual and small-group geographic rating areas be redrawn to reduce or eliminate health insurance cost disparities throughout the state and provide for stability of the individual market?

<p>46. Patient Discharges to Nursing Homes During COVID-19 Pandemic</p> <p><i>Requested by Representative Franson and Senators Gazelka and Kiffmeyer</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To the extent that patients with COVID-19 were discharged from hospitals to nursing homes during the pandemic, what were the health effects on the patients and nursing home residents and staff? • Did the discharges comply with federal and state rules and guidance, such as on COVID-19 testing and quarantines? • If there was noncompliance, what were the health effects? • What impact did the discharges have on reimbursements to hospitals and nursing homes for these patients' care?
<p>47. State Regulation and Oversight of X-Rays</p> <p><i>Requested by Representative Hansen, Senator Klein, and a citizen</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To what extent has the Minnesota Department of Health conducted inspections of X-ray equipment throughout the state, and has it complied with pertinent regulations in doing so? • Are there adequate health protections in state regulations for individuals who are receiving digital X-rays?
<p>48. Emergency Medical Services Regulatory Board (EMSRB)</p> <p><i>Requested by Representative Liebling, another legislator, and citizens</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Is EMSRB properly managed? • Has it followed proper practices for hiring staff and selecting contractors? • Does the board have appropriate mechanisms for allocating funds around the state, and does the board adequately monitor emergency medical services response times throughout the state?
<p>49. Board of Nursing</p> <p><i>Requested by a legislator and a citizen; related OLA evaluation released in 2015</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To what extent has the board implemented necessary changes in response to OLA's 2015 evaluation? • Does the board process cases effectively and efficiently, and is the board well managed? • To what extent does the board reply in a timely manner to questions and complaints?
<p>50. Pharmacies' Safeguards for Protecting Patients</p> <p><i>Requested by Senator Klein</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What measures do pharmacies in Minnesota have in place to ensure the use of safeguards and to prevent adverse patient reactions to medications? • To what extent does the Minnesota Department of Health provide oversight and ensure appropriate safeguards are in place?
<p>51. Prescription Drug Monitoring Program</p> <p><i>Requested by Representative Liebling</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To what extent has the mission of the Prescription Drug Monitoring Program changed over the years? • What is the program's current mission, and how well does the program fulfill that? • How does it handle sensitive information that it collects? • Has it helped reduce the epidemic of addiction and death from overdoses?
<p>52. 340B Pharmaceutical Pricing Program</p> <p><i>Requested by Representative Liebling</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To what extent do some health plans use Medical Assistance funds to provide extra support to "340B" organizations (determined eligible to receive outpatient drugs at significantly reduced prices)—that the health plans own or with whom they have other relationships?

<p>53. Medical Emergency Ambulance Services <i>Requested by Representative Liebling</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To what extent do all areas of the state have adequate and equitable access to service? • What drives the cost of an ambulance ride, and who is paying? • To what extent does the Emergency Medical Services Regulatory Board provide adequate oversight and governance of the state's emergency ambulance services?
<p>54. Board of Psychology <i>Requested by several citizens</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What are the board's practices for processing applications and complaints? • Who reviews the complaints, what criteria are used to make determinations, and are these practices reasonable? • To what extent are disciplinary actions based on accepted criteria and guidelines?
<p>55. Health Professionals Services Program <i>Requested by several citizens</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To what extent is this program fulfilling its statutory duties to protect the public from regulated medical personnel whose illnesses may affect their ability to practice safely? • Does this program operate with the support and confidence of organizations that employ health professionals and make referrals to the program?
<p>56. Implementation of Governor's COVID-19 Orders Affecting Businesses <i>Requested by a citizen</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Did the Minnesota Department of Health appropriately communicate the Governor's orders, including any relevant exemptions, to affected businesses? • Did the department take appropriate and fair actions to enforce the COVID-19 restrictions in the Governor's orders? • To what extent were businesses cited or penalized for violations of the orders?
<p>57. Oversight of Nursing Homes <i>Requested by a citizen; related OLA evaluations released in 2005 and 2018</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To what extent does the Minnesota Department of Health provide adequate oversight of nursing homes? • Does the department adequately protect vulnerable adults who live in these facilities?

HUMAN SERVICES

<p>58. DHS Programs for Direct Care and Treatment <i>Requested by Representatives Akland, Albright, Baker, Daudt, Dettmer, Erickson, Green, Gruenhagen, Hamilton, Heinrich, Johnson, Jurgens, Kiel, McDonald, Mueller, Nelson, O'Neill, Pfarr, Pierson, Quam, Robbins, Scott, Theis, and Urdahl; and Senator Abeler</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Are mentally ill and dangerous patients properly and timely placed? • To what extent does the level of direct-care staff at the Minnesota Security Hospital create bottlenecks or other problems at the Anoka-Metro Regional Treatment Center or the state's community behavioral health hospitals? • What are the levels and types of staff at the Minnesota Security Hospital and the Minnesota Sex Offender Program, and how does this affect budget needs and services provided?
<p>59. DHS Drug Formulary Committee <i>Requested by Senators Dibble, Dziedzic, Eaton, McEwen, Pappas, and Wiklund; and another legislator</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Does DHS have an appropriate and transparent process for determining which medications will be included in its drug formulary for state-administered public health care programs? • To what extent has DHS's formulary promoted cost-effectiveness in health care programs, while ensuring appropriate access of individuals to medications?

<p>60. Mandated Social Services Provided by Counties <i>Requested by Senator Weber</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What do individual counties spend annually on social services mandated by the federal or state governments? • How much of the expenditures come from the federal and state governments and how much from each county's local property tax levies?
<p>61. MNsure's Efficiency in Processing "Life Event Changes" <i>Requested by several citizens</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Does MNsure process "life event changes"—for example, changes in premiums related to enrollees' changes in income—in a timely manner? • How does MNsure's timeliness with these cases compare with that of the Department of Human Services and counties? • Has MNsure taken adequate steps to improve the efficiency with which it processes these cases?
<p>62. Economic Status of Public Assistance Recipients <i>Requested by several citizens; related OLA evaluation released in 2002</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How has Minnesota's package of government assistance programs changed in the last decade? • How well are current and former public assistance recipients doing financially? • To what extent does the state's package of government assistance benefits encourage recipients to work more and increase their earnings?
<p>63. Discharges from Minnesota Security Hospital in St. Peter <i>Requested by several citizens</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To what extent does the process for discharging patients from the Minnesota Security Hospital meet legal requirements? • How sufficiently does the Special Review Board, which recommends patient discharges to the Department of Human Services, take into account for each patient all sources of information, including the hospital's professional staff? • What ongoing training, if any, do board members need?

TRANSPORTATION

<p>64. Metropolitan Council Southwest Light Rail <i>Requested by Representatives Albright, Daudt, Green, Gruenhagen, Johnson, Kiel, Koznick, Mueller, Nash, Pierson, Robbins, and Torkelson</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Have Metropolitan Council funds or employee time been paid for with state funds in the planning and construction of the Southwest Light Rail project, despite the current prohibition in statute preventing the use of state funds on this project?
<p>65. Trunk Highway Fund <i>Requested by Representatives Albright, Heinrich, Igo, Kiel, Kresha, O'Neill, Pierson, Schomacker; related OLA evaluation released in 1997</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To what extent is the money in this fund used for allowable purposes?
<p>66. Corridors of Commerce <i>Requested by Representatives Boe, Heinrich, Igo, and Johnson, and legislative staff; related OLA evaluation released in 2016</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What are the criteria for selecting projects under the Corridors of Commerce program? • To what extent does the Minnesota Department of Transportation consistently and transparently follow these criteria? • What is the distribution of projects in the Twin Cities metropolitan area as compared with outstate Minnesota?

<p>67. Metro Mobility</p> <p><i>Requested by Representatives Gruenhagen, Hertaus, and Koznick</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How well does Metro Mobility meet the demand for its services, and how cost-effective are these services? • Who are the users of Metro Mobility, and what is the average cost per trip? • What are the causes of the significant annual increases in costs to the program?
<p>68. MnDOT “Construction Manager/General Contractor” Contracting Method</p> <p><i>Requested by Representatives Nash, O’Neill, and Torkelson</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To what extent has MnDOT’s Construction Manager/General Contractor method for procuring road construction projects effectively involved contractors in a timely manner to develop a road project’s scope that meets its budget? • How well has the method met its objectives, such as saving time and providing greater cost certainty early in the project?

OTHER

<p>69. Minnesota’s COVID-19 Response</p> <p><i>Requested by Representatives Akland, Albright, Anderson, Baker, Bennett, Boe, Burkel, Daniels, Daudt, Demuth, Dettmer, Erickson, Green, Gruenhagen, Hamilton, Heinrich, Igo, Johnson, Jurgens, Kiel, Koznick, Kresha, McDonald, Mekeland, Mueller, Nash, Nelson, O’Neill, Pfarr, Pierson, Poston, Raleigh, Robbins, Schomacker, Scott, Theis, Torkelson, and Urdahl; the Senate amended HF1952 to request OLA to analyze the state’s response to COVID-19</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What shortcomings were there in how Minnesota handled its COVID-19 response, especially with respect to COVID-19 in nursing homes? • What actions has the Executive Branch taken, and how much and where has it spent money related to COVID-19? • Were the actions taken by the Governor and executive branch agencies allowable under Chapter 12’s emergency powers? • How successful was our state response, and are there issues that the Legislature should address?
<p>69a. COVID-19 Response and Child Care</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To what extent did the Child Care Assistance Program allow eligible parents to obtain child care during the pandemic? • To what extent did Department of Human Services’ actions allow child care providers to operate while protecting the health and safety of both children and providers? • What were the costs of those actions? • To what extent were department actions allowable under statutes governing peacetime emergencies, and how could the state’s response have been improved?
<p>69b. COVID-19 Response and Medical Assistance Coverage</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To what extent did the Department of Human Services maintain health care coverage for people enrolled in, or potentially eligible for, Medical Assistance and home- and community-based waiver programs during the pandemic? • What were the costs? • To what extent were department actions allowable under statutes governing peacetime emergencies, and how could the state’s response have been improved?

<p>69c. COVID-19 Response and Peacetime Emergency Powers</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Were the actions taken by the Governor during the pandemic allowable under Chapter 12's emergency powers? • What is the statutory authority on the duration and nature of gubernatorial and executive branch powers during peacetime emergencies in Minnesota? • How do the statute's provisions and requirements compare with other states?
<p>70. Office of the State Archaeologist <i>Requested by Senators Dziejdzic, Eaton, Franzen, McEwen, Pappas, Port, Torres Ray, and Wiklund; related OLA evaluation released in 2001</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To what extent do the Office of the State Archaeologist, MnDOT's Cultural Resources Unit, and partnering agencies use clear and consistent processes to license, contract with, and monitor archaeologists? • Should the Legislature create a board to oversee the licensure process?
<p>71. Department of Labor and Industry's Contractor Recovery Fund <i>Requested by Senators Anderson, Draheim, Howe, and Koran</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How many claims are paid out of this fund, and what is the amount of loss homeowners incur? • How long does it take the department to process these claims?
<p>72. Minnesota Housing Finance Agency <i>Requested by Senators Anderson, Draheim, Koran, and Westrom; related OLA evaluation released in 1989</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How does the Minnesota Housing Finance Agency spend the state and federal funds it receives? • To what extent does the agency comply with government accounting standards?
<p>73. Destination Medical Center <i>Requested by Representative Robbins and Senator Senjem</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Is the Destination Medical Center (DMC) initiative being executed in accordance with the very complex statute that created it? • Are local decisions regarding the receipt and use of DMC monies between the state, county, city, and the DMC Board being made in accordance with the provisions of statute? • Are the DMC administrative and operational processes involving the state, county, city, and DMC Board in conformance with statute? • What is the return on investment of the DMC?
<p>74. Prevailing Wages for Housing Projects with State Funding <i>Requested by Representatives Greenman and Lislegard; related OLA evaluation released in 2007</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To what extent are requirements related to prevailing wages being applied and enforced in the construction of public housing projects that receive state funds?
<p>75. Prevailing Wage: Effect on Housing and Road Improvements <i>Requested by Senator Westrom; related OLA evaluation released in 2007</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To what extent have prevailing wage requirements affected housing grant programs or road improvements? • How much does requiring prevailing wages add to the cost of the project, and how does this differ between rural Minnesota and the Twin Cities metropolitan area?
<p>76. COVID-19 Business Relief Payments and Grants <i>Requested by Representative Baker</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What funds has the state awarded to benefit businesses affected by COVID-19? • What types of businesses have received funds, and how has this differed by county? • What portion of the appropriated funds remained unspent, and why did this occur?

<p>77. Sustainable Building Guidelines <i>Requested by Representative Fue Lee</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To what extent have new state buildings and major renovations that received funds from the bond proceeds fund been compliant with sustainable building guidelines, as required in <i>Minnesota Statutes 2020, 16B.325</i>? • What is needed to ensure that such state buildings and major renovations comply with this statute before money is encumbered on a project? • Who is in charge of enforcing this statute, and does this need to be clarified in law?
<p>78. Speed of Agency Permitting <i>Requested by Senator Frentz; related OLA evaluations released in 2002 and 2011</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How efficiently do state agencies process permits? • To what extent are agencies transparent about the permitting process, and how well do they communicate with the public about expected timelines and unexpected delays?
<p>79. Volunteer Firefighter Relief Association Special Funds <i>Requested by Representative Rasmusson</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Why do these funds underperform both their statutory requirement and other pension benchmarks? • To what extent is there adequate and appropriate oversight of these funds?
<p>80. OLA Evaluation Outcomes <i>Requested by Representative McDonald</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How many audits and evaluations completed in the last ten years have not had any of their recommendations implemented?
<p>81. Board of Animal Health Oversight of Domestic Animals <i>Requested by Representative Hansen; related OLA evaluation released in 2018</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How well has the Board of Animal Health fulfilled its responsibility to “protect the health of the state’s domestic animals” with respect to companion animals? • How well has it fulfilled its responsibility to enforce the provisions of the Commercial Breeders Licensing and Enforcement law?
<p>82. Problem Gambling <i>Requested by Representative Liebling</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How effective and coordinated are the state’s efforts to control problem gambling? • What more is needed?
<p>83. Veterans Defense Project <i>Requested by Representative Poston</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How did the Veterans Defense Project use the grant funding it received, and did it fulfill the purpose outlined in statute (to support military veterans who are involved with the criminal justice system)?
<p>84. Minnesota Veterans Homes <i>Requested by Senator Newton</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How well does the Minnesota Department of Veterans Affairs manage veterans homes located in the state? • Why is the state building new homes when there is space available at existing facilities? • How does the agency manage wait lists and vacancies across its facilities?
<p>85. Minneapolis Veterans Home <i>Requested by a citizen</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Is this facility well managed? • Does it provide appropriate care and treatment to the military veterans it serves?
<p>86. Minnesota State Band <i>Requested by a citizen</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Is the state band properly managed? • Has it followed proper practices for managing funds, handling conflicts of interest, and managing personnel concerns?

87. Enforcement of State Codes in Nontraditional Event Venues

Requested by a citizen; related OLA evaluation released in 1999

- To what extent has there been consistent enforcement of state fire and building codes at nontraditional venues—such as barns—that are used for weddings or other large events?

88. Board of Behavioral Health and Therapy

Requested by a citizen

- To what extent are the board's licensing practices handled in an efficient and timely manner?
- Does the board provide adequate oversight of licensed counselors, and does it have a reasonable complaint resolution process?
- To what extent are the board's licensing requirements consistent with national standards?