

State of Minnesota
Legislative Audit Commission

Possible Evaluation Topics for 2023

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Possible Evaluation Topics for 2023

CORRECTIONS, PUBLIC SAFETY, AND JUDICIARY

<p>1. Department of Public Safety (DPS) Bureau of Criminal Apprehension Forensic Science Services (FSS)</p> <p><i>Requested by Representative Hemmingsen-Jaeger</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> How many cases does the FSS process each year? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> To what extent has there been a backlog of cases to process in recent years? How much funding has the Legislature provided to the FSS in recent years and for which purposes? To what extent has the FSS been fully staffed? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> What qualifications does FSS require for staff in different divisions? To what extent has the FSS experienced turnover or difficulties hiring qualified staff? To what extent has FSS and DPS leadership promoted a culture that supports a productive workplace?
<p>2. Department of Public Safety (DPS) Office of Justice Programs Grants</p> <p><i>Requested by Representative Hudson; related to OLA program evaluation completed in 2023</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To what extent do state and agency reporting requirements provide DPS and the Legislature with information about the effectiveness of grants awarded by the Office of Justice Programs? To what extent has the Legislature appropriated money to DPS for grants with substantially similar purposes? To what extent have DPS grantees received grants from other state agencies? What changes could DPS make in its administration of grants to promote measurable results in its grant programs?
<p>3. Guardian ad Litem Board</p> <p><i>Requested by citizens; related to OLA program evaluation completed in 2018</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Does the Guardian ad Litem Board respond appropriately to requests from the public and provide adequate information on its website? To what extent has the board implemented recommendations from OLA's previous program evaluation?
<p>4. 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 of Public Defense appropriately funded so that public defenders can provide adequate representation on their cases? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> What are current average caseloads and how do they compare to national standards? To what extent has the board met its goals? To what extent have board members provided effective leadership and carried out their responsibilities?
<p>5. MNDrive</p> <p><i>Requested by Representative Nash</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To what extent has the MNDrive system met the needs of stakeholders, including DPS, vehicle dealers, and the public? How well does the MNDrive system work in terms of usability and efficiency?
<p>6. Office of Lawyers Professional Responsibility</p> <p><i>Requested by a citizen</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To what extent has the Office of Lawyers Professional Responsibility responded appropriately and in a timely manner to public complaints about attorneys?

Possible Evaluation Topics for 2023 (continued)

7. Recidivism Rates of Adult Felons <i>Requested by Representative Grossell, Representative Schomacker, Senator Koran, and Senator Limmer; related to OLA program evaluation completed in 1997</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> How does the Minnesota Department of Corrections define recidivism in adult offenders? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> To what extent is this definition applied uniformly across types of crime and offenders? What is Minnesota's rate of recidivism, and how does this rate compare to that of other states? To what extent have recidivism rates changed in recent years, and what are the reasons for any change?
8. Speed Violation Dispositions <i>Requested by Senate File 2321</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> What were the rates of citations issued compared to the rates of citations contested in court in recent years? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> What were the outcomes of contested court cases? What were the number and amounts of fines imposed compared to the number and amounts of fine payments? What changes, if any, occurred in the pattern of traffic enforcement from 2017 through 2022?
9. Strategies for Preventing Repeat Offenses by Impaired Drivers <i>Required to be completed by August 1, 2024, as directed by Laws of Minnesota 2021, 1st special session, chapter 11, art. 5, sec. 21</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To what extent have ignition interlock and vehicle forfeiture effectively reduced repeat offenses by impaired drivers? What has been the financial impact of these strategies?

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT, ENERGY, AND COMMERCE

10. Department of Employment and Economic Development (DEED) and Grant Oversight <i>Requested by a legislator; related to OLA program evaluations completed in 2023</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To what extent does DEED provide adequate oversight of grants? To what extent does the department have sufficient resources to meet oversight requirements? What state and agency reporting requirements exist, and to what extent do reports provide DEED with sufficient information to determine whether a grant is being used for its intended purpose? To what extent does DEED have processes in place to detect indicators of fraud in grant administration? To what extent has the agency reported wrongdoing or shared information about grantees with poor performance?
11. Department of Labor and Industry (DLI) Grant Oversight <i>Requested by a legislator</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Does DLI have an appropriate process for making grants? To what extent has the department adequately overseen the grants it makes?
12. Department of Labor and Industry (DLI) Permit Processing <i>Requested by Senator Rarick</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To what extent has DLI processed permits, including plumbing plan reviews and permits, in a timely manner? To what extent have permit processing timelines affected construction timelines?

Possible Evaluation Topics for 2023 (continued)

<p>13. Economic Concentration in Minnesota</p> <p><i>Requested by Representative Howard</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To what extent has economic concentration in Minnesota changed in recent decades, and how has this impacted workers, small businesses, farms, and consumers? • Does Minnesota have sufficient antitrust laws and penalties to deter anticompetitive conduct? • To what extent does the Minnesota Office of the Attorney General and other state agencies have the capacity to address anticompetitive activities?
<p>14. Energy Conservation Improvement Program</p> <p><i>Requested by Representative Heintzeman, Representative Scott, and other legislators; related to OLA program evaluation completed in 2005</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To what extent has the Energy Conservation Improvement Program met the goals or objectives set in statute? • To what extent 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>15. Prevailing Wage Rate Setting</p> <p><i>Requested by Representative Backer, Representative Heintzeman, Representative Scott, and other legislators; related to OLA program evaluation completed in 2007</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To what extent is the method used for setting prevailing wage rates reasonable and in accordance with any best practices? • How well are prevailing wage rate requirements enforced?
<p>16. Renewable Energy Development Fund</p> <p><i>Requested by Representative Backer, Representative Fogelman, Representative Heintzeman, Representative Wiener, and other legislators; related to OLA program evaluation completed in 2010</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Overall, how well has the Fund been managed? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ To what extent is the process for funding projects clear and effective? • To what extent have funded projects achieved their goals? • What benefits, if any, has the Fund provided Minnesota?
<p>17. Solar for Schools Grant Program</p> <p><i>Requested by Representative Igo</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To what extent have school districts, colleges, and universities participated in the Solar for Schools grant program? • How much electricity has the program generated? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ To what extent has the program saved grantees money on energy costs? • What effect, if any, have grants had on local property taxes?
<p>18. State Oversight of Long-Term Care Insurance</p> <p><i>Requested by a citizen</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Does Minnesota have adequate laws in place to protect against unreasonable increases in rates for long-term care insurance? • To what extent has the Department of Commerce provided sufficient oversight of the rates providers are charging?
<p>19. Unemployment Insurance</p> <p><i>Requested by several legislators; related to OLA program evaluation completed in 2022</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To what extent did Minnesota make payments to people who were ineligible for benefits? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Were these payments made due to ineffective processes, attempted fraud, or other reasons? • To what extent did Minnesota provide benefits to people with other jobs, such as gig employment?

Possible Evaluation Topics for 2023 (continued)

<p>20. Worker Classification</p> <p><i>Requested by Representative Greenman; related to OLA program evaluation completed in 2007</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To what extent do employers misclassify Minnesota employees as independent contractors? • To what extent do current guidelines for classifications adequately address “gig” work and other less traditional work across industries in Minnesota? • How effective are Minnesota’s laws in deterring, preventing, and correcting misclassification? • To what extent have recommendations from OLA’s previous evaluation been implemented?
<p>21. Workforce Development Fund Grants</p> <p><i>Requested by Representative Robbins and another legislator</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To what extent has DEED provided oversight of Workforce Development Fund grants? • What state and agency reporting requirements exist, and to what extent do reports provide DEED and the Legislature with information about grant effectiveness? • To what extent have the agency and grantees complied with required financial reporting and reviews?

EDUCATION

<p>22. Minnesota Department of Education (MDE) Grant Oversight</p> <p><i>Requested by Senator Coleman and another legislator; related to OLA program evaluation completed in 2023</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To what extent does MDE have an effective grant award process? • What processes does MDE have in place to identify and prevent conflicts of interest in its grant-making processes? • To what extent does MDE provide adequate oversight of grantees and ensure that funding is used for intended purposes? • How does MDE share information about wrongdoing or poor performance of grantees?
<p>23. Minnesota Department of Education (MDE) Oversight of Feeding our Future</p> <p><i>Requested by Senator Wesenberg, related to OLA special review expected Summer 2023</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What oversight did MDE provide of Feeding our Future’s use of grant funds? • To what extent are individuals and organizations that were charged with fraud in association with Feeding our Future being prosecuted?
<p>24. Minnesota State Academies for the Deaf and the Blind</p> <p><i>Requested by a citizen</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To what extent have the Minnesota State Academies for the Deaf and the Blind been properly governed and managed, and has leadership promoted a healthy workplace climate? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ What have been the recent enrollment trends at the Academies? ○ What are the reasons for any recent changes in enrollment? ○ To what extent have the Academies experienced staff turnover? • To what extent has the Academies board complied with open meeting requirements? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ To what extent has it provided transparent information about activities and given the community opportunities to provide input?

Possible Evaluation Topics for 2023 (continued)

25. Minnesota State Universities and Colleges Governance <i>Requested by a citizen</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To what extent has the Minnesota State Board of Trustees provided effective oversight of the college system? To what extent has the board conducted their oversight duties as required by applicable law or board policies?
26. Postsecondary Enrollment Options (PSEO) <i>Requested by Senator Draheim and legislative staff</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To what extent have school districts administered the PSEO program consistently across the state? Are grade-level eligibility criteria appropriate and applied consistently across school districts? How do PSEO and “PSEO by Contract” affect the funding school districts receive?
27. Safety on the University of Minnesota Twin Cities Campus <i>Requested by a legislator and a citizen</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> How well has the University managed its police force? To what extent has the University experienced violence, including gun violence, on campus? To what extent has the University taken actions to ensure the security of students, staff, and visitors?
28. Special Education in K-12 <i>Requested by Senator Gruenhagen; related to OLA program evaluation report completed in 2013</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To what extent does Minnesota have special education requirements that exceed federal requirements? If Minnesota has requirements that exceed federal requirements, have they been evaluated for cost effectiveness? To what extent is there medical evidence that supports the use of pharmaceuticals for children?
29. Student Teacher Grants <i>Requested by Senator Draheim</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> What has been the outcome of grants provided to students enrolled in teacher education programs, including grants for student teaching?
30. University of Minnesota Admissions <i>Requested by a legislator</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To what extent does the school admit Minnesota applicants? What preference does the school provide, if any, for international applicants?
31. University of Minnesota Board of Regents <i>Requested by a legislator and citizens</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To what extent has the University of Minnesota Board of Regents provided effective oversight of the university system? To what extent has the board conducted their oversight duties as required by applicable law or board policies? To what extent has the board been appropriately responsive to concerns raised by stakeholders, including students, faculty, staff, and the public?
32. University of Minnesota Regent Selection Process <i>Requested by a citizen</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> How well has the Regent Candidate Advisory Council fulfilled its statutory duties? Has the council been subject to outside or undue influence in nominating candidates to the Joint Committee on Regent Selection?

ENVIRONMENT, NATURAL RESOURCES, AND AGRICULTURE

33. Aggregate Mining Operations <i>Requested by a citizen</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> What is the process for establishing aggregate mining sites, and which agencies are involved in this process? Which agencies oversee established aggregate mining sites, and what are their responsibilities? To what extent have aggregate mining sites complied with applicable regulations and standards?
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Possible Evaluation Topics for 2023 (continued)

34. Agricultural Utilization and Research Institute (AURI) <i>Requested by Representative Hansen; related OLA program evaluation completed in 2016</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> What types of projects does AURI undertake, and what services does the institute provide? How does AURI make decisions about projects and set priorities? What have been the results of AURI projects?
35. “Cottage Foods” Regulation <i>Requested by anonymous</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To what extent does the Minnesota Department of Agriculture properly regulate homemade foods that are exempt from state food licensing laws?
36. County Fairs <i>Requested by Representative Hansen</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> How does Minnesota fund county fairs? Is Minnesota’s current model for supporting county fairs sustainable?
37. Department of Natural Resources (DNR) Animal Population Control <i>Requested by Senator Rarick; related OLA program evaluation completed in 2016</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> How does the DNR establish counts for deer, wolves, and fish species? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> To what extent are these counts accurate? To what extent have fishing limits been evaluated for effectiveness, and have any been altered to improve results? How does the DNR establish deer limits, and to what extent does DNR adjust limits to population changes?
38. Department of Natural Resources (DNR) Land Purchases <i>Requested by Senator Utke and Senator Weber</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To what extent, if at all, has the DNR purchased land at costs exceeding the lands’ market value? How often has the DNR outbid private entities or individuals when purchasing land?
39. “Green Acres” and Agricultural Land Preservation Programs <i>Requested by a legislator; related OLA program evaluation completed in 2008</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> What changes to these programs have been made since OLA’s 2008 evaluation? Do these programs effectively equalize taxes for agricultural landowners and preserve farmland?
40. Minnesota Board of Water and Soil Resources: One Watershed Plan <i>Requested by Representative Jacob; related OLA program evaluation completed in 2007</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> What percentage of funding going towards this project has been spent on program setup and administration, and could this percentage be reduced? To what extent does the governance model provide accountability for program decisions, and to whom is the program accountable? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> How effective is the governance model? How has the program determined which areas to target? What results has the program achieved?
41. Minnesota Department of Agriculture (MDA) Agricultural Growth, Research, and Innovation Livestock Investment Grant Program <i>Requested by a citizen</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> What criteria does MDA use to award Livestock Investment grants? To what extent does MDA’s administration of the grant program comply with applicable laws and policies? What is the impact of the Livestock Investment Grant Program? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Have Livestock Investment grants had any impact on the longevity of grantees’ operations?
42. Minnesota Pollution Control Agency (MPCA) Air Monitoring and Regulation <i>Requested by Representative Lee</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> How well has the MPCA ensured that facilities comply with regulations to limit air pollution? Was there adequate public oversight of the Northern Metals Recycling facility prior to its fire in April 2021?

Possible Evaluation Topics for 2023 (continued)

43. Minnesota Pollution Control Agency (MPCA) Aquatic Life Water Quality Standards <i>Requested by Representative Hansen and a citizen</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> What actions has the MPCA taken to develop and enforce water quality standards for aquatic life, and have they been effective at reducing nitrates and other water pollutants? What have other states done to establish and enforce water quality standards for aquatic life?
44. Minnesota Pollution Control Agency (MPCA) Landfill Permitting and Oversight <i>Requested by a citizen</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Does the MPCA have adequate standards for permitting and expanding landfills? Does the MPCA adequately monitor permitted landfills? Besides the MPCA, what other public entities are involved in landfill oversight?
45. Minnesota Pollution Control Agency (MPCA) Licensing and Permitting Schedules <i>Requested by Senator Weber; related OLA program evaluations completed in 2011 and 2002</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To what extent has the MPCA issued licenses and permits in a timely way?
46. Oversight of Wildlife Management Areas <i>Requested by a citizen</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> How well has the DNR protected and managed the state's Wildlife Management Areas? To what extent has the DNR prioritized timber production in these areas, and have efforts to promote timber production violated the DNR's responsibilities to manage and protect these areas?
47. Trout Lakes and Streams <i>Requested by a citizen</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> How does the state designate trout lakes and streams, and what protections does this designation provide? What responsibilities do local governments have to protect designated trout lakes and streams within their jurisdictions? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> What authorities do state or federal agencies have to ensure local governments meet these responsibilities?
48. Water Appropriations Permit Program <i>Requested by legislative staff</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> How well does the Water Appropriations Permit Program ensure an "adequate supply to meet long-range seasonal requirements for domestic, agricultural, fish and wildlife, recreational, power, navigation, and quality control purposes"? Does DNR adequately ensure that all wells are permitted as required by law? To what extent does DNR monitor and enforce compliance with existing water use permits, and are there adequate consequences for not having or for violating a water use permit?

GOVERNMENT OPERATIONS

49. Gift Acceptance Policies <i>Requested by anonymous</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> What is the value of the gifts the state has received in recent years, and for what purposes were the funds used? To what extent have state agencies complied with state laws and policies regarding gifts from donors? To what extent has Minnesota Management and Budget provided adequate guidance to state agencies on how to manage gifts?
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Possible Evaluation Topics for 2023 (continued)

50. Governors' Use of Executive Orders <i>Requested by Senator Wesenberg</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To what extent have governors used executive orders and for what purposes? Should there be a limit on the duration or extent of executive orders?
51. Grant Award Processes <i>Requested by Senator Koran and another legislator</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> What processes do agencies use to select who (agency staff, community members, etc.) will review grant applications and determine grant recipients? What processes do state agencies use to identify and mitigate conflicts of interest in grantmaking and contracting processes? Who has participated in the grant application review process (state agency staff, local government representatives, community members, representatives of nonprofit or for-profit organizations, etc.)?
52. Grant Reporting Compliance <i>Requested by Senator Pratt; related OLA program evaluation completed in 2023</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Are grant recipients fully complying with state reporting and accountability requirements?
53. Grants to Nonprofit Organizations <i>Requested by Senator Limmer; related OLA program evaluation completed in 2023</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> What safeguards exist to ensure the proper use of grant funds? Should there be a vetting process, independent of the legislature or the administration, to review the quality and integrity and experience of organizations? Should there be a complete review of the proper, existing resources of a nonprofit organization before public money is deployed?
54. Identifying Fraud in State Grants <i>Requested by a legislator</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> What processes do state agencies have in place to identify possible fraud? What processes do state agencies have in place to share information about possible fraud with other agencies and organizations? How do these practices compare with requirements and best practices for informing the proper authorities?
55. Inter- and Intra-Agency Transfers <i>Requested by two legislators</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To what extent do agencies use service agreements with other agencies or within agencies? What is the value of these types of agreements? To what extent do they comply with reporting requirements in law?
56. IT Consolidation <i>Requested by Representative Nash and another legislator</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> How have the number of staff at MNIT changed since the agency's creation? How does the number of IT staff employed by the state currently compare to the number employed prior to consolidation? 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?
57. MNIT Software Licenses <i>Requested by Representative Nash</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> How many software licenses does MNIT contract for each year? What is the cost of these software licenses? For what purposes, and by which agencies, are these licenses used? To what extent does MNIT use a competitive bidding process to procure licenses, and how well does it comply with the state's procurement requirements?

Possible Evaluation Topics for 2023 (continued)

58. MNIT Use of Cloud Services <i>Requested by Representative Nash</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> What factors does MNIT consider when entering into contracts with large vendors? To what extent has MNIT taken a “cloud first” approach when entering into contracts? To what extent have MNIT’s recent contracting decisions impacted the competitiveness of future IT contracts for the state?
59. Office of Administrative Hearings <i>Requested by a citizen</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To what extent has the Office of Administrative Hearings managed the cases that come before it efficiently and consistently?
60. Office of the Attorney General Facilities <i>Requested by Representative Nash</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> How much does the Office of the Attorney General pay for rented facilities across Minnesota, and where are these facilities located? To what extent does the Office use these facilities, and for what purpose(s)?
61. Office of the Secretary of State Election Oversight <i>Requested by several legislators; related to OLA program evaluation completed in 2018</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To what extent are there adequate controls regarding the voting process, from voter authentication through final vote tabulation? To what extent have existing controls ensured the integrity of Minnesota’s elections? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> What controls are in place to remove voters who have moved or died, or who are ineligible to vote? To what extent have voters properly used residential addresses or alternatives only as allowed by law?
62. Office of the Secretary of State Safe at Home Program <i>Requested by a legislator</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To what extent has the Safe at Home Program operated within applicable requirements?
63. Office of the State Auditor Facilities <i>Requested by Representative Nash</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> How much does the Office of the State Auditor pay for rented facilities across Minnesota, and where are these facilities located? To what extent does the office use these facilities, and for what purpose(s)?
64. State Employee Group Insurance Program (SEGIP Plan Benefits) <i>Requested by Senator Elkins</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> How do benefits, cost, and administration compare between SEGIP plans and publicly available plans compliant with the Affordable Care Act (ACA)? How do consumption of health care services and health outcomes compare between members of SEGIP plans and members of publicly available ACA health plans? Would health care outcomes or premiums change if publicly available health plans were more similar to SEGIP?
65. State of Minnesota Human Resources, Wages, and Benefits <i>Requested by a citizen</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> What process does the state use to determine the benefit package for state employees? Who manages state employee benefits and what process do they use for ongoing management? How do state employee wages and benefits compare with similar jobs in the private or nonprofit sectors? To what extent is the state using fair, consistent, and effective hiring practices? To what extent has the state developed up-to-date and effective human resources policies?
66. State Work-from-Home Policy <i>Requested by Senator Draheim</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> How, if at all, has the Executive Branch’s work-from-home policy affected the services available to the general public?

Possible Evaluation Topics for 2023 (continued)

HEALTH

67. Board of Medical Practice <i>Requested by a legislator and a citizen</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To what extent has the Board of Medical Practice replied in a timely manner to questions and complaints? Has the board processed complaints effectively, efficiently, and consistently, and has the board been well managed?
68. Board of Nursing <i>Requested by citizens; related OLA program evaluation released in 2015</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To what extent has the board implemented necessary changes in response to OLA's 2015 evaluation? Has the board processed complaints effectively and efficiently, and has the board been well managed? To what extent has the board met its responsibilities regarding the open meeting law, the data practices act, and licensing? To what extent has the board replied in a timely manner to questions and complaints?
69. Green Burial Industry <i>Requested by a citizen</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To what extent are natural, or "green" burials regulated? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Who regulates them? What requirements exist for the handling, transport, or burial of bodies? Can for-profit cemeteries acquire land under <i>Minnesota Statutes</i> 306.05?
70. Health Risk Limits <i>Requested by Representative Hansen</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> How does the Minnesota Department of Health set Health Risk Limits for contaminants in drinking water?
71. Healthcare Fraud <i>Requested by a legislator</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To what extent is there fraud in healthcare spending?
72. Healthcare Ownership Structures <i>Requested by Representative Klevorn and Representative Liebling</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Who owns hospital and clinic buildings in Minnesota's nonprofit medical systems? How are leases for nonprofit medical system buildings structured? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> What costs do these systems pay for building space, and how were those costs determined? How, if at all, have nonprofit medical system leases affected costs of health care? To what extent do conflicts of interest exist with health practitioners within the nonprofit medical systems who own buildings leased to the system for which they work?
73. Healthcare Provider Consolidation in Minnesota <i>Requested by Representative Elkins and legislative staff</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To what extent have healthcare provider organizations and specialty practices in Minnesota consolidated in recent years? To what extent has consolidation: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> increased or decreased the prices paid for healthcare services by health plans and consumers? increased or decreased the availability of services to healthcare consumers? impacted public health programs?

Possible Evaluation Topics for 2023 (continued)

74. HMO Network Access <i>Requested by Senator Gruenhagen</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To what extent does HMO network access vary by provider or geographic location? To what extent, if at all, does HMO network access correlate with health care costs?
75. Hospital Infusible Drug Price Markups <i>Requested by Representative Elkins</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> How do the prices that hospitals charge for infusible drugs compare to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> drug industry reference prices, such as the Wholesale Acquisition Cost and the Average Wholesale Price? the prices charged by pharmacies? the discounted prices that hospitals pay for these drugs when they purchase them through Group Purchasing Organizations? average prices paid for these drugs as reported to the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services?
76. Impact of Cost Sharing Factors on the Consumption and Cost of Healthcare <i>Requested by Representative Elkins</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To what degree does increased cost sharing by health plan members enhance or degrade efficient and effective health care delivery? How, if at all, do Affordable Care Act-qualified health plan pricing structures influence health outcomes for plan members in each of the four tiers? To what extent does consumption of health care services by plan members differ across the four tiers? What are the average total annual costs paid by health plan members in each tier (premiums, copays, coinsurance)?
77. Impact of Hospitals on Medical Costs <i>Requested by Senator Gruenhagen</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> What share of medical costs are attributable to hospital administration? To what extent could services provided by hospitals be provided in other settings? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Do these other settings offer comparable care at a lower cost?
78. Insulin Safety Net Program <i>Requested in Minnesota Statutes 151.74, subd. 14 (2022) and by Representative Schomacker</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To what extent have insulin manufacturers reimbursed pharmacies for urgent-need insulin, determined eligibility in a timely manner and notified individuals, and provided pharmacies with insulin product as required by law? To what extent is the training program developed for navigators adequate and easily accessible?
79. MinnesotaCare <i>Requested by Senator Gruenhagen; related OLA program evaluation completed in 2003</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To what extent do state and county agencies accurately determine MinnesotaCare eligibility and set premium levels? What effect, if any, have MinnesotaCare reimbursement rates had on participants' access to hospitals, clinics, or providers?
80. Minnesota Department of Health (MDH) Nursing Home Surveyors <i>Requested by a legislator; related OLA program evaluation completed in 2005</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> How does MDH manage on-site inspections of nursing homes? To what extent has MDH penalized nursing homes in recent years? Are nursing home fines fair, and to what extent has the Legislature regulated them?
81. Minnesota Department of Health (MDH) Health Regulation Division <i>Requested by Representative Schomacker</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To what extent has this division inspected or otherwise examined state-regulated or federally regulated health care facilities on a regular basis? Has this division provided appropriate training and guidance to its employees? Is the division properly staffed?

Possible Evaluation Topics for 2023 (continued)

82. Oversight of Mortuary Science <i>Requested by a citizen</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Does the Mortuary Science Section within MDH conduct initial licensure inspections, corrective order inspections, and other compliance reviews and investigations in compliance with Minnesota law and MDH policy? Does the Mortuary Science Section's licensing program for funeral establishments, crematories, alkaline hydrolysis, morticians, and funeral directors comply with Minnesota law and MDH policy? Does the staff of the Mortuary Science Section comply with Minnesota laws and policies concerning the use of state property?
83. Positive Alternatives Program <i>Requested by legislative staff</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> For what activities has MDH used Positive Alternatives Program funding? To what extent have those activities aligned with the program's purpose as outlined in law, rules, or other applicable guidelines? How are program locations staffed, and what certifications or licenses do staff hold? To what extent do program locations provide unique services (e.g., services not provided at other organizations in the area?)
84. Saint Paul Mental Health Hospital and Clinic <i>Requested by a citizen</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> How did MDH determine the joint Fairview Health Services/Acadia Healthcare mental health hospital project was in the public interest? To what extent did MDH determine that the proposed clinic meets the need for mental health services? What gaps in need, if any, will remain after this entity is in full operation? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> To what extent has MDH determined how to fill those gaps?
85. Use of 340B Drug Program by Minnesota Clinics and Hospital Systems <i>Requested by Representative Elkins</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To what degree are health care providers purchasing drugs under the 340B program? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> To what extent are these drugs used for their intended purpose (to provide drugs inexpensively to indigent populations)? To what extent are Minnesota provider organizations profiting from marking up the price of drugs purchased under the 340B program? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Are health care provider practices under this program legal? What would be the revenue impact on Minnesota provider organizations, especially rural health care systems, if these providers were prevented from marking up the price of drugs purchased under the 340B programs?
86. Vault Health Contract and Billing <i>Requested by Senator Miller and Senator Utke; related OLA special review completed in 2021</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> How much has the state paid to Vault Health for COVID-19 testing? Through its contract with the Minnesota Department of Health, has Vault Health overbilled the state for COVID testing or received excessive payments?
87. Water Contaminants of Emerging Concern <i>Requested by Representative Hansen</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To what extent is the process used to identify chemicals for inclusion in the annual guidance development work plan reasonable and effective? To what extent does MDH's process for evaluating contaminants adhere to industry best practices or accepted standards? What have been the outcomes of special projects?

Possible Evaluation Topics for 2023 (continued)

HUMAN SERVICES

88. Certified Community Behavioral Health Clinic <i>Requested by citizens</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> How well has the Department of Human Services (DHS) managed this program? To what extent has the program achieved its intended results?
89. Child Care Assistance Program (CCAP) <i>Requested by Senator Drazkowski and Senator Lucero; related to OLA special review completed in 2019</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To what extent is there evidence of fraud in CCAP? Does CCAP have adequate internal controls to prevent fraud? What changes, if any, has DHS made in response to OLA's 2019 special review recommendations?
90. Childcare Revitalization Grants <i>Requested by a legislator</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> How efficiently and transparently has DHS awarded these grants? Have there been unnecessary delays in awarding these grants—and, if so, why? To what extent has DHS complied with grants management requirements when managing these grants?
91. County Mental Health Crisis Responders <i>Requested by Senator Klein</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> What is the geographic availability of county mental health crisis responders across the state? How often have these responders received calls, and to what extent did they meet requirements to respond when called? To what extent does state funding support county mental health responders?
92. Department of Human Services Behavioral Health Division (DHS-BHD) Grant Oversight <i>Requested by citizens; related OLA financial audit completed in 2021</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To what extent has DHS-BHD appropriately managed grants and contracts administered through the division? To what extent have mental health and substance use disorder programs administered by DHS-BHD achieved their purposes? What changes has the division made in response to OLA's 2021 findings regarding inadequate internal controls and noncompliance with state laws and policies related to grant oversight?
93. Department of Human Services Behavioral Health Division (DHS-BHD) Management <i>Requested by citizens</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To what extent has DHS-BHD effectively administered the programs for which it is responsible? To what extent have the division managers provided effective leadership to the division? To what extent has leadership promoted a healthy, productive organizational culture within the division?
94. Department of Human Services (DHS) Developmental Disabilities and Children's Mental Health Targeted Case Management <i>Requested by Representative Hicks</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> How does DHS monitor applications for case management services processed by counties? To what extent do counties apply eligibility criteria consistently when assessing applications for case management? To what extent does DHS provide clear direction about which services to provide and when? To what extent are these services billed to Medicaid?

Possible Evaluation Topics for 2023 (continued)

<p>95. Department of Human Services (DHS) Organization</p> <p><i>Requested by Senator Miller</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What functions housed within DHS are related to functions performed by other state agencies? • How do other states structure their administration of human services programs? • Are there alternative ways to structure the services and functions currently housed within DHS that would achieve greater efficiency and effectiveness?
<p>96. Department of Human Services (DHS) Oversight of Mobile Crisis Providers</p> <p><i>Requested by a citizen</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To what extent has DHS complied with requirements related to mobile crisis provider enrollment? • How effectively has DHS monitored the services provided by mobile crisis providers?
<p>97. Department of Human Services (DHS) Oversight of the Prepaid Medical Assistance Program (PMAP)</p> <p><i>Requested by Representative Fischer</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How does DHS monitor managed care organizations' compliance with PMAP requirements? • What consequences exist, if any, for noncompliance? • To what extent has DHS identified noncompliance, and what actions has it taken as a result?
<p>98. Department of Human Services (DHS) Support to Counties</p> <p><i>Requested by Representative Jacob and another legislator</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To what extent has DHS communicated effectively with county partners on licensing and procurements? • Can DHS collaborate more effectively with counties? • Are there efficiencies that could reduce redundancies?
<p>99. Foster Care</p> <p><i>Requested by a citizen</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How do child protection agencies evaluate the quality of foster care placements? • What steps do agencies take to ensure that children in foster care settings are not abused or victimized, and how effective are these steps?
<p>100. Medical Assistance and MinnesotaCare Eligibility</p> <p><i>Requested by Representative Backer, Representative Drazkowski, Representative Robbins, and another legislator; related OLA financial audits completed in 2018</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Has DHS re-verified eligibility for these programs since 2020? • To what extent are ineligible people receiving benefits? • How much fraud has occurred in these programs?
<p>101. Minnesota Sex Offender Program</p> <p><i>Requested by anonymous; related OLA program evaluation released in 2011</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To what extent has the treatment program successfully prepared its residents for reintegration into the community?
<p>102. Oversight of Child Protection Services</p> <p><i>Requested by a citizen</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To what extent does the state oversee child protection services? • How effective is the state in preventing maltreatment within the child protection system?
<p>103. Vulnerable Adult Maltreatment Investigations</p> <p><i>Requested by a citizen; related OLA program evaluation completed in 2018</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To what extent do state and county agencies collaborate to address maltreatment allegations?

Possible Evaluation Topics for 2023 (continued)

TRANSPORTATION

104. MetroMobility <i>Requested by legislative staff</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• To what extent does MetroMobility provide consistent, reliable, and efficient service as required by law?• How well does MetroMobility meet the demand for its services?• To what degree has the Metropolitan Council established an effective system to address customer complaints?• How cost-effective are MetroMobility services, and how do costs and service levels compare with alternative service delivery models in other states?
105. Metropolitan Council <i>Requested by Representative Hornstein; related OLA program evaluation completed in 2011</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• How is authority for governance, planning, management, operations, and funding of transit systems in the Twin Cities region distributed among state and local governments?• What actions has the Metropolitan Council taken to improve transit safety, and how have other transit operators addressed safety concerns?• How effectively does the Metropolitan Council operate the region's transit system?
106. Trunk Highway Fund <i>Requested by Senator Jasinski and legislative staff</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• How has the Minnesota Department of Transportation (MnDOT) used the money from this fund, and has the department used these funds appropriately?• Have these funds been used for purposes other than road and bridge projects?• How did MnDOT establish its \$1 billion per year funding gap estimate for the next 20 years?• What assumptions regarding new lanes and existing infrastructure does MnDOT use to establish estimates for needed funding?• Which of these does it prioritize in funding?

OTHER

107. Board of Animal Health Oversight of Companion Animals <i>Requested by a legislator</i>	<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?
108. Board of Cosmetology <i>Requested by Representative Nash</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• To what extent has the board used appropriated funds for their intended purpose?• How much money has the board transferred to MNIT's Information and Technology Account (also known as the Odyssey Fund) over time?

Possible Evaluation Topics for 2023 (continued)

109. Bond Proceeds and Cancellation Reports <i>Requested by Representative Lee</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Are all capital projects shown as required by statute in the bond proceeds report, regardless of fund or agency or accounting system? Could statutory language be used to clarify Minnesota Management and Budget's requirement to display all capital projects in a format that matches the titles and format of capital investment bills? Are the timelines around the Bond Proceeds and Cancellation Reports realistic for implementation of accurate reports? Are there areas of noncompliance with statutory requirements?
110. Broadband Infrastructure <i>Requested by Representative Hansen</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To what extent has the funding to develop broadband infrastructure been awarded competitively and through a transparent process? What has been the overall process for developing broadband across the state, and has it utilized the most current technology?
111. Data Practices Requests <i>Requested by a legislator</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To what extent have agencies complied with laws regarding data practices requests?
112. Department of Administration's Real Estate and Construction Services Division <i>Requested by anonymous</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To what extent has the division properly managed construction projects' schedule and costs? Has the division sufficiently scrutinized bidders, construction designs, and changes during construction to limit budget overruns and timeline delays?
113. Destination Medical Center (DMC) <i>Requested by former Senator Senjem</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Has the DMC initiative been executed in accordance with the statute that created it? Have local decisions regarding the receipt and use of DMC monies been made in accordance with the provisions of statute? Have the DMC administrative and operational processes involving the state, county, city, and DMC Board conformed with statute? What is the return on investment of the DMC?
114. Explore Minnesota <i>Requested by Representative Nash</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> How does Explore Minnesota promote Minnesota tourism? To what extent does Explore Minnesota promote tourism in a nonpartisan way?
115. Historical Markers <i>Requested by Representative Hansen</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> How many Minnesota historical markers (monuments) exist, and are there standards for where they are placed? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> How are they tracked and maintained? To what extent are they permanent markers (such as metal) vs. degradable markers (such as wood)? What would be the advantages and disadvantages to replacing degradable markers with permanent markers?
116. Minneapolis 2040 Plan <i>Requested by a citizen</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To what extent are the goals of the plan in-line with the current needs of the city? To what extent has work on the plan up to this point achieved these goals? How, if at all, does the city review and revise the plan as time passes?
117. Minnesota Board of Firefighter Training and Education <i>Requested by anonymous; related OLA financial audit expected Summer 2023</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Does the board provide adequate oversight of the state's firefighters? To what extent has the board complied with state laws and policies regarding the administration of grants, reimbursements, and/or professional or technical contracts?

Possible Evaluation Topics for 2023 (continued)

118. Minnesota Department of Veterans Affairs (MDVA) <i>Requested by anonymous</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To what extent has MDVA ensured the effective operation of Minnesota's state Veterans Homes and state Veterans Cemeteries? How well does the department serve Minnesota's veterans?
119. Minnesota Historical Society (MNHS) <i>Requested by Representative Nash</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To what extent has the MNHS charged "restart fees" following COVID-19 pandemic-related closures? For what purposes has MNHS used these fees?
120. Minnesota Historical Society (MNHS) Legacy Amendment Reporting <i>Requested by a citizen</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To what extent has MNHS provided accurate information about activities related to the Arts and Cultural Heritage Fund? How well has MNHS completed its administrative duties related to the Legacy Amendment? To what extent has MNHS complied with conflict of interest laws and requirements when performing its duties related to the Legacy Amendment?
121. Minnesota Housing Finance Agency (Minnesota Housing) Down Payment Assistance Program <i>Requested by Representative Nash and legislative staff</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> How does Minnesota Housing decide which projects to fund, and to what extent does it consider regional balance when selecting projects? Does Minnesota Housing have a limit on per-unit costs?
122. Minnesota Housing Finance Agency (Minnesota Housing) <i>Requested by Representative Robbins, Senator Anderson, and other legislators; related to OLA program evaluation completed in 2019 and program evaluation expected Spring 2023</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> How does Minnesota Housing manage grants for housing assistance projects and rental assistance? How much grant funding has Minnesota Housing dedicated to direct assistance? To what extent have Minnesota Housing programs experienced fraud?
123. Minnesota Housing Finance Agency (Minnesota Housing) Rehabilitation Loan Program <i>Requested by a citizen</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To what extent did Minnesota Housing monitor lenders' compliance with program requirements? How did Minnesota Housing ensure that improvements were appropriate for the properties that received rehabilitation loans?
124. Minnesota Housing Finance Agency (Minnesota Housing) Infrastructure Bonds <i>Requested by a legislator</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To what extent have the projects Minnesota Housing has funded with Housing Infrastructure Bonds complied with eligibility requirements? To what extent is information about Housing Infrastructure Bond-funded projects publicly available? To what extent should it be publicly available and easily accessible?
125. Minnesota Sports Facilities Authority (MSFA) <i>Requested by Representative Lee</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> For what purposes does the MSFA use its public funding? To what extent do those uses align with the applicable laws, rules, or policies? What parameters, if any, could the Legislature apply to MSFA's use of public funding? What outcomes, if any has MSFA demonstrated?
126. Minnesota State Arts Board Funding Equity <i>Requested by a citizen; related OLA program evaluation completed in 2015</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> What portion of Minnesota State Arts Board grants have gone to arts or cultural organizations based in Minnesota communities of color? To what extent are the board's criteria for awarding grants inclusive of non-western art forms and arts or cultural organizations based in Minnesota communities of color?

Possible Evaluation Topics for 2023 (continued)

<p>127. Minnesota State High School League</p> <p><i>Requested by a citizen; related OLA program evaluation completed in 2017</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To what extent has the league appropriately applied laws and policies related to student transfer eligibility decisions? • To what extent does the League consider outside input—such as recommendations from medical professionals—in these decisions? • Do appeals processes provide adequate recourse for individuals affected by league decisions?
<p>128. Office of the Attorney General: County Attorney Assistance</p> <p><i>Requested by Senator Pratt</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Over the past decade, how often have county attorneys requested help from the Office of the Attorney General? • Of these requests, how many has the Attorney General fully granted, partially granted, and denied?
<p>129. Oversight of Minnesota Veterans Homes</p> <p><i>Requested by Senator Anderson and Senator Lang</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To what extent have veterans in Minnesota Veterans Homes received proper and necessary care? • How well does MDVA oversee Veterans Homes? • To what extent have MDVA leaders ensured a safe and healthy workplace for Veterans Homes administrators and staff?
<p>130. Public Sector Wages</p> <p><i>Requested by Representative Hemmingsen-Jaeger</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How do public sector wages compare between state agencies and other public sector employees in hard-to-hire job classes? • How do similar positions differ in pay between various public sectors (state vs. local) and public vs private sector employees? • Do pay gaps differ across job roles (IT, administration, etc.)?
<p>131. Sibley Historic Site</p> <p><i>Requested by citizens; related OLA special review completed in 2019</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To what extent did the MNHS acquisition of the Sibley Historic Site and related assets comply with applicable law? • To what extent did this acquisition comply with recommendations and stated wishes of the donor? • To what extent has information provided to the public about the Sibley Historic Site been accurate? • To what extent has MNHS provided adequate oversight and care to the site?
<p>132. Tax Compliance</p> <p><i>Requested by Representative Gomez; related OLA program evaluation completed in 2006</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Does the Department of Revenue have an effective program to identify and audit taxpayers who may have underpaid their taxes? • Does the Department of Revenue have effective education and assistance services to help taxpayers understand and meet their tax obligations? • How successful is the Department of Revenue in collecting delinquent tax payments?