



THE ECONOMY & EFFICIENCY REPORT

2017-18

The Little Hoover Commission's Biennial Review
of California State Government Operations

LITTLE HOOVER COMMISSION

*Dedicated to Promoting Economy and
Efficiency in California State Government*

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THE ECONOMY & EFFICIENCY REPORT

Letter from the Chair



I am pleased to present the Milton Marks “Little Hoover” Commission’s biennial Economy and Efficiency Report for 2017-18. Founded in 1962, the Commission is charged with assisting the Governor and Legislature in promoting economy, efficiency, and improved services in state government.

The Commission is uniquely positioned to fill this vital role. We are a bipartisan body—no more than 7 of the 13 members can be from the same political party—with a unique composition—nine citizen members, two Senators, and two Assembly members—that provides a broad spectrum of views, knowledge and skills. In conducting studies, the Commission consults with experts, knowledgeable professionals and stakeholders in private industry, government and academia; holds formal hearings; conducts informal advisory meetings; makes site visits; and uses various research methods.

Over the past two years, the Commission has issued nine reports. Among its recommendations, the Commission encouraged state leaders to develop robust policies, and state government infrastructure, for the development and use of artificial intelligence; called for an end to the disastrous cycles of wildfires and tree deaths and proposed profound cultural changes in the way forests are managed; pressed for much needed reform and improvements to Denti-Cal, a vital Medi-Cal program that provides dental services to low-income adults and children; urged increased statewide and local bond oversight; and suggested greater self-sufficiency in the state’s veterans homes program and less reliance on the General Fund to free up resources to serve more California veterans, particularly those incapable of caring for their own health.

The Commission saw many of its recommendations considered and enacted into law. Those achievements were due in large part to the hard work and dedication of our talented staff.

Sadly, though, we said farewell to two beloved colleagues during this period. Matthew Gagnon was a research analyst who was instrumental in ensuring that Commission studies were thoughtful, thorough and accurate. Executive Director Carole D’Elia was a profoundly gifted leader, writer and editor who had keen insight and commitment to the Commission’s mission. She devoted countless hours to making sure the Commission’s work was of the highest quality. They are both greatly missed and remain true inspirations to us all.

We take great pride in assisting state government leaders and lawmakers in their efforts to improve and enhance California. Therefore, on behalf of the Commission, I invite you to take this opportunity to review this report and learn more about our efforts and accomplishments. I trust you will agree that the Commission has contributed meaningfully to building a more efficient, effective and organized state government.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'P. Nava', written in a cursive style.

Pedro Nava
Chair, Little Hoover Commission

ABOUT THE COMMISSION

The Milton Marks “Little Hoover Commission” on California State Government Organization and Economy has served as an independent voice for government reform, advising the Governor and Legislature for more than 56 years.

Purpose & Responsibilities

The Commission has broad, independent authority to evaluate the state’s services, activities and functions, along with the policies and methods for appropriating and administering funds. The Commission also has the legal responsibility to review and make recommendations on reorganization plans initiated by the Governor.

Unlike fiscal or performance audits, which focus on compliance, the Commission’s studies explore how state governmental entities can and should function. Commission reports and recommendations are developed through extensive research and interviews of experts and knowledgeable professionals, academics and stakeholders. In conducting its work, the Commission focuses on how state government can:

- Improve outcomes.
- Increase transparency.
- Reduce spending without sacrificing services.
- Eliminate redundant services.
- Consolidate services or abolish, create and reorganize departments or programs to better meet the needs of Californians.

The Commission has issued hundreds of recommendations on such topics as:



Education



Health & Human Services



Energy, Environment & Resources



Infrastructure



General Government



Public Safety

Governor’s Reorganization Plans

The Commission is responsible for reviewing all gubernatorial reorganization plans, which may be used to consolidate, transfer or abolish programs and agencies, or to create new agencies. The Governor has the authority to examine the organization of executive branch agencies and execute changes to promote better government services through a Governor’s Reorganization Plan. The Governor must submit any reorganization plan to the Commission at least 30 days prior to submitting the plan to the Legislature. The Commission assesses the plan based on its broad mandate to assist lawmakers in promoting economy, efficiency and improved service in the transaction of the public business. Based on its assessment, the Commission develops recommendations as to whether or not it believes the reorganization plan should go into effect and occasionally offers recommendations to strengthen the plan. It offers its conclusions and recommendations in a report to the Governor and the Legislature within 30 days of the plan being submitted to the Legislature.

History of the Commission

The Commission’s name and function derive from the federal Commission on Organization of the Executive Branch of the Government, which operated between 1947-1949 under the Truman Administration and again between 1953-1955 under the Eisenhower Administration. Former president Herbert Hoover chaired this commission, resulting in the nickname “Hoover Commission.” The members were appointed by the President and Congress to create bipartisan solutions to increase the efficiency of the administration structures in the executive branch.

To replicate the success of the “Hoover Commission,” California State Senator Milton Marks in 1961 proposed an organization dedicated to promoting economy, efficiency and improved service in California’s governing structure. The organization later was renamed the Milton Marks Little Hoover Commission on California State Government Organization and Economy to pay homage to both the original Hoover Commission and Senator Marks.

A RECAP OF COMMISSION WORK IN 2017-2018



Borrowed Money: Opportunities for Stronger Bond Oversight

(Report #236, February 2017)

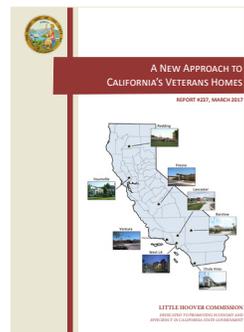
Urges better and more consistent oversight of California's more than \$1.5 trillion in bond debt to pay for schools, roads and other public works projects. Proposes a framework for oversight of all state bonds, in addition to better access to information on all statewide bond spending online. Also finds that local bond oversight groups often lack of financial expertise and limited authority. Recommends the dissemination of training materials to bond oversight committees, stronger oversight by county treasurers before bonds are renewed, and overhauling the Strict Accountability in Local School Construction Bonds Act of 2000.



A New Approach to California's Veterans Homes

(Report #237, March 2017)

Calls for policymakers to evaluate the effectiveness of California's veteran homes program. Finds that the veterans program makes up 80 percent of the California Department of Veterans Affairs' (CalVet) budget, but fewer than one percent of the state's 1.7 million veterans benefit from it. Also finds declining demand for independent living programs, but increasing need for skilled nursing and memory care services. Recommends systematic evaluation of the veterans home program and a bold strategy to more equitably distribute limited resources to more of the state's veterans. Recommends that CalVet should evaluate best use by prioritizing need. Also recommends that CalVet should gradually eliminate domiciliary programs to focus on skilled nursing care and use savings to develop additional home- and community-based veteran's services.



Improving State Permitting for Local Climate Change Adaption Projects

(Report #238, June 2017)

Urges reducing unnecessary delays in state permitting of local government projects designed to improve California's resiliency against climate change. Finds that state permitting is necessary to protect California's environmental resources, but excessive bureaucracy in agencies means that climate adaptation permitting can take many months or years to complete. Delays are often due to inadequate staffing levels, lack of permitting training, and applicants submitting incomplete permits. Recommends establishing agency round tables so permitting agencies can communicate with clients to identify potential obstacles and streamline the permitting processes; requiring state permitting agencies to develop detailed guides for expectations and requirements for permit applications; and, establishing a formal dispute resolution process.





Special Districts: Improving Oversight and Transparency

(Report #239, March 2017)

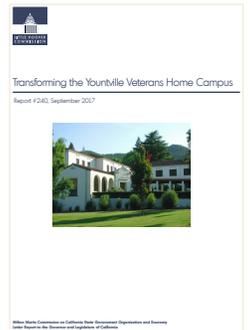
Calls for improved oversight of special districts by removing unnecessary barriers to dissolution, improving transparency, and standardizing fiscal reporting. Special districts provide vital services ranging from fire protection to water and cemeteries to sewers, and are on the frontline of climate adaption planning in their communities. Finds that the agencies charged with oversight are not uniformly effective and basic information on all special districts is not readily available. Recommends lawmakers eliminate unnecessary obstacles for special district dissolutions and consolidations to improve services; improve transparency by requiring every district to have a website with basic information; and, standardizing current reporting requirements on revenues, expenditures and reserves.



Transforming Yountville Veterans Home Campus

(Report #240, September 2017)

Urges lawmakers to immediately address the inadequate infrastructure issues at the Yountville Veterans Home that undermine the dignity and care for the veterans housed there, while also developing a long-term plan to modernize and creatively use the expansive Yountville campus. Recommends that California establish an independent organization to transform the Yountville campus through innovative design and creative, long-term financing agreements that could generate revenue for other veterans services statewide



Letter to Governor Brown and Legislature: Denti-Cal Program Still Broken

(Report #241, November 2017)

Urges the Department of Health Care Services (DHCS) to do more to prioritize access to critical dental services and preventative oral care for communities throughout the state. Finds the Denti-Cal program fell short in making strides toward the legislature's 60 percent utilization target meant to increase the number of eligible children who use their benefits to make annual visits. Recommends DHCS do more to provide data collection and reporting information necessary to evaluate progress toward the legislature's utilization goal and to explain overall program performance and administrative improvements.



Fire on the Mountain: Rethinking Forest Management in the Sierra Nevada

(Report #242, February 2018)

Urges California to stop reactively responding to devastating fires, disease and insect infestation, and to shift to long-term forest restoration and management. Recommends the state's fire policy incorporate prescribed fire as a tool to create and maintain healthy forests. Also recommends greater collaboration among state, federal and local agencies, private industry, conservationist organizations and local stakeholders. Recommends California bolster demand for its own wood products and develop a long-term bioenergy plan with measures to mitigate any negative impacts from the path the state chooses. Finally, recommends regular reporting on the Forest Carbon Plan to hold the state accountable to its forest management goals.





Letter to Governor Brown and Legislature on Denti-Cal Update

(Report #243, September 2018)

Continues calls for improved access and administration of Denti-Cal. Finds that data from the Department of Health Care Services (DHCS) continue to show a decrease in provider enrollment. Limited access to providers can result in delayed treatment, or at worst, the development of preventable childhood tooth decay. Recommends better education about dental health and how to access oral health care through Denti-Cal. Also recommends consistent and sustainable Denti-Cal funding, enhanced communications from DHCS to Denti-Cal providers, and improved reporting of Denti-Cal program data.



Letter to Governor Brown and Legislature on Voter Participation in New Motor Voter Program

(Report #244, October 2018)

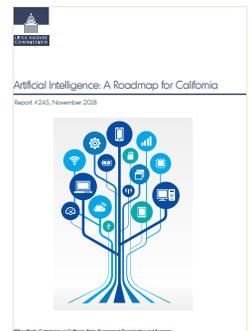
Calls for independent audit of the new Motor Voter Program. Finds more than 1.4 million eligible voters opt out of registering to vote or fail to complete their registration through the program administered by the Department of Motor Vehicles. Recommends the Secretary of State engage in activities to learn why so many eligible Californians opt out of registering to vote and also measure the effectiveness and cost efficiency of existing outreach efforts to eligible voters.



Artificial Intelligence: A Roadmap for California

(Report #245, November 2018)

Urges policymakers to act swiftly to create an artificial intelligence (AI) framework that promotes the ethical development and use AI for economic, social and environmental good. Finds that AI technology and applications have nearly limitless potential to improve substantively lives, jobs, businesses, health care, government services, education and more. Yet California, the 5th largest economy in the world, lacks an infrastructure, plan or measures to take advantage of the opportunities – and minimize the risks – associated with AI. Recommends the Governor and Legislature adopt artificial intelligence policies and establish state government infrastructure necessary to harness the power of AI for the public good.



Commissioners, staff and advisory committee members discuss the viability of forest bioenergy as a forest management tool (August 2017).

STUDY PROCESS

The Commission relies on a comprehensive study process to gather information and consider ways to promote economy, efficiency and improved service in state government. The Commission's open process creates an opportunity for the public to participate in the policy discourse.



Study topics are generated by the public, legislators, Commission staff and the Commission's own areas of interest and concerns. Over the course of a year, the Commission typically selects three to five matters to research in depth and may return to review the status of findings and recommendations made in previous studies. The Commission also selects Commissioners to serve on the study subcommittee. The subcommittee works closely with staff during the study process.



Under the direction of the study subcommittee, staff conducts research by such methods as collecting data, reviewing news articles and other relevant documents, and interviewing experts, knowledgeable professionals and stakeholders. Commissioners and staff may also conduct site visits.



The Commission holds formal public hearings, where subject matter experts and other stakeholders testify and answer questions before the Commission. The study subcommittee usually conducts meetings with knowledgeable and interested members of the public, whether from private industry, state or local governments, or other stakeholders. These meetings are referred to as advisory committee meetings and allow for a more informal question-and-answer process.

Working With the Commission

The Little Hoover Commission welcomes the opportunity to work with the Governor, legislators and staff and is available to:

- **LISTEN & RESEARCH:** Consider letters from the Governor, members of the Legislature and others requesting future Commission study topics.
- **ADVISE:** Brief policymakers and staff on issues researched by the Commission and discuss policy or organizational options, past or potential reforms and ideas for legislation.
- **SUPPORT:** Offer official support for legislation that implements our recommendations, including writing support letters or providing testimony at legislative hearings.

The Commission also maintains an online library of written testimony from participants of its public hearings - a valuable resource for policy analysts seeking various viewpoints of an issue from a historical perspective. All of the Commission's reports are available for download on our website at www.lhc.ca.gov.



The Little Hoover Commission and Legislative Analyst’s Office hold a joint legislative briefing on the findings from recent forest management studies (April 2018).

4  **Evaluate & Analyze**

Throughout the study process, evaluation and analysis of the gathered facts is done. Once the study has been fully explored, a draft report with findings and recommendations is prepared.

5  **Review & Adopt**

A draft report is presented to the Commission for review, consideration and adoption. Commissioners may adopt the draft report or determine that amendments or changes are necessary. After a draft report is adopted by the Commission, the final report is made public and sent to the Governor and Legislature for review and consideration.

6  **Outreach**

To encourage and support the implementation of its recommendations, the Commission and staff engage in outreach activities, including:

- Meetings and presentations with executive and legislative branch officials and staff. Meetings may also be held with departments and stakeholders.
- Supporting bills that are based on or influenced by Commission reports and recommendations. The Commission’s chairman and executive staff testify at legislative hearings and work with legislative staff and interest groups to advance bills. The Commission does not oppose bills that are contrary to its recommendations.
- Commissioners may revisit study topics to monitor progress made and consider whether additional review and recommendations are necessary.



Chairman Pedro Nava talks with Mark Keppler, host of The Maddy Report, about how California must move away from a culture of fire suppression and build healthy, resilient forests by using fire as a tool (May 2017).

IMPROVEMENTS & TOP OPPORTUNITIES FOR REFORM

During each legislative session, the Commission actively supports bills that would implement its recommendations in whole or in part. Some of these bills are highlighted below, along with additional opportunities for lawmakers to strengthen California's ability to respond to its changing economic, health, environmental and educational needs.



Business, Professions and Economic Development

Expand economic opportunities. The high cost of education is one barrier to Californians seeking jobs. Requirements to practice certain occupations and professions are another. Some people who have worked in a job in another state or while serving in the armed forces discover that they are unable to meet licensing requirements in California without taking additional classes, gaining additional work experience, or taking often-costly exams. Californians of modest means are often the hardest hit.

One step the state has taken to ease the barrier to entry into occupations is to help Californians with criminal convictions ascertain whether it would make sense to spend the time and money working to enter a particular profession: AB 2138 (Chiu, Chapter 995, Statutes of 2018) authorized licensing boards to post on their website a summary of the criteria used to consider whether a crime is considered substantially related to the qualifications, functions or duties of the business or profession it regulates.

More remains to be done, however. In particular, to help the most vulnerable Californians enter licensed occupations, the state should dramatically expand the availability of apprenticeship opportunities in which people can earn money while gaining hands-on work experience (Report #234).

Create a one-stop shop for businesses in California, including a master business application. Most business owners who run afoul of the law in California do so accidentally. To cut down on these mistakes that take state resources away from actual lawbreakers and inconvenience business owners, the state should create a one-stop shop where entrepreneurs can find all of the information they need to start and run a business in California, as well as a master business application that can send the appropriate information to all of the relevant regulatory and tax agencies. The Governor's Office of Business and Economic Development has made progress through its California Business Portal, but there still is no master business application (Reports #229, #226, #66).



Veterans Affairs

Redefine the role of California's veterans homes. As recommended by the Commission, lawmakers enacted AB 1365 (Reyes, Chapter 509, Statutes of 2017), to require CalVet to submit and post online financial reports of veterans homes to the Legislature as well as regularly review the use of each veteran's home to determine how best to use it in the future.

Still, more is needed to boldly transform the Yountville Veterans Home Campus. California has an once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to transform the historic 615-acre campus in the heart of Napa Valley in a way that honors the history of the campus while simultaneously expanding the state's ability to serve more veterans and meet regional needs. To do so, the state must establish an independent entity to plan, design, and manage the use of the property beyond the current veterans home program (Report #240).



Governance and Finance

Establish a consistent accountability framework for statewide and local bonds. In the past decade, California has seen expanded auditing and improved transparency in some, though not all, departments responsible for administering programs funded with bond proceeds. The state should ensure consistent accountability across all departments and at all levels of government. Local bond accountability also is imperative due to the sheer size of the local debt and the fact that local oversight lags behind the experience and improvements taking place at the state level (Reports #236, #201, #197).

Routinely review major regulations. The state should create a look-back mechanism to determine whether regulations are still needed and whether they work. It should establish an entity to revisit existing major regulations in the event of a fundamental change in conditions. The development of transformative technology, a substantial change in economic conditions, demonstration that a regulation is not having its intended effect, or the emergence of superseding regulations at the federal level may all warrant such a review (Report #209).

Improve oversight and transparency of special districts. Based on a Commission recommendation, lawmakers enacted SB 929 (McGuire, Chapter 408, Statutes of 2018) to require all special districts to maintain a website, to allow the public to understand the services available to them.

Still, the state can further expand transparency by requiring every special district website to include basic, standardized information, such as a description of services provided, governance structure of the district, compensation details, and pertinent financial information including revenues, expenditures and reserves (Report #239).



Governmental Organization

Improve customer service. Too many Californians distrust state government's ability to work on their behalf and get things done. Government must operate better, faster, and more conveniently for customers accustomed to instant online service in the rest of their lives and who live in a state that is home to the Silicon Valley. California government, too, can become a global model for public sector technology and efficiency in delivering services. This should begin with implementing customer-centric strategies across agencies and departments and creating digital teams to modernize government services (Report #229).



Health and Human Services

Establish a long-term care strategy. As an increasing number of Californians reach retirement age and beyond, the state must improve care for low-income, frail seniors, veterans and disabled Californians in their homes and communities, avoiding, to the extent possible, the need for nursing home care. California must streamline and consolidate state level roles and responsibilities and create a seamless continuum of long-term care services (Reports #237 and #205).

Strengthen oversight of dental and mental health programs. The Commission consistently has found a lack of transparency in the Department of Health Care Services' (DHCS) administration of dental and mental health programs. Some progress has been made with SB 688 (Moorlach, Chapter 403, Statutes of 2018) to make it easier for the public to understand how counties use Mental Health Services Act (MHSA) funds, as recommended by the Commission.

But more must be done to improve the administration of programs within the DHCS. The DHCS must dramatically increase efficiencies to ensure that all beneficiaries receive adequate health care (Reports #243, #230, #222). It also is critical the DHCS and other state entities to effectively oversee mental health spending and ensure the \$2 billion in annual revenues from the MHSA are spent as intended (Reports #233, #225).



Public Safety

Incentivize public-private partnerships for wraparound post-release services. Californians returning from jail or prison need a number of services, such as job assistance, housing, and medical, dental, and mental health care to help reduce recidivism. California should incentivize counties to expand public-private partnerships with qualified organizations to provide services for offenders re-entering the community from jail or prison incarceration on mandatory post-release community supervision or on supervised probation (Reports #219, #207, #177 #172).



Natural Resources and Water

Fund and conduct collaborative landscape-scale forest management. California's 2018 fire season is another reminder of the importance of funding landscape-scale collaborative forest management. Governor Brown took a critical step by forming the Forest Management Task Force in 2018, and lawmakers also have enacted important legislation: AB 1956 (Limon, Chapter 632, Statutes of 2018) created a local grant program dedicated to multiyear fire prevention activities and landscape adaptation to withstand fires of increasing frequency, intensity, and scope. Additionally, SB 1260 (Jackson, Chapter 624, Statutes of 2018) created and streamlined opportunities to conduct prescribed burns and to educate the public about them, and enhanced air quality and smoke monitoring.

More investment in forest management remains to be done, however, and quickly. While landscape-scale collaboration and action will require significant funding up front, in the long run preventative treatments should take the place of many of the emergency response costs. Policymakers also must consider how to spread the costs of forest management among all of those who benefit from healthy forests (Report #242).

Consolidate water governance. The state's water management and planning structure, in place since 1969, is obsolete. It leaves California ill-prepared to address unpredictable precipitation and balance water demands of agriculture, a rising population and the environment. The state should remove the State Water Project from the Department of Water Resources (DWR) and state government control. It also should convert the DWR into a broader-scale Department of Water Management that retains all functions of DWR and also oversees water rights (Report #201).



Commissioners and staff visit Blodgett Forest Research Station, operated within the El Dorado National Forest by the University of California, Berkeley (April 2017).

MEET OUR TEAM

Commissioners



Chairman Pedro Nava

(D–Santa Barbara)

Reelected to fourth consecutive term as chair in March 2018. Government relations advisor. Former State Assemblymember from 2004 to 2010. Former civil litigator, deputy district attorney and member of the California Coastal Commission. Appointed by Assembly Speaker Emeritus John Pérez in April 2013.



Vice Chairman Sean Varner

(R–Riverside)

Reelected to a second consecutive term as vice chair in March 2018. Managing partner at Varner & Brandt LLP where he practices as a transactional attorney focusing on mergers and acquisitions, finance, real estate and general counsel work. Appointed by Governor Edmund G. Brown Jr. in April 2016.



David Beier

(D–San Francisco)

Managing director of Bay City Capital. Former senior officer of Genentech and Amgen. Former counsel to the U.S. House of Representatives Committee on the Judiciary. Appointed by Governor Edmund G. Brown Jr. in June 2014.



Iveta Brigis

(D–Los Gatos)

Open Sourcing People Operations Program lead at Google Inc. since 2014, and looks after re:Work, Google's initiative to open source data-driven HR practices. Appointed by Governor Edmund G. Brown Jr. in April 2017.



Cynthia Buiza

(DTS–Los Angeles)

Executive director of the California Immigrant Policy Center. Former policy director for the American Civil Liberties Union, San Diego and policy and advocacy director at the Coalition for Humane Immigrant Rights of Los Angeles. Appointed by Assembly Speaker Anthony Rendon in October 2018.



Bill Emmerson

(NPP–Redlands)

Former senior vice president of state relations and advocacy at the California Hospital Association, State Senator from 2010 to 2013, State Assemblymember from 2004 to 2010 and orthodontist. Appointed by Governor Edmund G. Brown Jr. in December 2018.



Assemblymember Chad Mayes

(R–Yucca Valley)

Elected in November 2014 to represent the 42nd Assembly District. Former member of the Yucca Valley Town Council and mayor. Appointed by former Speaker of the Assembly Toni Atkins in September 2015.



Assemblymember Bill Quirk

(D–Hayward)

Elected in November 2012 to represent the 20th Assembly District. Former climate change scientist at NASA and physicist at the Lawrence Livermore National Lab. Appointed by Speaker of the Assembly Anthony Rendon in 2017.



Senator Richard Roth

(D–Riverside)

Elected in November 2012 to represent the 31st Senate District. Former labor and employment attorney and major general in the U.S. Air Force Judge Advocate General's Corps. Appointed by the Senate Rules Committee in February 2013.



Cathy Schwamberger

(NPP–Calistoga)

Associate general counsel for State Farm Mutual Automobile Insurance Company. Former board member of the Civil Justice Association of California and the Capital Political Action Committee. Appointed in April 2018 by the Senate Rules Committee.



Janna Sidley

(D–Los Angeles)

General counsel at the Port of Los Angeles. Former deputy city attorney at the Los Angeles City Attorney's Office, vice president of communications at Pallotta Teamworks, and an assistant United States attorney of the criminal and civil division at the United States Attorney's Office. Appointed by Governor Edmund G. Brown Jr. in April 2016.

Former Commissioners Who Served in 2017-18

Scott Barnett

(R–San Diego)

February 2016 - June 2017

Senator Anthony Cannella

(R–Ceres)

January 2014 - December 2018

Jack Flanigan

(R–Granite Bay)

April 2012 - April 2017

Josh Lafarga

(NPP–Wilmington)

June 2017 - April 2018

Don Perata

(D–Orinda)

February 2014 - January 2019

Assemblymember Sebastian Ridley-Thomas

(D–Los Angeles)

January 2015 - August 2017

Jonathan Shapiro

(D–Beverly Hills)

April 2010 - March 2017

Helen Torres

(NPP–San Bernardino)

April 2016 - April 2018

Staff

Commission staff arrange meetings, conduct research, draft reports, advocate for recommendations and provide full-time representation for the Commission. Staff members are available by phone at (916) 445-2125 or by email at:

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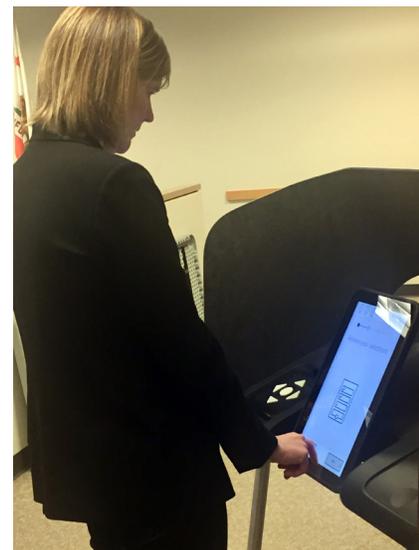
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Little Hoover Chair Pedro Nava testifies before a joint oversight committee on the future of California's Veterans' Homes (January 2018).



Commissioners test new voting equipment in Los Angeles County (September 2017).

IN REMEMBRANCE



Matthew Gagnon

The Commission laments the loss of Matthew Gagnon, who passed away in April 2017. Matt joined the Commission in August 2015 as a research analyst. Around the office, Matt was known for his cheerful attitude and witty sense of humor. He was particularly passionate about Denti-Cal and how California could offer preventative dental care services for low-income children and adults. Matt is fondly remembered and missed by his colleagues at the Commission.

Carole D’Elia

The Commission also mourns the loss of Executive Director Carole D’Elia, who passed away in December 2017. Carole began her career with the Commission in 2001 and was appointed the executive director in 2013. During her tenure, the Commission tackled some of the most complicated and important issues facing state government, including pensions, corrections, water quality, healthcare and long-term care, infrastructure and spending. Her work on “Solving California’s Corrections Crisis: Time is Running Out” was so well respected it was cited in a 2011 U.S. Supreme Court decision, *Brown v. Plata*, which held that California’s overcrowded prison system violated prisoners’ Eighth Amendment rights. Her leadership and handling of “Juvenile Justice Reform: Realigning Responsibilities” contributed significantly to the state’s efforts to reform both its youth and adult corrections systems after years of neglect.

Beyond her role as a public servant, Carole dedicated countless hours volunteering locally, serving on Sacramento County’s Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention Commissions, working with Family Promise, which assists homeless families, and coordinating Get on the Bus, a program that provides bus trips for children to visit their incarcerated mothers.

Carole has left a remarkable legacy of heartfelt and dedicated public service. She will always be remembered and deeply missed.



“Democracy itself is a process of change, and satisfaction and complacency are enemies of good government.”

Governor Edmund G. “Pat” Brown,
addressing the inaugural meeting of the Little Hoover Commission,
April 24, 1962, Sacramento, California