



# MEMORANDUM

Prepared for: JWM – General Government  
Date: April 29, 2021  
By: Misty Mason Freeman, LPRO Director  
Re: LPRO Budget Presentation

**LPRO: LEGISLATIVE POLICY AND RESEARCH OFFICE**

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On April 21<sup>st</sup>, in my role as Director of the Legislative Policy and Research Office (LPRO), I came before the Joint Subcommittee on General Government with a presentation on our agency's 2021-23 biennium budget. During the presentation, Co-Chair Greg Smith asked about the differences between LPRO's research work and the work undertaken by staff at the State Library of Oregon (SLO). After meeting with members of the SLO team, I can better articulate that while LPRO provides research and analysis to answer questions for legislators, SLO staff manage the library's resources and support all state employees in the legislative and executive branches with tools to use in completing research projects. At this time, it appears the nature and scope of each office's work is complementary, but our focus and expertise are quite different. Please see additional details below describing our complementary work.

The specific questions posed by Co-Chair Smith at the April 21<sup>st</sup> hearing were:

1. How do you differentiate work led by LPRO staff from SLO staff?
2. Any thoughts about moving SLO research staff to LPRO?

## **1. How do you differentiate work led by LPRO staff from SLO staff?**

### State Library of Oregon

The State Library of Oregon (SLO) staff provide state employees from the legislative and executive branches with tools to engage in the research process. The library maintains an online catalog of digital collections, including digitalized versions of state agency publications and access to federal government publications.

Approximately 100 databases are organized by subject and format, providing state employees, including LPRO and other legislative staff, access to research journals, eBooks, data and statistics. When state employees need help getting started on a research project, SLO staff assist with finding resources within the library or even acquire a needed resource if not currently in the library's collection. SLO staff also offer training on how to access databases, periodicals, and case law, and they provide information on publicly available databases maintained by state agencies.

With respect to research, highly trained and specialized staff within the SLO offer electronic tools and maintain online resources LPRO staff use to engage in comparative and subject-specific policy research analysis. Through the SLO, LPRO staff and other legislative staff can access data and statistics with the assistance of reference librarians who can aid with identifying places to search, including:

- Library databases (not limited to SLO's own databases),

- Government agencies,
- Non-governmental organizations, and
- International government and non-governmental organizations.

### Policy Research in LPRO

LPRO staff engage directly in policy research during legislative sessions and during the interim, often to answer a specific legislator’s question or to support the work of task forces and work groups with understanding policy problems and developing legislative concepts. LPRO staff use online databases and resources available through the SLO to gather and process information which we use to engage in document research, conduct literature reviews, study statistical sources, and present data.

Unique to LPRO research for the legislative branch, our staff:

- Review peer-reviewed literature, national trends, and state data to evaluate public policy;
- Plan, conduct, and lead research on policy issues;
- Analyze and verify data, and use data to develop reports and provide policy options;
- Study and analyze tables, graphs, charts, and statistical data to inform research requests; and,
- Work with state agencies to ensure that accurate and timely information is communicated to members.

### Comparison of SLO and LPRO Work

The closest parallels between SLO and LPRO work are that both offices do the following:

- Legislative and legal research, conducting and summarizing legislative history on a bill, and
- Browsing databases and digital collections to gather information from sources such as government publications and articles to inform responses to research requests from legislators.

SLO staff gather, and LPRO staff synthesize or analyze the information gathered, for example, articles compiled for a literature review or identified legislation in other states. SLO staff provide reference materials and help the researcher find the tools they need; LPRO staff provide research, analysis, and synthesis and complete the final product.

## **2. Any thoughts about moving SLO staff to LPRO?**

As an office, LPRO staff rely on SLO staff to assist us in gathering information to inform the research requests we receive from the legislature. SLO staff provide resources and training on the use of resources not only to LPRO, but to more than 40,000 state employees in the legislative and executive branches. We benefit from having SLO staff who bring expertise as reference librarians assigned to LPRO. Their

knowledge of the library resources and ability to find relevant sources, including data, complement the work LPRO does to analyze and synthesize multiple sources to provide a final product to the legislature.

It does not seem beneficial to combine the staffing and services of SLO and LPRO at this time, particularly because the nature and scope of our work appear to diverge in important ways. However, I am deeply grateful for the prompt to further explore how LPRO can work more closely with SLO in the future, taking full advantage of the significant opportunities library staff offer to enhance our work.