



LEGISLATIVE
BUDGET & FINANCE
COMMITTEE
EST. 1959

The LBFC Performance Report

Spring-Summer 2023 / Issue 8

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The End of An Era

After 38 years, on January 31, 2023, former LBFC Executive Director, Patricia Berger, retired (with all 38 years at the LBFC). Over her career, Patricia served as Counsel, Senior Counsel/Project Manager, and Executive Director. During her tenure as Executive Director, the National Legislative Program Evaluation Society (NLPES) awarded the LBFC consecutive Certificates of Impact, recognizing the LBFC's work as having resulted in documented public policy changes, program improvements, dollar savings, or other public impacts.

For her retirement, Pat was presented with citations from the House, Senate, and LBFC officers recognizing her remarkable career.

The staff of LBFC will miss Pat - particularly her professionalism, love of trivia, and fierce advocacy of the LBFC. We wish her the best in her well-deserved retirement!

The End of An Era II

On February 28, 2023, LBFC Counsel Rick Jones also retired. Fun fact: Not only were Pat and Rick coworkers, but they were law school classmates at Dickinson Law and share the same birth date and year! Rick also had a long career with LBFC, joining the office in 1997. Rick retired after 35 years of commonwealth service. The staff of LBFC will miss Rick's guidance! We wish him the best in his retirement!

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Find us on 

New Executive Director Appointed



Chris Latta was appointed LBFC Executive Director, effective February 1, 2023. Chris started with the LBFC in 2015. In 2018, he became Deputy Executive Director. Before joining

the LBFC, Chris worked for the Governor's Office of Administration, the state Senate, and in private lobbying roles. Chris is a graduate of Westminster College (BA) and Penn State University (MBA). He is also the proud dad of 4 children and husband to Brenda.

When asked what his main goal is in his new role, Chris stated:

"My goal is to build on the foundation set by my predecessor by growing the agency so we can expand the ways we provide data-driven analysis and oversight of state agencies to the General Assembly."

Thus far, Chris has held individual and management meetings with LBFC staff on various topics to continue improving office operations. Chris has also participated in many legislative meetings, including introducing the LBFC's work to new House and Senate members.

LBFC Officers Named

On April 12, 2023, the LBFC met to vote on new officers. The following officers were unanimously approved:



Other Staff News

The following staff promotions were announced:

Stephen Fickes	Deputy Executive Director
Jason Brehouse	Chief Counsel & Project Manager
Anne Witkonis	Project Manager
Lauren Bordner	Office Manager/ Comptroller
Stevi Sprenkle	Analyst III

Congratulations to all!

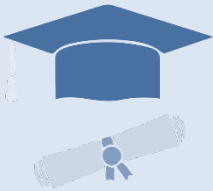
Released Report News

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



Prescription Drug Pricing Under the Medical Assistance Managed Care Program (January 2023), LBFC staff provided an overview of the distribution of and payment for pharmaceuticals in the medical assistance managed care program. The report made three recommendations regarding Maximum Allowable Cost (MAC) reimbursement, contract transparency, and pharmacy acquisition costs.

A Study Pursuant to House Resolution 68: Rural Dental Health (January 2023), LBFC staff studied the availability of dental health services in rural Pennsylvania. The study found new dentists are not practicing in rural areas, and cost is a significant barrier to dental services. The study recommended strengthening student loan forgiveness programs to incentivize dental providers to practice in rural areas, and mobile dentistry and teledentistry could help to expand access to basic dental services for rural Pennsylvania.



Report on the Establishment of the Northern Pennsylvania Regional College: Conducted Pursuant to Act 2014-126 and Act 2016-86

(December 2022), LBFC documented the progress of the Northern Pennsylvania Regional College (NPRC). This report recommended that the General Assembly consider directing LBFC to conduct a study of NPRC in five years to determine whether the college had met its plan goals and become an accredited college.

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

Other Report News

House Resolution 2022-174 was unanimously adopted by the LBFC officers on April 12, 2023. HR 174 is a study of the cost of implementing a safety plan for staffing State Correctional Institutions on Level 3 and Level 4 housing units. Our report is expected to be released later this year.

On April 25, 2023, the **Senate Agriculture and Rural Affairs Committee** held a public hearing on the future of the Over Order Premium on Class I milk in Pennsylvania. At this meeting, the LBFC's 2019 report titled **A Study of Pennsylvania's Dairy Industry** was referenced by the Chairman of the Pennsylvania Milk Marketing Board (PMMB). The 2019 LBFC report recommended licensing milk retailers to capture more detail about milk sales in Pennsylvania and improving the transparency and distribution of the PMMB's Over Order Premium.

Audit Corner: What Are Generally Accepted Government Auditing Standards?

The United States Government Accountability Office (GAO) publishes generally accepted government auditing standards, known informally as the "Yellow Book" (note: the name comes from the original edition, which was issued with a yellow cover that made it stand out as a reference document). The "Yellow Book" frames how performance audits are planned and conducted, and the LBFC uses these concepts when guiding and planning our work. In this newsletter edition and future editions, we'll discuss some key concepts covered in the "Yellow Book."

Ethical Principles



Public Interest. The collective well-being of the community of people and entities that the auditors/analysts serve. This responsibility is critical when auditing in the governmental environment.



Integrity. Includes auditors/analysts performing their work with an attitude that is objective, fact-based, nonpartisan, and nonideological regarding audited entities and users of the reports.



Objectivity. Includes independence of mind and appearance when conducting engagements, maintaining an attitude of impartiality, having intellectual honesty, and being free of conflicts of interest.



Proper Use of Government Information, Resources, and Positions. Accountability to the public for the proper use and prudent management of government resources is an essential part of auditor/analysts' responsibilities.



Professional Behavior. Complying with all relevant legal, regulatory, and professional obligations, and avoiding any conduct that could bring discredit to auditor/analysts' work.

Staff News

Welcome Baby Rhett!

On March 11, 2023, the LBFC grew by two tiny feet. Lauren, and her husband, Adam, welcomed a baby boy. Rhett William was born at a whopping 10 lbs.

Congratulations to mom, dad, big brothers, and sister!



Staff March Madness

Amy, Matt, Shanika, Steve, and Stevi participated in an LBFC staff March Madness pool. What a wild March Madness it was. The pool winner was Amy, with 69.8 percent correct picks. In honor of Amy's win, the other pool participants donated to Amy's choice of charity: Speranza Animal Rescue.

NLPES Judge

Stevi participated as one of three judges for the 2023 NLPES's Certificates of Impact in May. Stevi enjoyed the opportunity to review the critical work conducted by similar agencies in other states and the District of Columbia.

Staff Training

Analysts had the opportunity to participate in two post-pandemic professional conferences. Analysts attended *Data Analytics Summit* at Harrisburg University and the *2023 Pennsylvania Data User Conference* at Penn State Harrisburg.

LBFC STAFF

CHRISTOPHER LATTA, MBA
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

STEPHEN FICKES, MPA
DEPUTY EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

LAUREN BORDNER,
OFFICE
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MATTHEW THOMAS,
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TOMEKA JENRETTE,
RECEPTIONIST