Senate Local Government Committee Information

Role of the committees of reference. The Senate Local Government Committee is a committee of reference. Under the Colorado Constitution, every bill that is referred to the committee must be considered upon its merits and acted on within appropriate deadlines. The committee may also amend a bill provided that an amendment does not change the original purpose of the bill or expand its subject. After a bill has been considered on its merits, the committee may vote to postpone the bill indefinitely, refer the bill to another committee of reference, or favorably recommend the bill to the Committee of the Whole, also called second reading.

Confirmations. The Senate Local Government Committee also considers the Governor's appointments to boards, commissions, authorities, and the cabinet. Confirmations are favorably or unfavorably recommended to the Senate, upon a majority vote of the committee of reference. Confirmation hearings are listed in the Senate calendar. Public comment on the appointments is allowed at the committee hearing if approved by a majority of the committee members present at the meeting.

Departmental oversight responsibilities. The Joint Rules of the House and Senate require committees to stay advised of the activities, functions, problems, new developments, and budgets of the principal agencies within the executive and judicial branches and other instrumentalities of state government. The Senate Local Government Committee oversees the Department of Local Affairs.

Committee meetings times and locations. The Senate Local Government Committee is scheduled to meet in Senate Committee Room 353 on Tuesday afternoons at 1:30 p.m. (or 2:00 p.m. if a caucus lunch is held), and Thursday mornings upon adjournment. If the need arises, the committee may meet on Friday afternoons and before the Senate convenes in the morning. Occasionally, the committee will meet in a different committee room, such as Senate Committee Room 356 or the Old Supreme Court Chamber, to accommodate a larger audience. Changes to meeting times or locations are typically announced on the Senate floor prior to adjournment and listed in the Senate calendar. For those instances where a committee room change is made after the calendar is published, the committee staff will attempt to send out an e-mail notification to interested persons. The interested persons sign-up link is on the Senate Local Government Committee's web page at *www.colorado.gov/lcs/SenateLocalGovtCmte.*

Internet broadcast of committee meeting. Meetings are broadcast over the internet. To access the live feed, go to the General Assembly's main page at http://leg.state.co.us . At the top of the page is a link to audio broadcasts of current proceedings. Select *Senate Committee Room 353* or another meeting room as indicated in the Senate calendar.

Committee staff. Each committee is assigned a nonpartisan staff member from the Office of Legislative Council. Erin Vanderberg is the staff for the Senate Local Government Committee. She can be reach at (303) 866-4146 or erin.vanderberg@state.co.us. Services provided by staff to the committee and the public include:

- preparing committee meeting summaries;
- explaining legislative policies and procedures;
- maintaining records of committee activities; and
- responding to questions concerning scheduled meetings and recent committee activity.

Due to the large number of persons who are interested in each bill, staff is unable to contact each person prior to calendaring a bill or changing a calendar. Persons interested in when a bill will be heard in committee should review the Senate calendar that is posted on the General Assembly's website at www.leg.state.co.us. Interested persons may also contact staff by phone or e-mail for information about when a bill may be heard or they may use the interested persons sign-up link on the Senate Local Government Committee's web page at www.colorado.gov/lcs/SenateLocalGovtCmte to receive updates on last minute changes to the committee's calendar.

Testifying on a bill. Public testimony is typically taken on each bill. Person who are interested in testifying on a bill must complete the witness testimony sheet that is attached to a clip board located on or near the witness table. The sign-up sheet becomes part of the official record of the meeting. The chair determines the order of witness testimony on a bill, typically after consulting with the bill sponsor. When providing testimony, witnesses should be brief and limit their remarks to the bill that is before the committee. Witness are also encouraged to provide written testimony that will be entered into the record and distributed to committee members. Persons with written testimony should bring enough copies for each committee member and one for the record. To balance committee workload and the opportunity for public comment, chairs often request that witnesses not read prepared testimony and encourage witnesses to concisely summarize their thoughts on a bill. They also request that witnesses not repeat points made in prior testimony. Committee chairs request that witnesses and committee members be recognized before speaking. This recognition maintains order and identifies speakers for listeners of the taped record of the meeting and the internet broadcast. Chairs typically suspend this practice when it becomes cumbersome. Occasionally, testimony will be taken on one day and final action will be taken at a later date. If testimony will not be allowed, the calendar will typically list a bill as "for action only."

Committee summaries. Staff prepares a brief summary of each meeting that includes a summary of testimony, sign-up sheets, amendments offered in committee, votes, and information distributed during the meeting. Committee summaries also show the time when motions and discussions occurred to help guide persons who listen to meeting recordings. Summaries are posted on the General Assembly's website and a copy is available for review at the Legislative Council Staff office. The public may also listen to meeting recordings at the Legislative Council Library in Capitol basement or State Archives which is located at 1313 Sherman Street in Denver.