

House Republican Press Release

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Rep. Wasserman Reappointed To Chair Program Review and Investigations Committee



State Representative Julia B. Wasserman, R-106th District, has been re-appointed Chairman of the General Assembly's Program Review and Investigations Committee. She is the only member of the Republican Minority in the state House of Representatives who will serve as a committee chair during the 2007-2008 legislative sessions.

Rep. Wasserman also was re-appointed to serve on Legislature's Appropriations Committee and Public Health Committee.

"Julia Wasserman has been a member of the Program Review and Investigations committee for many years and maintains an excellent understanding the inner workings of state government," said House Republican Leader Lawrence Cafero, R-Norwalk. "Under her leadership, it has been one of the General Assembly's most important committees. In recent years, its investigative reports have led to legislation that has improved the efficiency of many state agencies."

"The Program Review and Investigations Committee conducts itself in a non-partisan manner and that is a key element to our efforts to make state government more effective and responsive," said Rep. Wasserman. "Because it serves as a watchdog committee, balanced input from members of both political parties is needed to ensure our oversight remains unbiased."

Most General Assembly committees' chairmen and the majority of their members are drawn from the legislature's majority party. The Program Review and Investigations Committee has one Republican and one Democrat Chairman and its membership is evenly divided between the two major parties. The chairmanship alternates between the two parties every two years. Representative Wasserman's Senate Co-Chair is Edward Meyer, D-12th District.

The committee also differs from other legislative committees in that its duties and powers are spelled out in state statutes rather than defined in the legislative rules adopted by the General Assembly at the outset of each two-year term.

The committee is charged with the duty of examining "...state government programs and their administration to ascertain whether such programs are effective, continue to serve their intended purposes, are conducted in an efficient and effective manner, or require modification or elimination."

The committee serves as a "watchdog" over state government and can be called upon by the full General Assembly to conduct independent investigations. It also conducts ongoing "sunset reviews" to determine whether particular state agencies, boards or commissions are still needed or should be modified to better serve the state.

The Appropriations Committee is responsible for developing the state budget.

"I very much look forward to another two years as a member of the Appropriations Committee," Rep. Wasserman said. "During the next several months, the Legislature must craft a budget for the following two years. Because deficits of almost \$800 million are projected between those two years, there is no question that we have to keep spending under control."