

**Agency:** 099 **Comm on Salaries Elected Officials**  
**Decision Package Code/Title:** A4 **Meet Legal&Public Info Requirements**  
**Budget Period:** 2015-17  
**Budget Level:** PL - Performance Level

**Recommendation Summary Text:**

The Washington Citizens Commission on Salaries for Elected Officials is open to new law suits such as in 1997 and 1999, because the Commission is unable to meet the requirements of RCW 43.03.300. Inadequate staffing, an outdated website, insufficient funding to accomplish the research and analysis required for developing an effective salary proposal, and insufficient funding to gather public input have put the Commission in an untenable, uncertain position. Moreover, the office has been closed and moved to a remote status (the home of the part-time Executive Director).The agency is currently seeking space to fit within its minimal budget of \$7,500. The agency budget is not large. The minimal increases necessary would bring our two year appropriation to just \$397,700.

**Fiscal Detail**

<b>Operating Expenditures</b>	<b><u>FY 2016</u></b>	<b><u>FY 2017</u></b>	<b><u>Total</u></b>
001-1 General Fund - Basic Account-State	42,300	39,400	81,700
<b>Total Cost</b>	<b>42,300</b>	<b>39,400</b>	<b>81,700</b>
<b>Staffing</b>	<b><u>FY 2016</u></b>	<b><u>FY 2017</u></b>	<b><u>Annual Average</u></b>
FTEs	.5	.0	.3

**Package Description:**

This package requests additional funding for continued staffing of the part-time staff assistant . This would provide continuity of support staffing for legal and public information throughout the biennium and help recruit, retain staff and avoid retraining every two years. Related support costs for website maintenance, training, and travel are also requested.

In order to fulfill this requirement, the Salaries Commission must rely on staff research that has several components . Most critical among these are gathering information on the details of the duties of each office for which we set the salaries as well as on salaries of comparable positions in other states. We are also required to hold public hearings throughout the state to take public testimony on the salary schedule being proposed by the Commission. (RCW 43.03.310)

In his August 19, 2015, memo regarding supplemental budget submittals, David Schumacher, Director of OFM, requires us to limit our requests to needs "which meet the state's highest priority needs for the most efficient, high-quality services to the public ...."

The same memo requires that proposals must be "consistent with Governor Inslee's priority goal areas under Results Washington." Goal 5 of that document is: "Efficient, effective & accountable government." Because of a number of years of budget cuts we are unable to meet any of these requirements. The complexity of the work has increased as the funds available for accomplishing that work have decreased dramatically.

We are unable to be accountable to the public because the state changed supporting the technology used for our website, and we do not have funds to upgrade to the program currently being used by the state. Now the public cannot gain access to information about the salary setting process and results. This directly violates the intent of the "Transparency and Accountability" component of Goal 5.

We are further limited in our ability to be responsive to the public because we do not have the staff resources to do so. Our budget no longer provides funds for sufficient staff to accomplish the work to be done, nor does the budget allow for staff training and continuity. It does not even cover the cost of a small office with records storage space, requiring that our sole, part-time staff person work from her home.

The limitations on funding for even minimal required staffing can result in the Commission not having sufficient information on which to base its salary proposal. This leaves us in jeopardy of being unable to meet our constitutional mandate (Article XXVIII, Section 1). It also leaves us open to new lawsuits such as those filed in 1997 and 1999 charging that inadequate staffing created operational instability and lack of public access.

## **Narrative Justification and Impact Statement**

### ***What specific performance outcomes does the agency expect?***

We are unable to meet the requirements of our work. RCW 43.03.300 requires that salaries of elected state officials are to be based on "realistic standards in order that such officials may be paid according to the duties of their offices ...."

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Because of a number of years of budget cuts (see below) we are unable to meet any of these requirements. The complexity of the work has increased as the funds available for accomplishing that work have decreased.

### Citizens' Commission on Salaries for Elected Officials

#### Recent Budget History

Biennium	Appropriation	Dollar Change
2008-2009	381,000	

2010-2011	361,000	-20,000
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2012-2013	327,000	-34,000
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2014-2015	308,000	-19,000
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2016-2017	316,000	+8,000
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(8,000 increase in 2016-2017 was to cover mandatory increase in central service costs.)

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### **Performance Measure Detail**

**Activity: A001      Salary Setting for Elected Officials**

**Incremental Changes**

No measures submitted for package

#### ***Is this decision package essential to implement a strategy identified in the agency's strategic plan?***

The work of the Commission is mandated in the Constitutional Amendment which created it; this decision package is essential to the Commission's ability to do its work which includes training of Commissioners; staff work in data collection, analyses, reports, studies and presentations; gathering input from elected officials; and providing accurate and current information to the general public, assuring they have the opportunity to provide input.

#### ***Does this DP provide essential support to one or more of the Governor's Results Washington priorities?***

This package addresses the Governor's requirements for public access to information, transparency in government operations, and efficient, effective and accountable government. Further it addresses the need for continuity of operations and increasing the public's access to state government.

#### ***What are the other important connections or impacts related to this proposal?***

Without an increase in funding for this biennium and in the future, the Commission cannot be in compliance with the statute which created it.

#### ***What alternatives were explored by the agency, and why was this alternative chosen?***

The Commission budget, which is already extraordinarily small, has been cut by \$73,000 over the past three biennia, completely crippling our ability to fulfill our mandated mission.

#### ***What are the consequences of adopting or not adopting this package?***

If the package is not adopted, the public will not have access to full information on the activities and proposals of the Commission; Commissioners and staff will have to provide personal funds to complete the Commissions required work; and the agency will fail to meet the Governor's priorities.

#### ***What is the relationship, if any, to the state's capital budget?***

None

#### ***What changes would be required to existing statutes, rules, or contracts, in order to implement the change?***

None

#### ***Expenditure and revenue calculations and assumptions***

Budget Deficiency:

Personnel (maintain a .5 FTE Executive Assistant year-around) -- \$35,900 per year in the first fiscal year, \$30,000 in the second fiscal year.

Website maintenance: \$2,400 per year.

Travel for Staff -- \$3,000/\$4,000 per year (even and odd years)

Note: Essential to reimburse staff for Commission meeting related travel around the state and for proactive engagement of the public in the work of the Commission.

Travel for 10th Congressional District Commissioner: \$2,000 odd year only

Note: When the 10th Congressional District was added, a 17th Commissioner was added, but funding for this person's travel was not funded.

Mandatory Training of Staff: \$1,000 per year.

Item	2016	2017 and carry forward
Personnel	\$35,900	\$30,000
Website	\$2,400	\$2,400
Travel	\$3,000	\$4,000 (odd year)
10th Congressional District		\$2,000 (odd year)
Training	\$1,000	\$1,000
Total Budget Request:	42,300	39,400

***Which costs and functions are one-time? Which are ongoing? What are the budget impacts in future biennia?***

On-going.

<b><u>Object Detail</u></b>	<b><u>FY 2016</u></b>	<b><u>FY 2017</u></b>	<b><u>Total</u></b>
A Salaries And Wages	27,000	23,000	50,000
B Employee Benefits	8,900	7,000	15,900
E Goods\Other Services	3,400	3,400	6,800
G Travel	3,000	6,000	9,000
<b>Total Objects</b>	<b>42,300</b>	<b>39,400</b>	<b>81,700</b>