**COUNCIL AGENDA ITEM DETAIL SHEET**

**ISSUE:** Should the Council staff have delegated authority to represent the Council’s interests during Legislative processes as long as the positions comply with the Council’s mission and values, the State Plan, and a legislative platform?

**SUMMARY:**  Due in part to our committee structure, as well as the complexities of the legislative process, the SCDD is often unable to respond in the moment to rapidly changing legislative realities.

**BACKGROUND/ISSUES/ANALYSIS:** The legislature is a fluid place. Bill introductions, amendments, and hearings can happen quickly. However, it can sometimes take weeks for the SCDD to review and adopt a position on legislation. By that time, important events and actions regarding the bill may have already occurred.

One possible solution would be to allow the SCDD staff to take formal positions on legislation on behalf of the Council, as long as those positions were consistent with SCDD philosophy in general, the State Plan, and the approved SCDD legislative platform. Staff would act after getting approval from the Council Chair. The LPPC Chair may also be included in this approval.

**DISCUSSION**: The Legislative and Public Policy Committee (LPPC) is the committee charged by SCDD bylaws with the detail work regarding the SCDD legislative agenda. It is the place where legislative proposals, policy issues, and related topics are carefully examined for their perceived strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats. The meetings are open to the public, as well as to other Council members. Currently, the committee is comprised of eight members, four of which are members of the community.

The LPPC has expressed a desire for the Council to be more relevant and credible at the Capitol. LPPC has also expressed the desire for Council staff to be involved in Legislative deliberations as they occur and represent a Council position. Allowing Council legislative staff to move forward on pending legislation as long as certain criteria are met would be helpful in improving the Council’s response time. This model is similar to the methods used by other state Councils. In addition, direct linkage to agreed upon objectives would help preclude the possibility of staff taking a stance not endorsed by the Council. It should also be noted that a position taken on a bill can always be changed. Lastly, should a particularly complex bill come up for consideration, the Council would retain the option of seeing the bill before staff communicates a position.

By adopting this streamlined approach, permission would be given to staff in return for a more nimble and proactive legislative effort. Authority for positions would be retained by the Council and the Executive Director would be responsible for the positions communicated.

**RECOMMENDATION: None.**

**DRAFT MOTION:**

* Delegate authority to staff to represent the Council’s interests and communicate positions during Legislative processes as long as the positions comply with the Council’s mission and values, the State Plan, and/or a legislative platform.
* Staff will get Council Chair and/or LPPC Committee Chair approval before conveying a Council position.
* The Executive Director shall update the Council on positions taken.
* The Legislative Platform should be reviewed annually.

**COUNCIL STRATEGIC PLAN OBJECTIVE:** Support all 15State Plan goals.

**ATTACHMENTS**: None.

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