

Testimony Before the CA Performance Review Commission

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The Department of Personnel Administration (DPA) and the non-adjudication aspects of the State Personnel Board (SPB) should be combined into a single agency. There are several reasons to support this proposition including:

1. There is an overlap of responsibility of the SPB and DPA. For example, in order for a line department to make a change to an existing job classification or establish a new classification, they first have to obtain the approval from DPA staff and then subsequently SPB staff. Neither the margin for error or consequences of an error requires such a high degree of oversight. Not only does it delay getting anything accomplished, it increases the cost of getting anything accomplished. These overlaps and duplications exist through out the personnel management system.
2. There is an inherent conflict in the roles of the SPB and DPA that need to be harmonized in one single agency. DPA is responsible for bargaining with employee organizations. Some of these agreements are perceived as conflicting with the merit system by the SPB. This has led to the SPB suing DPA and employee unions to prevent the bargaining agreements from being implemented. Having the functions combined should facilitate a more harmonious balance of merit and labor relations issues.
3. Neither the SPB nor DPA has adequate staffing to carry out their responsibilities. This lack of staffing results in delays in the personnel system including delays in implementing staff reductions that need to be accomplished on a real time basis. Lack of resources also results in neither agency fulfilling their oversight role of functions delegated to departments by the SPB and DPA. Combining the agencies would eliminate duplications and free up staff resources to allow the combined agencies to meet their legal mandates and improve the personnel management system.

The consolidation can occur and be consistent with the State constitution by limiting the role of the 5 member State Personnel Board to an adjudication role of merit issues and combine the SPB merit administrative function with the current DPA into a new Personnel Management Department.