



Report on the Fiscal 2020
State Operating Budget (HB 100)
And the State Capital Budget (HB 101)
And Related Recommendations

By the Chairmen of the
Senate Budget and Taxation Committee and
House Appropriations Committee

Joint Chairmen's Report
Annapolis, Maryland
2019 Session

C81C
Office of the Attorney General

Committee Narrative

OFFICE OF THE ATTORNEY GENERAL

C81C00.01 Legal Counsel and Advice

Public Information Act Transparency and Reporting: The committees are interested in ensuring that the State’s Public Information Act (PIA) increases government transparency through a robust review and disclosure process. The committees also understand that agencies must have sufficient resources and sufficient procedures to respond to reasonable and legal information requests from the public and press. To that end, the committees would like additional information on the volume of requests being made under PIA. The committees request that the PIA ombudsman and the PIA compliance board in the Office of the Attorney General (OAG) work with the Executive Branch cabinet-level agencies to prepare a report that provides the following data by agency for the period from July 1, 2018, to September 30, 2019:

- the number of PIA requests;
- the disposition of requests;
- the average response time;
- the number of fee waivers requested and the number granted; and
- the number of mediation requests and the number of mediations conducted.

In addition, the PIA ombudsman and PIA compliance board should include in the report an analysis of the utility and feasibility of State cabinet-level Executive Branch agencies publishing periodic self-evaluations of their PIA performance as well as the utility and feasibility of other PIA compliance/monitoring and extrajudicial enforcement processes, such as those employed by federal agencies pursuant to the Freedom of Information Act. This report should also include discussion of the current training, processes, and procedures, including, but not limited to, record retention and record management practices and technologies used by cabinet-level Executive Branch agencies to handle the PIA requests. The final report of the PIA ombudsman and the PIA compliance board shall be published and submitted to the committees by December 31, 2019. The PIA ombudsman and PIA compliance board shall set such interim deadlines as may be necessary to publish their final report.

| Information Request | Author | Due Date |
|--------------------------------|---------------|-------------------|
| PIA transparency and reporting | OAG | December 31, 2019 |