



# Presentation and Workshop Oversight of Public Safety

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Levin Center for Oversight and Democracy



# Levin Center for Oversight and Democracy



U.S. Sen. Carl Levin



Pennsylvania Oversight Committee

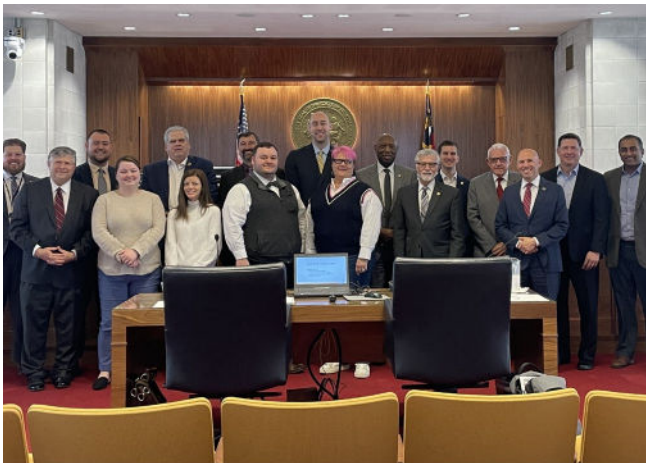


Wayne State Law School



DC Council Oversight Workshop

- Workshops for Congress, state, international legislatures
- Videos, testimony, webinars, social media
- Research & Reports (50-state analysis, contract oversight, more)
- Conferences, panels & events
- State Oversight Academy
- More: [Benjamin.Eikey@wayne.edu](mailto:Benjamin.Eikey@wayne.edu)



North Carolina General Assembly Oversight Workshop

# Agenda

- What is Legislative Oversight?
- State Oversight Academy Wiki, 50 State Study
- Oversight Topics, Phases of an Investigation
- Recommended Best Practices
- Crafting an Oversight Plan
- Oversight Scenario

# What is Legislative Oversight?

## The “eyes and voice” of the people

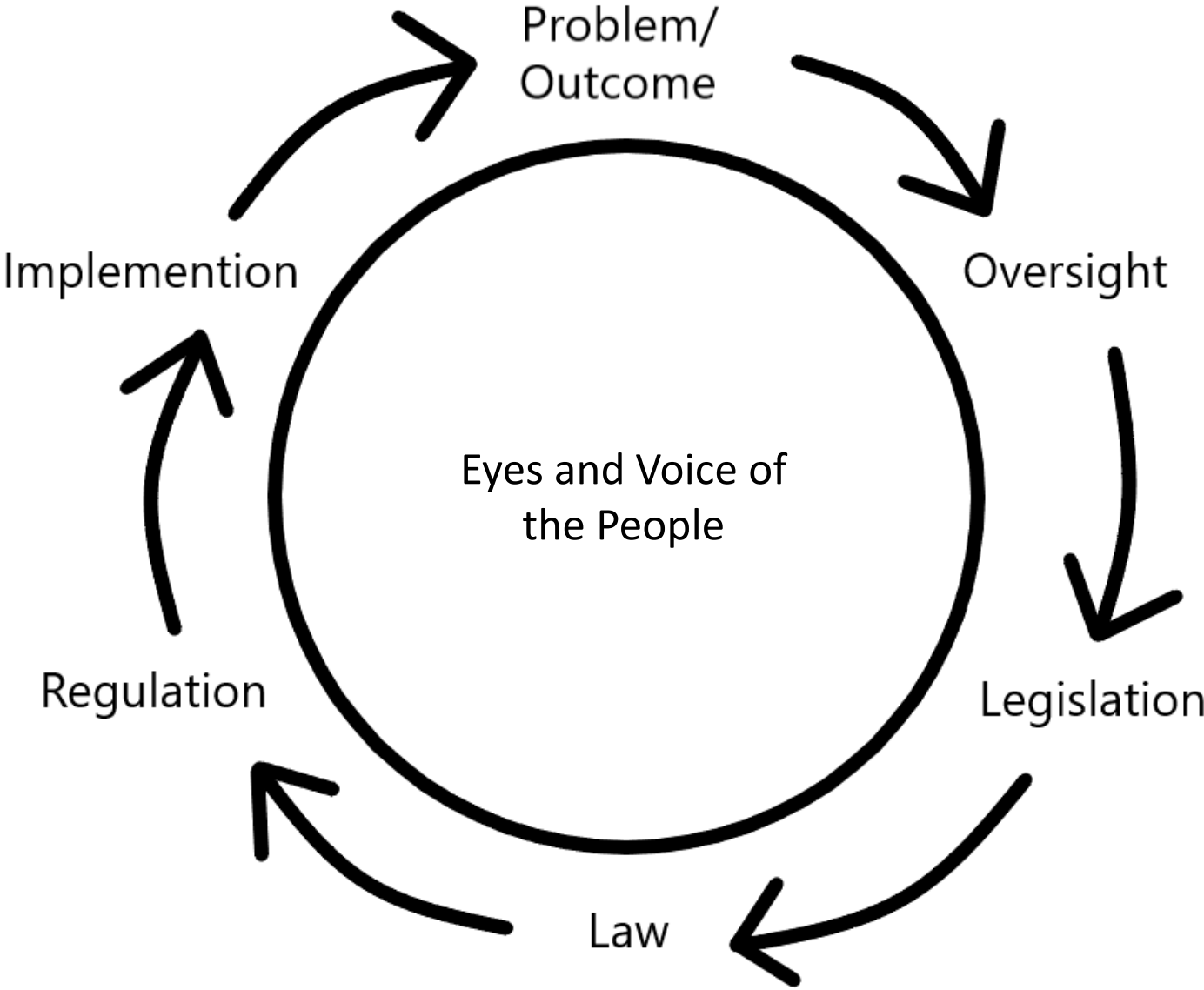
“It is the proper duty of a representative body to look diligently into every affair of government and to talk much about what it sees. It is meant to be the eyes and the voice, and to embody the wisdom and will of its constituents.”

-- United States Supreme Court<sup>1</sup>

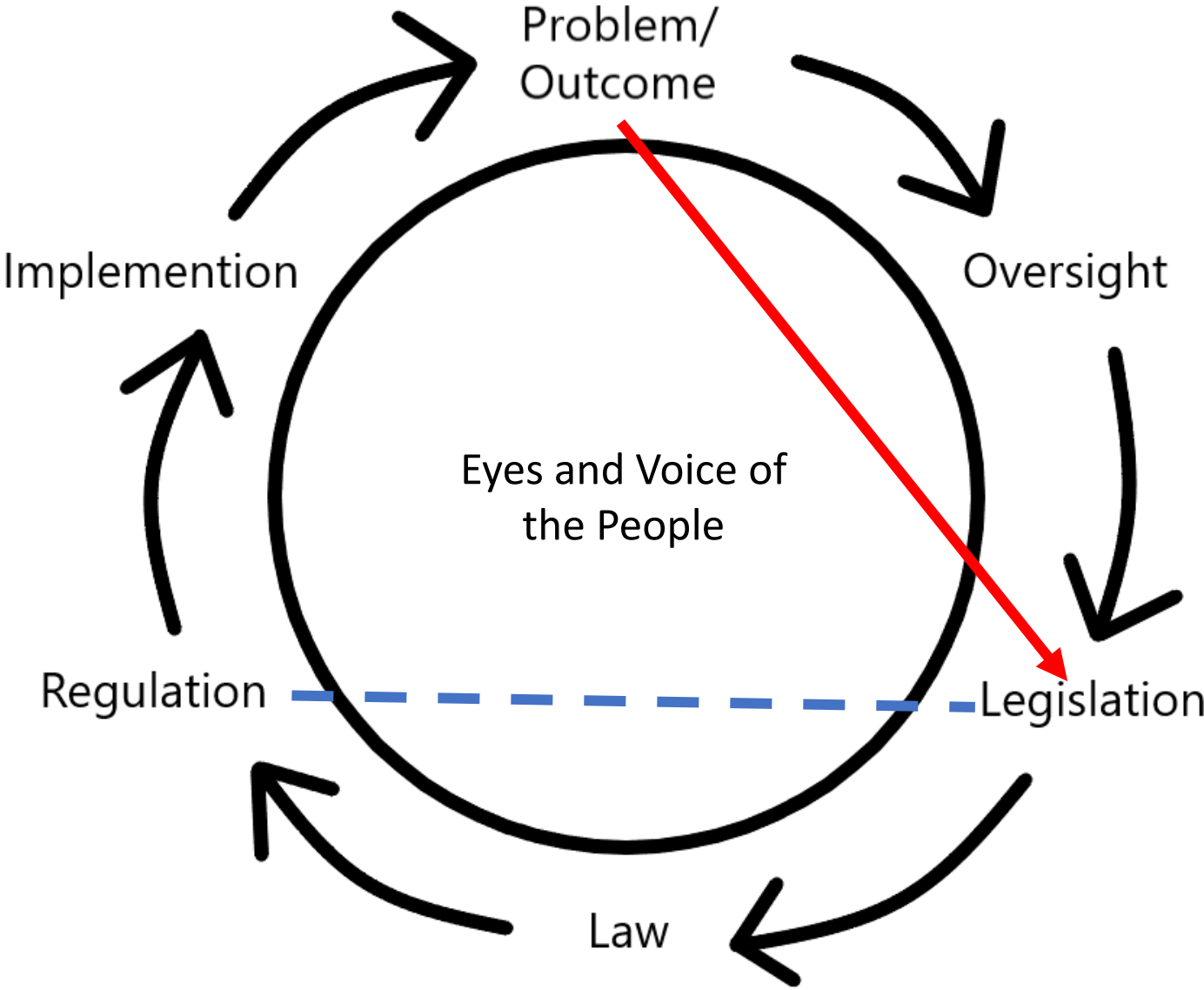
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<sup>1</sup> *Trump v. Mazars USA, LLP*, 140 S.Ct. 2019, 2031 (2020), citing *United States v. Rumely*, 345 U. S. 41, 43 (1953).

# Cycle of Accountability



# Cycle of Accountability



# Routine or Event-Driven Oversight?

Routine: "cop on the beat"	Event-Driven: "firefighter"
Program Outcomes	Scandal
Budgetary	Disaster
Contracts	Chronic Problems
Compliance	Escalating Problems
Deter Malfeasance	Long-term Investigation

# Your Superpowers



- Legislator phone calls and emails get returned.
- Legislators can request investigations and reports.
- Legislator questions trigger research, reconsideration, change.
- Oversight can have as much, or more, impact as legislation.



# Avenues for State Legislative Oversight

- Analytic Bureaucracies
- Appropriations Process
- Committees
- Administrative Rule Review
- Advice and Consent
- Monitoring Contracts

# State Oversight Academy

## State Legislature Oversight Wiki

The screenshot shows the homepage of the State Legislative Oversight Wiki 2.0. At the top, there is a dark green navigation bar with the text "Levin Center Home" on the left and "Annual Report", "Newsletter", and "Events" on the right. A search bar is located in the center of this bar. Below the navigation bar is a yellow banner with the text "STATE LEGISLATIVE OVERSIGHT WIKI 2.0" and a "SUPPORT NOW" button. The main content area has a dark green background with a search bar and a "SEARCH" button. The search bar contains the text "Search..." and a dropdown menu labeled "All Categories".

The screenshot shows the "Featured Reports and Resources" section of the State Legislative Oversight Wiki 2.0. It features a grid of 12 items, each with a state seal and the name of the state. The items are arranged in three columns and four rows. The first column contains "Featured Reports and Resources", "American Samoa", "California", and "Delaware". The second column contains "Alabama", "Arizona", "Colorado", and "District of Columbia". The third column contains "Alaska", "Arkansas", "Connecticut", and "Florida".

The screenshot shows the Michigan page on the State Legislative Oversight Wiki 2.0. The page has a yellow background. On the left side, there is a map of Michigan. To the right of the map, the word "Michigan" is written in a large, bold font. Below the name, there is a breadcrumb trail: "Home > State Legislative Oversight Wiki 2.0 > Michigan".

The screenshot shows the content of the Michigan page on the State Legislative Oversight Wiki 2.0. It features several sections, each with a title and a brief description. The sections are: "Legislature" (Type of Legislature Michigan has a full-time, bicameral legislature. House of Representatives: 110 members | 2-year terms 12 years in...), "Committee Oversight Authority" ("Legislative committees; powers, punishment for contempt. "Sec. 1." Committees and commissions of or appointed by the legislature may by resolution...), "Standing Committees Focused on Oversight" (House Ethics and Oversight Committee Website Membership, testimony, and meeting minutes available on website. Purpose/Jurisdiction "Upon receipt of Auditor General...), and "Non-Standing Committees Focused on Oversight" (Joint Committee on Administrative Rules House Website / Senate Website Membership / membership; rulemaking process; documents; reports; regulatory plans; proposed...).

# Origin of Investigation Topics

- Committee jurisdiction
- Leadership concerns
- Scandals, events, news, problems
- Reports
- Constituents
- Whistleblowers, advocacy groups
- Legislator concerns
- Lawsuits
- Agencies
- Personal experience
- Oversight plan, long-term vision



# Examples of Topics

- Pension funds
- Prison Operations
- Foster care
- Disaster response and mitigation
- Lobbying disclosures
- Contract mismanagement
- Infrastructure



# Phases of an Investigation

1. Fact-Finding
2. Written Product
3. Hearing
4. Follow up



Tutorials: <https://levin-center.org/congressional-lawmakers/online-tutorials/>



# South Carolina

## House Oversight Committee

- Full Committee plus five subcommittees
- Video archive and minutes of all meetings
- Public input form, plus info on testimony submission
- Restructuring recommendations for agencies
- Seven-year agency reviews



# South Carolina

## House Oversight Committee

- Transparency report to citizens
  - Purpose, findings, and recommendations
- All reports available online since 2014

Oversight Matters Podcast: Rep. Wes Newton: <https://levin-center.org/what-is-oversight/oversight-matters/>

# Recommendations for Strengthening Oversight

- Joint oversight committee with balanced party membership  
E.g., Michigan SJR O, 2022
- Bipartisan approach to topics, inquiry, witnesses, questions, etc.
- More follow-up (e.g., hearings) on reports.
- More contract oversight.
- Create oversight plan for a committee, or even full legislature.
- Post status and results of investigations on website.

For additional resources: <https://www.levin-center.org/state-lawmakers/state-oversight-resources/>



# Oversight Planning

Oversight planning can and should be undertaken at any of these levels:

- Entire legislature
- House/Senate
- Caucus
- Committee
- Investigation



For additional resources: <https://levin-center.org/state-oversight-academy/state-oversight-resources/>

# Corrections Oversight Plan

Topic	Subtopic	Factual Question	Avenue(s)	Routine/Event Driven (Required Resources)	Timeline
Reentry	Economic Opportunity	How does Ohio incorporate the previously incarcerated into the workforce?			

Avenues:

- Analytic Bureaucracies
- Appropriations Process
- Committees
- Admin Rule Review
- Advice and Consent
- Monitoring Contracts

# Corrections Oversight Scenarios

Topic	Subtopic	Factual Question	Avenue(s)	Routine/ Event Driven (Required Resources)	Timeline
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1. Reentry
2. Diversion
3. Education
4. Healthcare
5. Sentencing
6. Recidivism
7. Juvenile Justice
8. Opioid Crisis
9. Conditions
10. Safety
11. Death
12. More!

- Analytic Bureaucracies
- Appropriations Process
- Committees
- Admin Rule Review
- Advice and Consent
- Monitoring Contracts

Please view the handout  
for more information



# Presentations and Q&A





# Thank you!

For more information, contact:

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State Oversight Resources: <https://www.levin-center.org/state-lawmakers/state-oversight-resources/>

State Oversight Workshops: <https://www.levin-center.org/state-lawmakers/oversight-workshops/>

