

**Testimony of the Department of Civil Service  
Before the Joint Hearing of the Legislative Fiscal Committees  
February 27, 2013**

Good afternoon Chairman DeFrancisco, Chairman Farrell, distinguished members of the Senate and Assembly. I am Jerry Boone, Commissioner of the Department of Civil Service. I would like to thank you for the opportunity to appear before you today to comment on the Governor's Executive Budget for 2013-14 as it relates to the Department of Civil Service, and share with you some of the Department's accomplishments over this past year.

The Executive Budget proposal for 2013-14 reflects the implementation of recent agency consolidations and shared services actions. Over this past year, the Department served as a strategic partner in workforce restructuring on several statewide shared services actions, including the IT Transformation, Business Service Center (BSC) and Call Center, to ensure the orderly and efficient movement of employees substantially engaged in the functions merged. As a result of the Department's efforts, together with the Office of Information Technology Services (ITS), and our partners at GOER, approximately 3,300 employees were transferred to ITS this past November. Similarly, employees were successfully moved to the BSC and the Call Center. As a part of this process, all policies relating to transfers of functions and the movement of staff were carefully reviewed and reformulated to allow government to transform, improve services and achieve greater efficiencies while protecting employees' rights to continued employment.

The Department also assisted in creating the positions needed to set up new agencies, entities and functions created as a result of the consolidations and shared services actions, including the ITS, BSC, the Statewide E-Licensing System, the Gaming Commission, the Health Insurance Exchange, the Media Services Center, the Justice Center and the Tappan Zee Bridge. The Department will continue to assist the Justice Center, the Call Centers and the Department of Health with organizational and staffing issues over the next year.

At the same time that work is being done to restructure and reorganize the existing workforce, the Department must ensure that agencies have the talent they need to fulfill their ongoing missions and that the State has the leadership needed for the future. This past year, Governor Cuomo introduced the *New New York Leaders Initiative* to renew the connection between the public and the state and ensure that state government is diverse, talented, and prepared to lead for decades to come. This Initiative exposes the state's next generation of leaders to the work of governing increasingly complex policy challenges facing New York State. A component of this Initiative is the first ever coordinated, centralized statewide Student Intern Program portal, through which undergraduate and graduate students are placed within the Executive Branch to gain hands-on experience serving the people and interacting with government leaders and policy makers. The Department implemented the Student Intern Program on June 1st, for agencies to advertise internship opportunities and for interested undergraduate and graduate students to learn about and apply for those opportunities. To date, over 200 students have been placed in internships.

The Department also continues its important efforts to diversify the State workforce. Staff in the Department's Outreach and Recruitment Office conducts outreach to increase diversity, attending events organized for veterans, individuals with disabilities and other diverse populations.

Additionally, during 2012, the Department developed and administered 494 examinations to approximately 60,000 candidates for positions in the State service. The Department remains committed to the use of technology to modernize its testing processes. Within existing resources, the Department developed and piloted new computer-administered tests for promotion examinations to fill various positions in the Office of the State Comptroller. Computer based test delivery is viewed as a critical component of the testing program for the future.

Another significant responsibility of the Department is to provide the 96 municipal civil service commissions with advice and assistance in their administration of civil service for the 373,000 civil service positions under their jurisdiction. During 2012, local officials and civil service administrators attended specialized training, including a rigorous three week training program conducted annually by the Department on more than 30 different topics pertaining to civil service law and administration. Further, the Department provides local jurisdictions with examination services. Last year, the Department developed over three thousand examinations for administration by local jurisdictions to over 68,000 candidates to fill critical positions in local government.

The Department has also been productive in implementing changes to the New York State Health Insurance Program – commonly referred to as NYSHIP- a comprehensive health insurance program covering over 1.2 million State and local government employees, retirees and their families. NYSHIP, which contains the Empire Plan and various HMOs, is one of the largest public employer health insurance programs in the nation. On January 1<sup>st</sup> of this year, the Department implemented the Empire Plan Medicare Pharmacy Benefit which provides prescription drug benefits to Medicare eligible retirees covered under the Empire Plan. . The establishment of Empire Plan Medicare Pharmacy Benefit will result in savings to the Plan in excess of \$154 million annually over the federal Retiree Drug Subsidy program which it replaces.

As authorized by legislation passed in 2010, the Department is moving forward with conversion of the Empire Plan to a self funded basis. This will further reduce the cost of the NYSHIP to the State and the more than 900 local governments and public authorities which participate.

Much has been done by the Department over this past year. Much more remains to be done. The combination of GOER and DCS into a single State Employee Workforce Development Center will allow the State to take a more strategic approach to workforce development and training, employee engagement and performance. I am looking forward to creating a first class workforce to support the Governor's vision of a *New New York*.

Again, thank you for the opportunity to appear before you today. I would be happy to address any questions you may have.