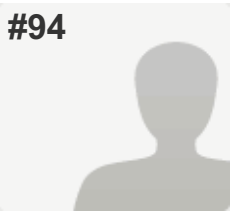


#94



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Collector: Web Link 1 (Web Link)

Started: Friday, September 23, 2016 4:05:29 PM

Last Modified: Friday, September 23, 2016 4:06:01 PM

Time Spent: 00:00:32

PAGE 2: About Agencies Scheduled for Study

Q1: Please share any comments, suggestions or concerns you may have about these agencies. Please note your responses may be included verbatim in a Committee report, which may be posted online.

Public Safety, Department of

As a former DPS employee, I agree with many of the comments that have been submitted to the committee through the public input portal. Trooper morale is poor if not worse. Clear “favorite” employees, both civilian and sworn, are promoted or given special treatment due to the whims of the executive leadership team rather than merit. Any meaningful decisions are made behind closed doors without the input of mid-management personnel or below. Too many good employees are run out of the agency to create space to install “yes-men” into higher ranks or positions, and too many good employees have been demoted or terminated because they did something to make the leadership mad (usually incredibly petty things, like voicing an opinion or asking for additional training). State/local politics play a HUGE role at DPS and good ideas are shot down/ignored due to the leadership being terrified of what the Governor’s office will think instead of doing what is best for SC tax payers. Much better days were observed at DPS under previous leadership. It is not only that Trooper morale is low – all morale at the agency is low due to the manipulative, impulsive, and quick-tempered leadership. Civilian staff members are treated as expendable and there is no way to suggest changes/improvements without fear of reprimand or worse. Don’t bring your complaints to HR – you might as well write your concerns on the walls because Director Smith/Ms. Autry are thick as thieves (and the majority of the executive leadership as well). “Exit interviews” consist of a packet mailed to your residence and contain a page for you to leave your forwarding information for tax returns. Anyone who speaks truthfully on one can rest assured that it is completely not anonymous (I worked in HR, I know) and you can kiss that employment reference goodbye because it will get back to your division head. OPR doesn’t care unless you’ve stolen something, said something bad about the

Director, or a race-based complaint is made. Unbelievable amounts of federal grant money flow into the agency and get held hostage by the executive leadership (usually to make a point or hold a grudge against a local sheriffs' office or police department). Jobs are filled without postings, employees are disciplined/terminated without any real basis, resources are mismanaged, unreasonable quotas (yes, quotas) are set and expected to be met without fail – the list goes on. Starting salary increases will only initially help in getting Trooper levels back up, which is sad, because there are so many good road Troopers (and STP/BPS officers) working long days for little appreciation. The truth remains that as long as the current leadership is in place, most will still leave before 5 years (realistically, more like 2-3). Non-sworn personnel have no incentive to stay unless they are close to retirement – why stay in a job where you are belittled, unappreciated, and live in constant fear of being targeted for little or no reason? Maybe that is why so many at DPS spend as much time as they do looking for jobs at other state agencies. Ask around – it's the worst kept secret at DPS. Director Smith can walk the halls on select Fridays and speak to each employee and preach openness and honesty all day long – the truth remains that sending him an email with a concern is the quickest way to end up in a division head's office getting reamed out for speaking out of place. Stay firmly in your lane or go ahead and resign before you are fired.

PAGE 3: There are three questions seeking general information.

Q2: What is your age?

Prefer not to answer

Q3: Which best describes your current role?

Former State employee of an agency under study by the House Legislative Oversight Committee (i.e., Comptroller General's Office, DOT, First Steps, DSS, DJJ, State Transportation Infrastructure Bank, School for the Deaf and Blind, Commission for the Blind, DPS, and Treasurer's Office)

Q4: In which county do you live?

Fairfield
