

Alaska Ways and Means Committee

Discussion of the New York SAGE Commission Report

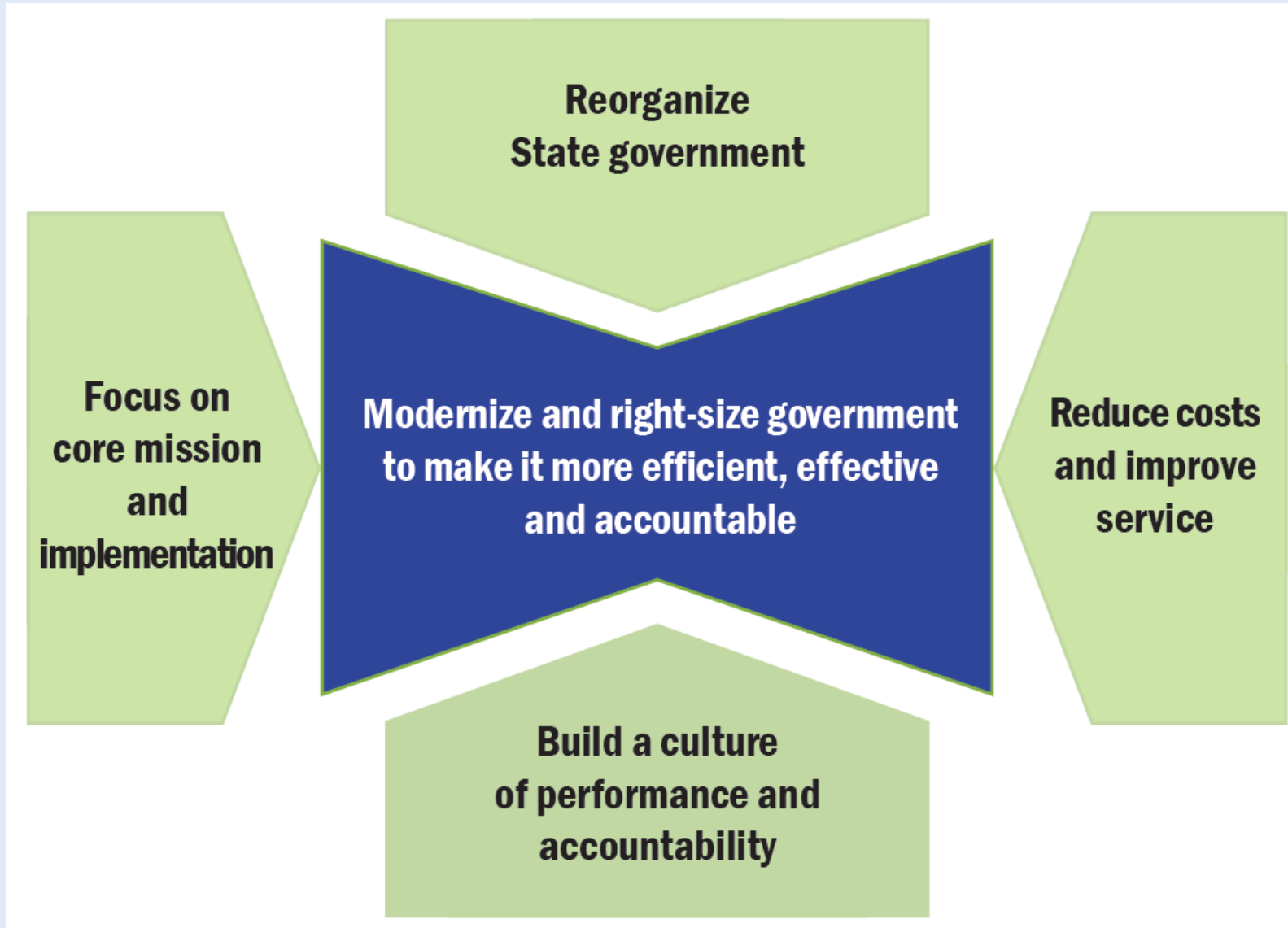
March 1, 2022

Paul Francis, Vice Chairman of the SAGE Commission (2011-2013)

SAGE Commission

- The New York Spending and Government Efficiency (SAGE) Commission convened from 2011 until early 2013
- The SAGE Commission focused on State government *operations*, not programs
- The Commission was comprised of members of the legislature, local elected officials, representatives of organized labor, and business leaders

SAGE Commission Charter and Mission



Consolidation of Agencies and Authorities

- What got done right away – Department of Financial Services
- What got done later – Mental Health and Substance Abuse
- What remains undone – Department of Transportation and Thruway Authority
- Trade-offs – Integration and efficiency versus Coordination and Focus

Consolidation and Rightsizing of Facilities

- Closing unneeded prisons
- Consolidation of real estate and ancillary activities
- Shared services with local governments
- Trade-offs – Efficiency versus Employment security

Reducing Costs and Improving Service

Centralization of Information Technology

- Consultant driven recommendation to centralize IT
- Need for differentiation between Operations and Software Development
- Technology changes in IT since 2013 now place more control with business users
- Trade-offs – Efficiency versus “User ownership”

Reducing Costs and Improving Service

Customer Service and Process Improvement

- Digital delivery of government services
- Licensing and Permitting
- Contracting and Grants Management
- “Lean” process improvements
- Trade-offs – Must be combined with process reengineering

Reducing Costs and Improving Service

Modernizing the Workforce

- The Civil Service system remained impervious to change
- Ongoing replacement of civil service workers with contracted services
- Significant workforce disinvestment over the last 25 years has diminished capabilities
- Trade-offs – Interests of incumbent employees versus Long-term capacity of permanent government staff

Performance Management Systems

- What “performance” are you measuring – crime rates or fingerprint processing cycle times?
- Why is the bureaucracy so resistant to performance management?
- Who is the real audience?
- Trade-offs – Transparency and strategic focus versus Risk of political embarrassment from unfavorable metrics

Conclusion

- “Efficiency” commissions offer a great opportunity to challenge the status quo
- The SAGE Commission catalyzed important changes and savings opportunities
- A Commission report can set the agenda for future action that is not currently politically viable
- One person’s “efficiency” is another’s person’s policy choice – but a commission can still find common ground