

HB

55

COMMITTEE REPORT

HOUSE

FURTHER:

1-24-79

Date: _____

Mr. Speaker:

The Committee on STATE AFFAIRS has had HB 55

"An Act relating to an employee suggestion award system; effective date.

under consideration and (a majority of the committee) (the committee) reports it back with the following recommendations:

- do pass do not pass
- do pass with attached amendments(s)
- replace with CS for _____ same title
 new title
- and recommends _____
- AND attaches a "Letter of Intent" New Fiscal Note
- reports it back without recommendation
- referred to the _____ Committee

**MEMBERS SIGNING
DO PASS**

Ray [unclear]

Terry Gardner

Bill [unclear]

**MEMBERS HAVING
OTHER RECOMMENDATIONS:**

do not pass - Terry Gardner

CHAIRMAN

THIS [] BILL [] RESOLUTION [] CITATION

has been prepared by the staff of the Legislative Affairs Agency in response to the request and at the direction of the sponsoring member or committee. The staff has attempted to place the document in proper legal and clerical form, subject to any special limitations or instructions of the requestor.

If we may be of further assistance in this matter, please contact the Director of Legal Services or the Director of Research Services, as appropriate.

Delivered to requestor 2-6-79

No award shall be made

- A. in excess of \$5,000 without the approval of the Governor and the Legislature;
- B. to an employee who offers a suggestion which is considered within the scope of his job responsibilities or for which he has control over implementing;
- C. until the suggestion is implemented and reduced expenditures or increased effectiveness is assured;
- D. without the release by the employee, his heir, representative, or assigns of all rights to claims of any nature.

add sunset

*June 30, 1982
expires*

FISCAL NOTE

I. REQUEST House Bill No. 55
 Bill/Resolution No. Department Log # 030
 Title An Act Relating to an Employee Suggestion Award System
 Requested by Governor Date _____

II. FISCAL DETAIL
 Agency Affected Administration
 Program Category Affected General Government
 Budget Request Unit(s) Affected Commissioner's Office

EXPENDITURES (Thousands of Dollars)

	FY 79	FY 80	FY 81	FY 82	FY 83	FY 84
100 PERSONAL SERVICES		40.5	45.5	47.0	50.8	51.8
200 TRAVEL		12.0	12.6	13.2	13.9	14.6
300 CONTRACTUAL		5.0	5.3	5.5	5.8	6.1
400 COMMODITIES		.8	.8	.9	.9	1.0
500 EQUIPMENT		2.5	2.4	2.5	2.7	2.8
600 LAND & STRUCTURES						
700 GRANTS, CLAIMS, ETC.		45.0	47.5	49.6	52.1	54.7
TOTAL		105.5	111.9	118.7	126.2	131.0

FUNDING (Thousands of Dollars)

	FY 79	FY 80	FY 81	FY 82	FY 83	FY 84
GENERAL FUND		105.5	111.9	118.7	126.2	131.0
FEDERAL FUNDS						
OTHER (Specify)						

POSITIONS

	FY 79	FY 80	FY 81	FY 82	FY 83	FY 84
FULL TIME		1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0
PART TIME		0	0	0	0	0
TEMPORARY		0	0	0	0	0

III. ANALYSIS (See Fiscal Note Preparation Instructions, Section III)

This program, which would be administered by a Director (Range 20), would result in projected first year benefits of \$150,000. This estimate is based on assumptions developed by the Division of Internal Audit and is substantially less than the 1/10 of 1% total budget which other governmental agencies have realized. Awards would be based on 10% of the annual hard dollar benefits of up to \$5,000 per person, and all employees except certain "managerial" positions would be eligible. Experience from private industry and other governmental agencies indicates that benefits increase each year of operation.

Net savings are estimated as follows:

Projected first year benefits	\$150,000
Less: Program Cost	(60,000)
Awards (10% of benefits)	(15,000)
Net savings	\$75,000

Costs for years beyond FY 80 have been calculated to include 8% inflation for personal services and 5% for all other line items.

IV. DATE 1-16-79 PREPARED BY [Signature]
 AGENCY Administration
 PHONE 711-2727

Original: Legislative Finance
 cc: Budget and Management
 Prime Sponsor (First Legislator Named) (Governor Hammond, Attention Carla)
 Commissioner Allen

No award shall be made

- A. in excess of \$5,000 without the approval of the Governor and the Legislature;
- B. to an employee who offers a suggestion which is considered within the scope of his job responsibilities or for which he has control over implementing;
- C. until the suggestion is implemented and reduced expenditures or increased effectiveness is assured;
- D. without the release by the employee, his heir, representative, or assigns of all rights to claims of any nature.

FISCAL NOTE

I. REQUEST House Bill No. 55
 Bill/Resolution No. Department 10: # 050
 Title An Act Relating to an Employee Suggestion Award System
 Requested by Governor Date _____

II. FISCAL DETAIL
 Agency Affected Administration
 Program Category Affected General Government
 Budget Request Unit(s) Affected Commissioner's Office

EXPENDITURES (Thousands of Dollars)

	FY 79	FY 80	FY 81	FY 82	FY 83	FY 84
100 PERSONAL SERVICES		40.5	45.5	47.0	50.8	51.8
200 TRAVEL		12.0	12.6	13.2	15.9	14.6
300 CONTRACTUAL		5.0	5.5	5.5	5.8	6.1
400 COMMODITIES		.8	.8	.9	.9	1.0
500 EQUIPMENT		2.5	2.4	2.5	2.7	2.8
600 LAND & STRUCTURES						
700 GRANTS, CLAIMS, ETC.		45.0	47.5	49.6	52.1	51.7
TOTAL		105.5	111.9	118.7	126.2	131.0

FUNDING (Thousands of Dollars)

GENERAL FUND		105.5	111.9	118.7	126.2	131.0
FEDERAL FUNDS						
OTHER (Specify)						

POSITIONS

FULL TIME		1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0
PART TIME		0	0	0	0	0
TEMPORARY		0	0	0	0	0

III. ANALYSIS (See Fiscal Note Preparation Instructions, Section III)

This program, which would be administered by a Director (Range 20), would result in projected first year benefits of \$450,000. This estimate is based on assumptions developed by the Division of Internal Audit and is substantially less than the 1/10 of 1% total budget which other governmental agencies have realized. Awards would be based on 10% of the annual hard dollar benefits of up to \$5,000 per person, and all employees except certain "managerial" positions would be eligible. Experience from private industry and other governmental agencies indicates that benefits increase each year of operation.

Net savings are estimated as follows:

Projected first year benefits	\$450,000
Less: Program Cost	(60,100)
Awards (10% of benefits)	(15,000)
Net savings	\$374,900

Costs for years beyond FY 80 have been calculated to include 8% inflation for personal services and 5% for all other line items.

IV. DATE 1-16-79 PREPARED BY [Signature]
 AGENCY Administration
 PHONE 415-2777

Original: Legislative Finance
 cc: Budget and Management
 Prime Sponsor (First Legislator Named) (Governor Hammond, Attention Carla)
 Commissioner Allen
 33-001 (Rev. 10/78)
 Keilus Sewell

No award shall be made

- A. in excess of \$5,000 without the approval of the Governor and the Legislature;
- B. to an employee who offers a suggestion which is considered within the scope of his job responsibilities or for which he has control over implementing;
- C. until the suggestion is implemented and reduced expenditures or increased effectiveness is assured;
- D. without the release by the employee, his heir, representative, or assigns of all rights to claims of any nature.

The Department of Better Ways

by THOMAS L. LOY
for The Courant



Operating out of a little basement room in the State Office Building in Hartford is a man who has given away more than a hundred thousand dollars of the state's money during the past seven years—in a successful effort to save many times that amount.

He is Ben Marino, administrator of the State Employees Suggestion Awards Program. Marino also is president of the New England Chapter of the National Association of Suggestion Systems, which promotes kibitzing in both the public and private sectors of the American economy.

Marino loves his work. He enjoys it most when someone comes up with an idea which justifies asking the Governor to present a Suggestion-Award check. These have run as high as \$5,000 the maximum allowed — as in the recent case of Barbara Hickey.

Ms. Hickey was working as a supervisor in the Accident Security Section of the Motor Vehicles Department. She was about to retire after 35 years of state service. Before doing so, she passed along to her superiors a thought she had been mulling for some time: to streamline and computerize the processing of uninsured accident cases by combining the data from six forms into one.

Ms. Hickey's idea was referred to the MVD Suggestion Awards Committee, one of 150 such groups through which Marino works. They decided her plan would save Connecticut taxpayers no less than \$34,000 per year.

"Our rule of thumb," Marino notes, "is to award the suggester at least 25 per cent of the estimated first-year's savings. At the end of the year, we conduct a review. Sometimes additional awards are justified."

The Connecticut State Police have come up with some lucrative suggestions. Example: Electronics Technician Ed Baines received \$1,160 for designing a coupler which allows the use of one antenna for two car radios — Police Band and Citizen Band. Estimated annual saving: \$4,500.

And \$1,400 went jointly to Litchfield Resident Trooper John L. McLeod and Sgt. Francis H. Conroy for an idea developed following the amalgamation of two state courts. They salvaged 60 cartons of

summons complaint forms which were about to be thrown away because the obsolete words "Circuit Court" appeared upon them. "Actually," Conroy said, "you can summon somebody on a piece of tissue paper if you want to."

Workers in the Department of Transportation also have come up with some impressive ideas:

Prior to 1975, snow had to be shoveled by hand from narrow bridges—because plows could be damaged by scraping against the parapets. Then Highway Foreman August Martin suggested that each side of the plow blade be covered with rubber. His award: \$125.

The same amount went to Raymond E. Barnes of the department's testing lab at Rocky Hill. He devised apparatus to determine why traffic lights have malfunctioned, thus eliminating the need to return them to the manufacturers for the same information.

One of the most adroit proposals was that of State Tax Examiner Robert H. Slattery. He noted that Connecticut was falling to put the bite on "unaccountable depletion of inventories of alcoholic beverages wholesalers." In plain words: booze given away for purposes of promotion. Slattery estimated the loss of tax revenue from this potential source at \$20,000 per year. Through legislative enactment, that now is being collected. And

Slattery has pocketed \$5,000 as his share.

In the Department of Social Services Duplicating Supervisor Richard Magnin was bugged by the problem of how to handle letters returned after the Post Office could not deliver them. Since numerous mailings were involved, Dick and his staff had to open and examine each throw-back missive before it could be rerouted to the office of its source. Finally he bought some magic markers and attached them to a device which puts streaks of distinctive color on each outgoing envelope. His award: \$445.

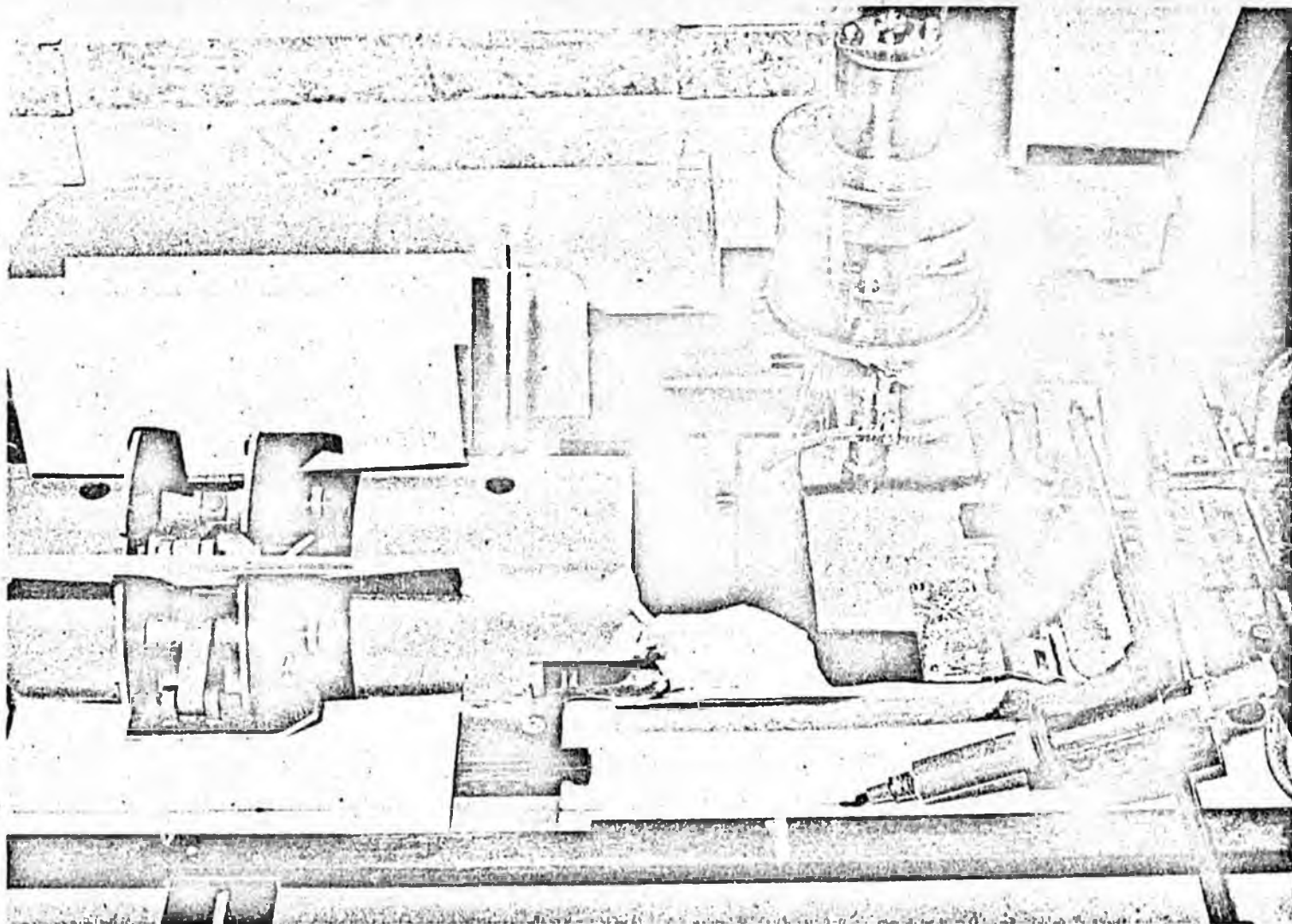
Ben Marino, who administers the suggestion award program for state employes, and secretary Virginia Callahan.

Richard Simmons, a correctional officer at the state prison in Somers, was happy to find that M-1 carbines frequently malfunctioned because of loose assemblies and fouled sights. Tower men, he discovered, had been battling boredom between escape attempts by taking guns apart and putting them back together. Simmons came up with the idea that each rifle should be enclosed in a case, secured by a zipper that could be opened only through breaking a fine wire. His compensation: \$80.

At Mattatuck Community College, as elsewhere, a lot of keys were getting lost. Accounting clerk Michele Macray calculated that \$75.25 had been spent on duplicates over a six-month period. In addition there was the cost of 27 trips to a Waterbury hardware store—15 minutes each way. Ms. Macray's idea was that the college should buy a key-cutting machine. That thought was gratefully accepted, and she received \$50 of the first year's savings.

Jennie Howley is a switchboard operator at a very busy office in Wethersfield. She used to answer her phone by saying "Commission on Special Revenue." Many a caller, not knowing what that meant, got confused and hung up. So Jennie proposed coming right out in the open

(Continued on Page 14)



Richard Magnini, a duplications supervisor in the state Social Services Department, wanted to avoid the trouble of opening each one of the hundreds of letters returned each day to the department. So he suggested color coding them before they left the department's various office. His invention saves time and earned him \$445.

and saying, "Connecticut State Lottery." That has proved much more efficient, and she has received \$50 for the clarification.

The State Employees Suggestion Awards program dates back to 1954. Since then more than 9,000 ideas have been put forward. Marino was hired in 1971. Prior to that year, the prizes were given out by a board of citizens who were unpaid—except for "travel and necessary expenses." During Marino's seven years, awards totaling \$122,500 have been made—producing annual savings which have been figured out to \$794,000.

Suggestion awards go also to state employees who come up with ideas which may cost Connecticut money rather than saving it—but which have the merit of improving state service. Examples:

Steno El Evelyn Sweet of the Department of Commerce suggested posting a

guidance chart in the State Office Building—to keep citizens from wandering around and around before getting where they want to go.

Ambrose Reynolds of the Department of Consumer Protection suggested a van to carry wise-buying information throughout Connecticut.

Ann Dusenberg of the Southbury Training School recommended placing clamps in vehicles transporting wheelchair patients—to prevent slidings and injuries.

Raymond Madigan of the Board of Education and Services for the Blind urged the use of Braille for floor numbers on the push buttons inside and outside state elevators.

Elizabeth Peterson of the Hartford Regional Center came up with an ingenious way to help non-ambulatory kids learn to walk: a jump suit suspended from a pulley

running on an overhead track. Mrs. Peterson received a special award as "Suggester of the Year" in 1975.

Down through the years, Marino has taken pains to keep Suggestion-Awards ideas flowing in. He began in 1971 by speaking at meetings of the Connecticut State Employees Association. His reminders have appeared on the dashboards of state cars. His boxlike posters have hung down from the ceilings of hundreds of state offices and workshops. "How much is your suggestion worth?" they asked. One wag went about taping pennies to those gimmicks. Marino merely smiled and kept plugging away.

Now he is off on a new kick: a special award of a trip to Hawaii for two given to whoever turns out to be Connecticut's ten thousandth suggester. That award should come sometime in the next 12 months.