

From: [REDACTED]
To: [Info_RSO](#)
Subject: Submission for review of statutory offices of the house of assembly
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To whom this may concern;

I'm writing in response to the call for public input from the public review of the statutory offices of the House of Assembly.

- The office is top heavy when compared with other government offices. For example, there is 1 advocate (equivalent to a deputy minister), two director positions, and only 10 reporting staff members (3 administrative staff and 7 professional staff). For every senior management position there is 3.3 staff, which for such a small office seems disproportionate and fiscally wasteful – particularly as there is no provision of emergency services.
- Some of the work completed by the OCYA is repetitive of internal CSSD and other departmental processes. For example, there is an internal quality assurance unit within CSSD that completes much of the same work in terms of auditing services and recommending changes. There are also two internal inquiries coordinators who manage individual complaints regarding services. [REDACTED] As there was often two different reports (internal and external) being completed with similar recommendations yet different language – creating confusion and more work for those trying to implement changes.
- Some might argue the office is external or arm's length, however at the end of the day the Premier appoints the Child and Youth Advocate and other statutory positions. The offices operate within the provincial government. Therefore, there is a false sense of independence which is concerning given that internal units of many departments are completing similar work (see previous point).
- Similar work is being completed by the OCYA, seniors advocate, and

citizens representative. The main difference is the age of the population served. While I recognize there are differences in terms of policies and rights of adults, seniors, children, and youth – I wonder why there are three separate offices dealing with complaints. Other provinces, (NS and ON) have some of their services combined and separated into divisions. For example, the NS ombudsman has a division of youth and senior services among other service areas. A model like this could reduce the amount of senior leadership positions within at least three of these offices through amalgamation. It could also reduce some of the administrative positions for a lower overall cost of running these offices.

- My final concern is the amount of information the OCYA is permitted to publicly release under the Child and Youth Advocate Act, particularly in comparison with other statutory offices. This information includes case details involving clients and professionals and is more information than the other statutory offices release. See the following link for examples of public reports:

<https://www.childandyouthadvocate.nl.ca/publications/investigation-reports/> An amalgamation could allow for similar protocols and legislation across the board for these three offices.

It was also concerning for the public service employees involved in many of these cases. Their colleagues and clients could surely identify them in these reports regardless of pseudonyms used. There is a fine line between seeking to improve systems and shaming employees whose actions were often a product of a lack of resources rather than lack of best practice. Further, many professions (social workers, psychologists, physicians, teachers) have their own associations that deal with complaints regarding practice - another potential duplication of work. In my opinion, when releasing any piece of a person's story (client or a professional), we need to balance the potential for change and the risks to those individuals and in my opinion, the legislation for the OCYA grants too much power regarding public disclosure.

I value the work of the OCYA and other statutory offices, and I also think there are ways, such as amalgamation of services and legislation, that could streamline services and reduce the cost on the province of these offices.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide feedback,

