



Facilitating a Legislatively Mandated Paid Family and Medical Leave Task Force Coordinated by the Colorado Department of Labor and Employment

July 2019 – January 2020

Situation

Colorado is a family friendly state, and stakeholders engaged in an ongoing and spirited debate about how best to provide paid family and medical leave over a number of years.

In the spring of 2019, SB19-188 passed both houses of the Colorado Legislature empowering a task force to study Paid Family and Medical Leave concepts and to develop recommendations to the General Assembly. With the Governor’s approval, the Family and Medical Leave Implementation (FAMLI) task force was created and charged with producing a public report to the Colorado Legislature that made recommendations on paid family and medical leave along 16 dimensions (e.g., eligibility, duration, funding structure, wage replacement rates, etc.).

Membership of the FAMLI task force was written into legislation and included employer representatives, workers’ rights advocates, policy experts, economists, and small business representatives.

In July 2019, the Department of Labor and Employment (CDLE) engaged GPS to provide facilitation and advisory services so that the members of the task force were able to engage in productive discussions and deliver a complete and comprehensive report on-schedule.

Approach

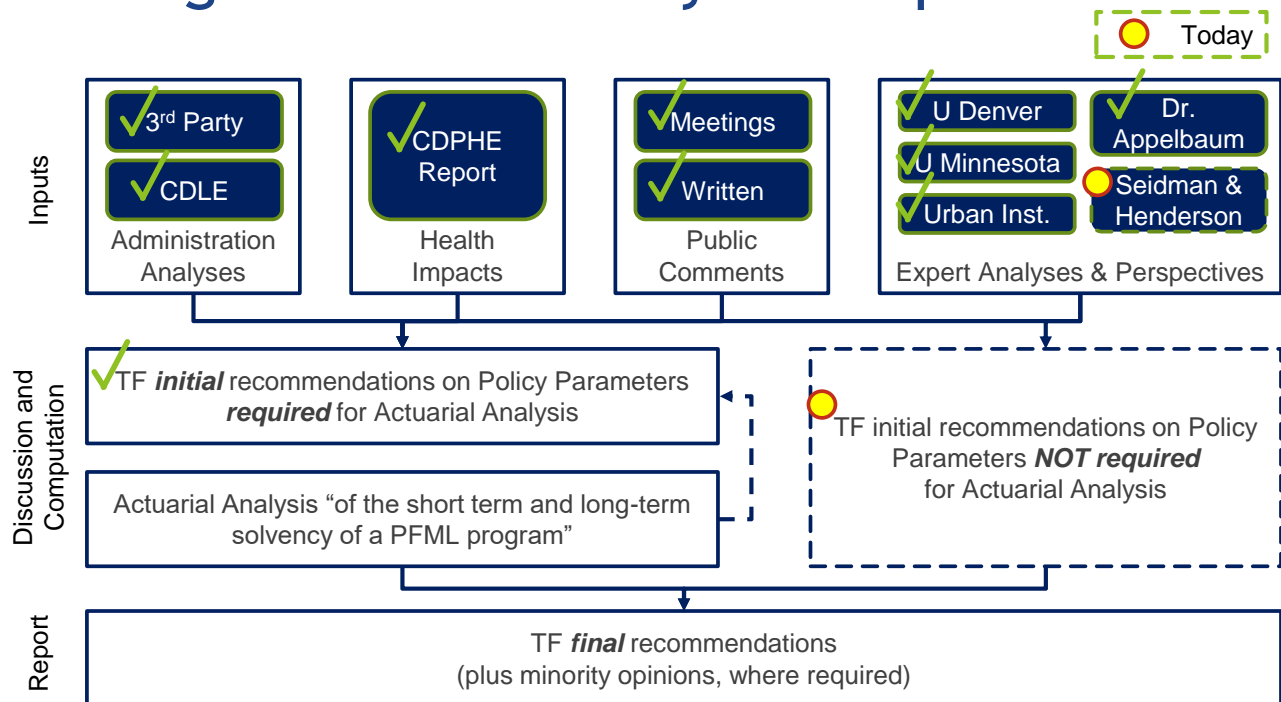
The legislation prescribed that the task force benefit from a number of analyses, both policy focused and actuarially focused, along with public comment. These various analyses were to be delivered through the course of the fall of 2019 and were not all available at once.

GPS worked with the department to assess initial consensus and then craft a roadmap of meetings designed to ensure that those high-priority topics required for actuarial analysis were addressed first and that other, implementation-focused or dependent issues be heard later. Below is an image of a graphic GPS developed that helped the task force understand how the various inputs would be managed and also used to track overall progress:

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Progress...on our way to outputs



GPS provided meeting planning, facilitation, document development support, and guidance throughout the six-month effort. Rules governing open meetings were followed to allow the public to engage with the task force through several channels, ensuring transparency.

Results

- The task force reached broad consensus on 14 of the 16 elements, resulting in 21 recommendations.
- 14 of the recommendations received unanimous support and alternative perspectives were documented for legislator review where desired by task force members.
- The FAMLII task force submitted the required report. The text of the report is available [here](#).
- Colorado voters passed a ballot initiative based on the report, with 57% of voters in favor of the proposal during the November 2020 general election.