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***LEGISLATIVE OVERSIGHT COMMITTEE:  
JOINT SURVEY COMMITTEE ON RETIREMENT SYSTEMS***

The 10-member Joint Survey Committee on Retirement Systems (JSCRS) was established by Chapter 376, Laws of 1947, to function as the legislative oversight committee for all matters relating to proposed statutory changes to state-operated public employee pension plans.

Because of the complexity and potential costs to public employers of any proposed change in Wisconsin Retirement System (WRS) law, a diverse JSCRS membership was established as a safeguard to ensure that such complex legislation receives adequate review. The members of the JSCRS are:

- ◆ Three senators and three representatives, appointed as members of standing committees in their respective houses. One senator and one representative must be a member of the minority party.
- ◆ An Assistant Attorney General appointed by the Attorney General.
- ◆ A public member who is not a WRS participant or annuitant, appointed by the Governor.
- ◆ The Commissioner of Insurance or an experienced actuary designated by the Commissioner from that agency.
- ◆ The Secretary of ETF or designee.

The Committee is co-chaired by one of its Senate members and by one of its Assembly members. The Assistant Attorney General and the public member serve four-year terms and continue in office until a successor is appointed and qualified. Legislative members receive appointment or reappointment to the Committee every two years at the commencement of a new Legislature. Any member of the Committee ceases to be a member upon losing the status on which membership is based.

Current law prohibits the Legislature from acting on any bill or amendment which would create, modify, or in any way provide for the retirement or payment of pensions to public employees unless the proposal has first been referred to the JSCRS, and the Committee has provided a written report on the bill or amendment. Actions of the JSCRS require the approval of a majority of all of its members.

The Committee report on a bill includes:

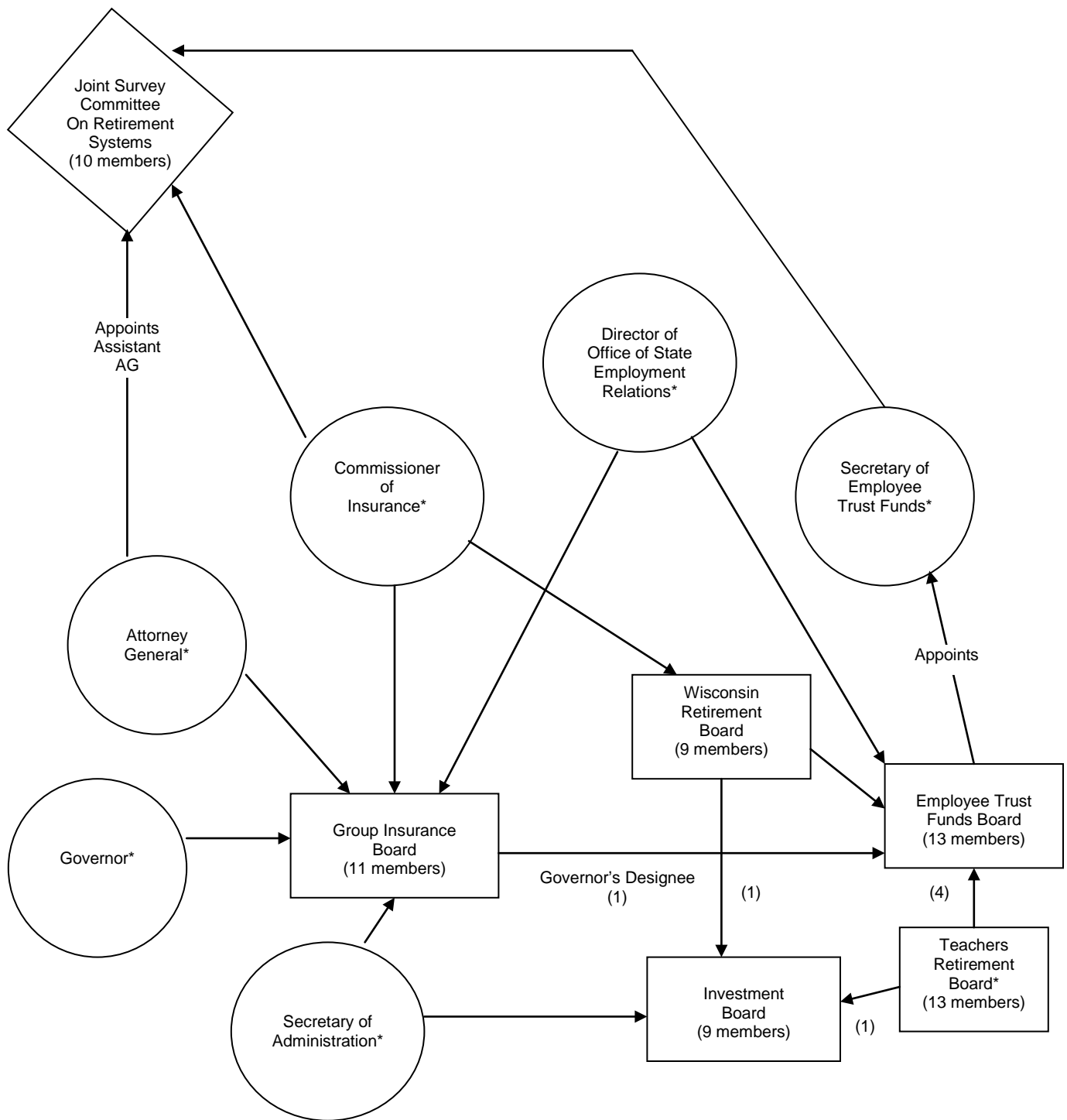
- ◆ A description of what the bill would do.
- ◆ The probable costs of the proposal both in terms of total dollars and as a percent of participating employers' total annual payroll.
- ◆ The likely effect of the bill on the actuarial soundness of the WRS.
- ◆ The judgment of the Committee as to whether the bill is desirable as a matter of public policy.

The Committee may hold hearings, receive testimony and review legislation; however, it does not have the authority to introduce retirement legislation or amendments to that legislation. The Committee may conclude, though, that the proposed legislation would be good public policy if amended in a certain fashion. In such situations, the Committee's report may indicate that fact, and an amendment to the bill accomplishing the recommended changes may subsequently be introduced by one or both of the co-chairs of the JSCRS or any other legislator.

The Legislative Council staff provides legal and research assistance to the JSCRS and may prepare fiscal estimates on bills referred to the Committee. The Legislative Council staff must also prepare a comparative study of major public employee retirement systems in the U.S. every two years. Finally, funds may be appropriated to enable the Legislative Council staff to contract for actuarial studies approved by the JSCRS.

While the various trust funds boards, agencies and legislative committees described above are all separate entities, the overlapping memberships at the policy-making levels in these bodies is intended to provide a level of coordination of WRS activities. These interrelationships are characterized in the table on the following page.

## Overlapping Memberships on Retirement-Related Boards and Committees



- \* = Indicates that the official or his or her designee serves as a member of the indicated board or other entity.
- = Executive Branch Officer
- = Executive Branch Board
- ◇ = Legislative Branch Committee
- ( ) = Number of members from one board or committee designated to serve on another board or committee.