

Summary of Findings and Recommendations

Trust and Legislative Performance

1. The panel concludes that legislative performance, demonstrated through a process of accountability, can provide a foundation for building citizen trust.

Institutional Accountability

2. The panel recommends that, in addition to existing election processes, legislative bodies at national, state and local levels establish a mechanism for institutional legislative accountability focused on the collective performance of the legislative body as a whole.

Legislative Leadership

3. The panel recommends that legislative bodies utilize a performance-based accountability process as a means to provide enhanced political leadership on important public issues.

A Framework for Accountability

4. The panel recommends that legislative bodies adopt, by statute or constitutional amendment, a two-part legislative accountability process focused on (1) identifying key issues facing the nation, state or locality—matters of strategic significance—and (2) reporting on actions taken to address those issues.

The Strategic Legislative Agenda

5. The panel recommends that legislative bodies annually establish a Strategic Legislative Agenda that will be:

- Focused on a limited number of high priority issues
- Developed prior to the session
- Created through a collaborative process involving leaders of the legislative body representing the major political parties
- Presented at the opening session of the legislature
- Publicized widely as evidence of institutional leadership
- Used to guide legislative attention throughout the session
- Evaluated by the public as evidence of the legislature's ability to identify both near- and longer-term issues of strategic significance

The Legislative Performance Report

6. The panel recommends that within 45 days after the conclusion of the session, legislative leaders produce a formal Legislative Performance Report that presents—for each issue on the Strategic Legislative Agenda—information describing:

- Actions taken to address the issue
- Reasoning behind each action
- How the actions taken will help address the issue
- Issues on which the legislature did not act, and why

Informing the Discussion

7. The panel recommends that the legislature take steps to ensure both the Strategic Legislative Agenda and Legislative Performance Report are widely distributed to all segments of the community via traditional, electronic and social media.