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Panel OKs bill on privatizing some services

By **Leigh Dethman**

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A bill to make sure state agencies are not doing work better left to the private sector passed out of committee Thursday.

HB75 would force most state agencies to create an inventory of commercial activities the government is providing.

The bill's sponsor, Rep. Craig Frank, R-Pleasant Grove, also wants to expand both the authority and size of the current government privatization policy board to "review whether or not certain services performed by existing state agencies could be privatized to provide the same types and quality of services that would result in cost savings."

Members of the House Government Operations Committee had raised a barrage of questions last week, namely whether or not the public education system would be exempt from the process and how the board seats were allocated between the public and private industry.

Frank then substituted the bill, and exempted public and higher education from the purview of the privatization board.

"I think it's healthy to review, number one, what really is a prime function of government and do an inventory as this is asking for," said Rep. Curt Oda, R-Clearfield.

The bill is one of three aimed at privatizing some government activities.

Frank has another bill, HB76, that would force state, cities and counties to create a commission for businesses to appeal the operations of publicly funded projects. **And Sen. Howard Stephenson, R-Draper, has a similar bill HB75 in the Senate that would require counties to create an inventory of all "competitive activities" that are not a core governmental activity.**

E-mail: ldethman@desnews.com

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