



State of Louisiana

Division of Administration
Office of the Commissioner

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Commissioner Nichols Announces Appointment of OGB Interim CEO and New Transformation Initiative to Save Taxpayer Dollars, Limit Premium Increases

BATON ROUGE – Today, Commissioner of Administration Kristy Nichols announced the appointment of Susan T. West as the interim CEO of the Office of Group Benefits (OGB). West currently serves as the State Risk Administrator with the Office of Risk Management (ORM). She has more than 31 years of experience with both public and private insurance lines of service as well as management in the areas of insurance policy, loss prevention, and premium development.

In West's new role, she will provide leadership for OGB in its efforts to continue to provide affordable and quality health benefits to state employees. Since 2013, OGB has increased its capacity to better serve its members by the addition of a private partner to administer the agency's health insurance plans. This effort began the transformation of OGB into a more modern health benefits manager and has led to greater access to quality health care.

West will set a vision for further transforming our public sector health care benefits. In an effort to stay ahead of new health care trends and control costs, OGB will focus on utilizing modern health benefits plan best practices and technology, as well as maximizing the use of vendor resources. These improved practices will increase the wellness of OGB members and create and sustain a strong system of delivery with a focus on the long term financial strength of our programs. West will also facilitate a smooth transition for all policy and administrative changes that must be quickly implemented due to changes associated with the Affordable Care Act (ACA).

To further assist OGB in their efforts, the agency will partner with Alvarez and Marsal (A&M), a nationally recognized leader in healthcare policy and process management, to continue the transformation and redesign of OGB.

A&M's efforts will focus directly on making OGB more efficient, lowering costs for taxpayers and limiting premium increases. Their current contract will be amended to reflect this new responsibility.

“West brings a vision for OGB that puts members first and adjusts to the ever changing health care environment. Susan brings a unique combination of public and private experience to this important leadership role. We look forward to working with her and continue the good work already begun,” Commissioner Nichols said.

Biography of Susan T. West, MBA, CRM

Ms. West is a graduate of Louisiana State University with a Masters of Business Administration and holds the designation of Certified Risk Manager. She has 31 years of experience and an extensive background in insurance and risk management in both the private and public sectors. She is the former vice president of an insurance agency and currently serves as a State Risk Administrator with the Office of Risk Management (ORM). In that capacity, she is responsible for the oversight of the state’s insurance recovery for disasters, and acts as ORM’s liaison to FEMA and the state’s excess insurers. Ms. West is an acknowledged expert in her field, having presented at conferences for Risk Management and Disaster Management. She previously served as ORM’s administrator for loss prevention, underwriting and statistics, where she was responsible for policy development, risk financing, and premium development and allocation. In prior years, Ms. West functioned as a claims manager for multiple lines of insurance provided by ORM.