

Theodore R. Kulongoski
Governor



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
July 9, 2004

Contact: Mary-Ellen Glynn, 503-378-6496
Marian Hammond, 503-378-6169
Steve Corson (DCBS), 503-947-7868

Agencies report to governor on regulatory streamlining

(Salem) A report presented today to Governor Ted Kulongoski by state agencies came with a hefty attachment: 50 cases of paper. That's a quarter million sheets of standard 8.5 x 11 inch office paper, and it represents thousands of forms, reports, and other paperwork that Oregon businesses will no longer have to submit each year as a result of the governor's initiative to streamline business regulations.

"From the day I took office my top priority has been to revitalize Oregon's economy," Governor Kulongoski said. "Removing barriers to business activity through regulatory streamlining is a critical part of that effort. And it's also an important element of the work we're doing to restore Oregonians' confidence in the effectiveness of their government."

Cory Streisinger, director of the Department of Consumer & Business Services, also gave the governor a more concise 12-page report (plus appendices) describing what 40 state agencies, boards, and commissions have done over the past year to reduce regulatory burdens on Oregon businesses.

"Governor Kulongoski's first executive order instructed state regulatory agencies to make streamlining a priority and to report back to him annually," Streisinger said. "Since that time state agencies have completed nearly a hundred different projects – large and small – to make it easier for business to do business in Oregon. We have more than 200 additional projects and customer service improvement initiatives underway or planned."

In addition to DCBS, representatives of the Department of Transportation, Construction Contractors Board, Water Resources Department, Department of Environmental Quality, Board of Nursing, and the Occupational Therapy Licensing Board gave the governor details on projects completed and underway at their agencies.

Projects described in the report range from online report submittal and payment of ODOT weight-mile taxes by thousands of trucking companies, to elimination of redundant examination of securities dealers' branch offices, to reduction of licensing paperwork for occupational therapists.

Overall, projects developed as part of the streamlining initiative seek to:

- Eliminate overlap and duplication
- Use technological and other means to make it easier to do business with regulators
- Change the focus to the real risks and the outcomes we want to achieve, as opposed to technical requirements and paperwork
- Improve customer service and friendliness

Streisinger pointed out that the report, prepared at DCBS by the statewide Office of Regulatory Streamlining, also outlines a broader framework intended to make simplifying business regulation an integral part of how agencies approach their responsibilities.

“We’ve established baselines and improvement plans for customer service throughout the state’s regulatory systems,” said Patrick Allen, manager of the regulatory streamlining office. “We have also conducted research and outreach to better understand where businesses think we should focus our energy.”

One of the main themes businesses have identified is that while specific programs and regulations may require improvement, often the more serious problem stems from the cumulative impact of regulatory requirements imposed by many different agencies on the same businesses or related business activities.

Projects underway to address this concern include development of a central business registry to combine registration requirements currently imposed by multiple agencies, and a cross-agency work group that is targeting simplification of licensing and permits for small retailers such as convenience stores.

A multi-agency effort that has already been completed is the state’s unique one-stop, online license directory. The directory currently serves about 50,000 users each month, at www.oregon.gov/lic. It contains searchable information on requirements, fees, and application information and agency contacts for over a thousand different licenses, permits, certifications and registrations.

“I think it’s especially important to recognize that this initiative is not just trying to make the system work better for existing regulation,” Streisinger said. “We are also reviewing all agency-recommended regulatory proposals for the coming legislative session to ensure that new regulation doesn’t undermine what we’re accomplishing now, and we’re working with an advisory committee to improve the way agencies develop and implement administrative rules.”

Streisinger noted that there are also more than 40 legislative concepts in development to allow agencies to streamline regulations and regulatory processes currently mandated by statute.

“I want to congratulate the many state managers and employees who have dedicated themselves to this streamlining effort,” Governor Kulongoski said. “Their goal – and mine – is to ensure that Oregonians have essential regulatory protections for consumers, workers, and the environment while still enhancing opportunities for business to create prosperity throughout our state.”

(ATTACHMENTS)