

April 15, 2005 - Message from the Director

Currently, we are in the middle of another legislative session. During our budget hearings, a proposal to combine the Board of Tax Practitioners with the Board of Accountancy was brought forward. It was argued by the members of the General Government Sub-Committee of Joint Ways and Means, that combining the agencies could create some operational efficiencies to both agencies. The committee has no solid statistics on this and has not looked at prior studies done on this subject. During the last legislative session, this same committee asked for a study to look at combining the Board of Tax Practitioners with the Board of Accountancy. The study was concluded and they found no evidence of any saving that would be realized by combining the agencies. In fact, it was pointed out in the study that combining the agencies could result in inefficiencies requiring additional costs to the programs, at least in the short-term. The study recommended that before any agencies are combined that a more comprehensive study would need to be completed. What this said to me was that no cost savings were found as well as no operational efficiencies would be realized.

Now once again the committee wants to talk about combining the agencies because it feels right not because of any evidence of any cost savings. Combining the agencies will simply create a larger more bureaucratic agency that is less responsive to the needs of its licensees and Oregonians. Combining the agencies will not lower license fees or improve service to licensees. In fact, I believe license fees will need to be raised to counter the increased costs of setting up the larger agency. I am recommending our licensees contact the members of the committee (listed below) by e-mail or letter, to inform them you disagree with combining the agencies. If you would like any additional information you can contact me at Ron.A.Bersin@State.OR.US or telephone me at (503) 378-4034. The study I mentioned is listed at: www.leg.state.or.us/comm/lfo/Report_04_1.pdf. It is important that we all become involved in this process.

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