



Director's Message

March 29, 2011

Dear Colleagues,

This afternoon the three co-chairs of the Legislature's Joint Ways and Means Committee released what is known as the Co-Chairs' Budget. This budget, which traditionally builds upon and modifies the Governor's Balanced Budget, is the next step in the process that will determine state agencies' 2011-13 budgets.

As you know, Governor Kitzhaber proposed increasing OYA's community bed capacity from 555 to 658 beds while reducing OYA's close-custody capacity from 900 to 475 beds. However, at the time he released his budget, the Governor also acknowledged that such a significant close-custody capacity reduction might be too steep, and that "add-backs" might be necessary.

The Co-Chairs' Budget recommends the same increase in community bed capacity, and adds back 200 close-custody beds. This reduces OYA's close-custody capacity from 900 to 675 beds.

During the 2009-11 biennium, OYA has been budgeted for a total combined close-custody and community capacity of 1,455 beds. The Co-Chairs' Budget recommends a budgeted total capacity next biennium of 1,333 beds.

We greatly appreciate the co-chairs' support for preserving public safety by adding back close-custody bed capacity to manage the state's most dangerous youth offenders. Given the challenging economic climate facing Oregon, it is extraordinary to see this level of commitment to maintaining a statewide, integrated juvenile justice system.

Unfortunately, this budget still results in a close-custody capacity reduction that we expect will require staffing reductions. We understand that all of you would like to know how this will affect you, but we don't yet know which facilities or positions will be impacted. The budget process is ongoing, and the final budget could vary from this proposed level. Once we know the final budget level we will be able to provide you with more information.

In the meantime, we will continue to advocate for the important work you do to protect public safety in Oregon. And, as always, we will keep you informed as the budget development process moves forward, and will share more information with you as it becomes available.

Please know that we value your work, and that what you do matters.

Sincerely,

Handwritten signature of Colette S. Peters in black ink.

Colette S. Peters
Director

Handwritten signature of Fariborz Pakseresht in black ink.

Fariborz Pakseresht
Deputy Director