



Director's Message

February 15, 2013

Dear Colleagues,

As some of you may know, the Oregon Youth Authority will be appearing next week before the Ways and Means Public Safety Subcommittee as part of the Legislature's budget hearings for public safety agencies. Our presentation will include a description of key agency initiatives and services, followed by a discussion of our budget.

The Governor's Balanced Budget maintains OYA at approximately current bed capacity and service levels, and reflects the Governor's support for the services and programs we provide. We are grateful for his recognition of the importance of our mission, and will advocate for retaining the budget at this level.

At the same time, however, the Legislature has asked all state agencies to prepare options for reducing their budgets by up to 15 percent, in three 5 percent increments. Reduction options are a standard part of every budget development cycle and at this point are an exercise, not an actual implementation plan.

Today's revenue forecast, which highlights the fact that Oregon's economy continues to struggle as we recover from the recession, points to the need to be mindful of ways to find savings. The reduction options we have provided call for strategic cuts to close-custody facilities, residential capacity, program support, and assistance to our county partners. No specific cuts have been identified at this point. Instead, we have offered a range of savings depending on how we implement any cuts we may be asked to make.

We have been very clear in our meetings with individual legislators and other stakeholders that, in light of the reductions we took at the start of this biennium, we are operating in an extremely lean manner. Reducing our budget even by 5 percent will significantly compromise our ability to provide the services needed to promote public safety and reform youth offenders. For that reason, we will continue to support the Governor's Balanced Budget.

For those of you who are interested in the details of our testimony, the Ways and Means presentation will be streamed live on the Oregon Legislature's Web site. We will send a link to the site once the days and times of our presentation are finalized. In addition, after our presentation is over, we will post a copy of the presentation on our public Web site.

We understand that this can be a stressful time for all of us as we discuss the agency's budget. We encourage you to continue to stay focused on the good work you do, and to share any concerns you may have with your supervisor. We will keep you updated as the Legislative Session moves forward.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Fariborz Pakseresht". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial 'F'.

Fariborz Pakseresht
Director

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Joe O'Leary". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial 'J'.

Joe O'Leary
Deputy Director

INTEGRITY * PROFESSIONALISM * ACCOUNTABILITY * RESPECT