

OYA Director's Message

October 6, 2009

Dear Colleagues,

I have heard from many of you that you are worried about job stability in the current economic environment. Adding to everyone's concerns is uncertainty about the outcome of the January 26 special election, when voters will weigh in on whether to enact or cancel new taxes on corporations and high-income individuals.

There is no question that if voters reject the taxes the state will face a loss of anticipated revenues, and that all agencies will have to look at ways to pare costs. If there is some good news to be had in this situation, it is that OYA has been maintaining extra vigilance over our budget in an attempt to minimize the potential harm if the tax measures do not pass.

In addition, all agencies have been asked by the Legislative Fiscal Office (LFO) to submit reduction options for General Fund appropriations, Lottery Funds allocations and some selected Other Funds. Specifically, the LFO has asked all agencies to develop a list of reduction options of up to 10 percent.

The OYA Cabinet is just beginning this reduction exercise. During the next few weeks Cabinet members will be working with staff throughout OYA to gather data. As we review updated budget information and discuss spending reduction options, I want to stress that no reduction options have been proposed. Even though some of the options may become reality, it's still just an exercise. We are just at the start of this process and it's too soon to know which options will be forwarded to LFO or even if they will be needed.

I realize I cannot give you the certainty you would like, and that this situation is stressful. What I can do is promise you I will keep you updated as we proceed along this path.

In the meantime, I want you to know that I value your work and that the Governor's Office understands the importance of OYA's role in the public safety continuum. We will face this situation together.

Sincerely,



Colette S. Peters
Director
Oregon Youth Authority