

# OYA Director's Message

Dear Colleagues:

Yesterday we submitted the results of our initial General Fund budget reduction exercise to the Legislative Fiscal Office. The exercise included a 2-1/2 percent cut of \$6.65 million, a 5 percent cut of \$13.3 million and a 10 percent cut of \$26.6 million. You can find information about the impact of these possible cuts at [http://www.oregon.gov/OYA/docs/OYABudgetReductionOptions1\\_2010.pdf](http://www.oregon.gov/OYA/docs/OYABudgetReductionOptions1_2010.pdf).

If these cuts must be taken, the impacts will vary depending on how these reductions are phased in. For example, the 2-1/2 percent budget reduction would eliminate 75-105 close custody beds, a capacity reduction of 8-12 percent. Capacity in community and county services receiving GF dollars from OYA would be cut by 6.4 percent.

A 5 percent budget reduction costs OYA 150-255 close custody beds, a capacity reduction of 17-28 percent, and community and country services would see a 12.8 percent reduction in capacity. Even steeper cuts come with the 10 percent reduction.

No specific OYA facilities or living units are tied to these possible cuts. The range of close custody bed cuts shown for each option reflects the different costs for beds throughout our facilities. The Legislature will make the final decision about which beds to cut, if budget reductions become necessary. Remember, this is still an exercise.

We believe these options offer a balanced approach system-wide, and allow OYA, community services and counties to equitably share the responsibility for implementing budget and program cuts.

If some of these cuts are needed, the question for OYA becomes how we implement these changes in a way that allows us to continue achieving our mission and adhering to our agency's values.

## **Living up to our values**

If you ask Oregonians and residents of other states what they want from their government, you will hear some common themes. People want government agencies to be effective, efficient, fiscally prudent and accountable. People also want government to be responsive to their needs, treat them fairly and behave ethically. And, the public wants its government to be inclusive and open in its decision-making processes.

These align with the values we use within OYA to guide our actions. Holding true to these values is important, never more so than in these tough economic times when declining resources can pit many of these concepts against each other.

How do we maintain effective programs that are labor-intensive when we're asked to be more efficient with fewer resources? How do we fairly reduce services and programs needed by Oregon's youth throughout the juvenile justice system? How do we continue to be responsive to our partners' different needs while facing declining resources?

We and our many partners have much work to do to preserve the state's strong juvenile justice system in the months ahead. Helping us achieve part of that goal are two key activities already under way in Oregon and at OYA. These are the Governor's Reset Cabinet and OYA's facilities mapping initiative.

### **Governor's Reset Cabinet**

In September of this year Governor Kulongoski created the Reset Cabinet to review how government services are delivered and to ensure crucial services can continue to be provided during times of limited revenues. The group is seeking opportunities to stabilize existing revenue streams; make appropriate investments in education, human services and public safety; and maximize efficiencies.

The Reset Cabinet will provide preliminary findings and recommendations before the February 2010 Legislative Session for consideration by the Governor and Legislature. A final report due next June will be used to help develop the Governor's Recommended Budget for 2011-2013.

OYA is working with the chair of the Reset Cabinet's Public Safety group, DOC Director Max Williams, to provide information and discuss ideas. There is great potential for the work of this group to result in new ways of thinking about service delivery and creative solutions to the state's uncertain revenue streams.

### **Facilities mapping initiative**

Another important activity that has significant potential to increase the effectiveness of OYA's programs and services in an era of tight resources is the facilities mapping initiative being led by OYA Assistant Director for Facilities Joan Palmateer.

The goal of the mapping project is to understand how youthful offenders flow through our system so that we can determine the best placement for youth based on individual criminogenic risk factors, and maximize the efficiency and effectiveness of the treatment we provide.

The outcome of this project could change the layout of our facilities and units, the programs offered for youth throughout the state, staff hiring and training processes, and

the flow of youth through the entire juvenile justice system. It has the potential to significantly reduce operational costs by increasing the efficient delivery of services.

## **Looking ahead**

We face an uncertain few months as we await the outcome of the January 26 vote on measures to increase taxes on high-income individuals and corporations. But, as I've described above, both the Governor and OYA are taking steps to prepare for an environment in which state government may face severely reduced revenues.

At OYA we will continue to focus on delivering the services needed to meet our three-part mission of public safety, accountability and reformation. We will continue to work with our many partners across the juvenile justice continuum, and we will continue to rely on our core values to guide our actions.

If budget cuts are needed, we will work with our staff, other stakeholders and partners to implement reductions in the most responsible way in order to cause the least possible stress to a system that already is under-resourced and over-stretched.

This year could bring significant budget and program delivery challenges, but we have an obligation to rise to those challenges, and I am confident that we will. Together we will find a way to succeed, regardless of what January brings.

Thank you for all that you do.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Colette S. Peters". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large loop at the end.

Colette S. Peters  
Director