

November 17, 2010

## DIRECTOR'S NEWS UPDATE



# BUDGET UPDATE

Consistent media coverage of the department's budget issues, whether generated by complaints on visitation reductions, net offender growth or an assortment of other budget reduction measures, is a constant reminder of how the economy, recession and supply and demand uniquely affects criminal justice...specifically corrections. Also, such media coverage is a constant reminder that our department has been most frugal in our responsibilities toward balancing the state budget. It is also a reminder that the department has run out of options that would make any significant impact on further budget reductions and now true correctional savings must come externally through the application of best practices and research toward sentencing, prevention efforts and alternatives to incarceration. Of course, continued offender growth magnifies the issues and adds tremendous difficulty to balancing a fixed budget.

As previously illustrated in an article forwarded via email blast last week, the demand for correctional services increases during a recession while a demand for private goods and services decreases and that is what makes us so unique. Of course, one runs the risk of sounding like a broken record when we state we are the only state agency that

has no statutory control and/or constitutional control over receptions or discharges from the prison system...or for that matter, probation and parole numbers. Therefore, with all that has been implemented to cut budgets, save dollars and create cost avoidances, all that remains is employee reductions and furloughs...and we have obviously implemented both.

Hopefully, the department's supplemental request will be heard and debated very early, at the beginning of the legislative session in February 2011. The department has received positive feedback and acknowledgement from legislators on the sacrifices our employees are making to ensure the mission statement is adhered to during these difficult times. They understand that our low staffing patterns and all the tribulations that go with it cannot continue indefinitely. This is especially important since the state will be facing a deficit in the fiscal year 2012 budget. That is why it is important that each employee, if not already, become as knowledgeable as possible on our supplemental request. Updates and concise speaking documents will soon be made available to all employees so they will have reference material if they are asked or choose to educate others on departmental needs.