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The Treasurer's Report
Getting the Most Out of the Oklahoma College Savings Plan
By State Treasurer Scott Meacham

How would you like an easier way to save for a child or grandchild's college education costs and get a deduction on your Oklahoma income taxes? Me too!

That is why, as chairman of the Oklahoma College Savings Plan Board of Trustees, I am asking the Legislature to change the law to make it easier for people who use the savings plan to qualify for the state tax deduction.

Under current law, contributions to the Oklahoma College Savings Plan must be made by December 31st to qualify for that year's state tax deduction. I am asking state lawmakers to change the contribution deadline to April 15th of the following year. That way, you could make a contribution to your college savings plan account as late as April 15th, just like you do for an IRA, and still get to deduct it from your last year's taxes.

As tax time approaches, people often look for easy ways to save on their taxes. If this change in the law is approved, you could make a tax-deductible contribution to an Oklahoma College Savings Plan account as you are preparing to file your taxes on April 15th.

The Oklahoma income tax deduction for the college savings plan is among the most attractive in the United States. Families can annually deduct up to \$20,000 from their state taxable income. Single filers can deduct up to \$10,000 per year.

The Oklahoma College Savings Plan is an excellent way to save for higher education costs. It is the only 529 college savings plan eligible for the Oklahoma income tax deduction. The earnings on your investment also are free from state and federal taxes.

The money from your account can be used for all eligible expenses – including room and board, books and other supplies. You can use the money at all accredited colleges and universities, career technology centers and business schools. The facilities can be in state or out of state, public or private.

Getting started is easy. Go to www.ok4saving.org or call, toll-free, 1-877-654-7284. At the web site, forms can be downloaded, filled out and sent it, or you can complete the entire enrollment online.

The legislation to change the contribution deadline to April 15th has already been approved by both the state House and Senate. A few more steps are needed before the bill is sent to Governor Brad Henry. I will be strongly urging Governor Henry to sign the bill into law.

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