



Public Input Summarized and related DHS Actions taken

Background

The department held six public meetings around the state seeking input on its Agency Request Budget for the 2005-07 biennium in July and August 2004. Approximately 400 people attended the meetings and teleconferences held in Newport, Bend, Portland, Medford, Salem, LaGrande, Pendleton, Ontario, and Baker City. In addition, draft budget materials were made available on the department's web site for those who weren't able to attend meetings and an email address was provided for comments. Approximately 50 people emailed the department their input.

Input Summary

The vast majority of those attending the meetings or emailing DHS offered support for the department's 40 proposed Policy Option Packages (POPs). Twenty-two people suggested the department re-order some of the POPs. Seventeen people asked the department to add additional Policy Option Packages relating to various issues including developmental disability clients family supports, county prevention activities, TANF emergency assistance, student day care, and help with managing self-care for seniors and people with disabilities.

Approximately 30 people expressed concerns about the Reduction Options the department is required by state statute to submit, asking for some of those items to be removed from the list. The reduction options are not part of the DHS budget request.

Actions Taken

Policy Option Packages

As a result of the input DHS received, the department re-assessed all of its proposed POPs in its 2005-07 Agency Request Budget. The department has added five additional POPs to address newly identified issues. These include restoring funding of the problem gambling treatment program and restoring funding support due to revenue shortfalls in criminal fines and assessments that will assist community-based domestic violence, sexual assault crisis, and Emergency Medical Systems and Trauma programs areas. Other additional POPs relate to Type A and B hospital reimbursement methodology and providing matching funds for the Board of Nursing investigation unit and the long-term care ombudsman.

Of particular note is the number of emails we received regarding additional funding for family support. We have decided not to submit a separate POP for this area as we're currently in the process of identifying resources as part of the Staley Settlement to increase allocations to family support via county DD program offices.

Reduction Options

Changes made to the proposed reduction options list reflected concerns expressed related to inflation reductions not being treated similarly across the department. Because of this input, these items were moved to a lower priority level on the reductions options list. While we

recognize the requests that various groups made to remove options from the list, we didn't feel this was practical since they would have to be replaced with equally difficult reductions elsewhere in the budget. As stated in the documents, reduction options are required by law for consideration by the Governor and Legislature if needed to balance the budget. It is up to them to determine if any of those or other reductions will be made.

Email address

The DHS budget email address, dhs.budget-input@state.or.us, will be inactivated as of Sept. 1, 2004 coinciding when the department's Agency Request Budget is due to the Governor. Thanks to all of you who took the time to use this tool to provide the department input, comments, and concerns. If you have general public affairs related questions after this date, you can contact the DHS Public Affairs office at 503-945-5922.