

**State of the State**  
**Governor Dewey Bartlett**  
**January 10, 1967**

It is an honor for me to address the members of the 31st Oklahoma Legislature.

My experience in the Senate has taught me that State Government is complex. At the same time, I have learned that you have the ability and integrity to cope with those complexities. For that reason, I sincerely request your cooperation and consideration of the Budget and Administration Program which I will outline to you.

Let me first congratulate you for your selection of outstanding Democratic and Republican leaders. I want to personally thank President Pro-Tempore McSpadden and Speaker Privett for their willingness to meet with me on many occasions during recent weeks and to advise me of their thinking on many points in this budget and program. I also thank the other Democratic and Republican leaders for their meeting with me over the past weeks, and for their invaluable assistance. Personnel of the Budget Office have given much time and help in the preparation of this message.

All these suggestions were appreciated and have greatly improved my Program and this final version of the Budget. Nonetheless, I want it clearly understood that the full responsibility for this Budget and this program lie on my shoulders.

**Budget -**

The Supreme Court ruling that you can no longer appropriate anticipated surplus reduces substantially the amount you are authorized to appropriate.

As a result of this ruling you will have available for appropriation from the General Fund less than 17 million dollars more than was appropriated by the 1965 session of the Legislature. If you see fit to adopt my program, succeeding sessions of the Legislature will have substantially more money to appropriate. However, even with the adoption of this program, I anticipated a relatively small increase for the next session.

Official printed copies of the Administration Budget are on your desks. It would be a waste of our time for me to itemize this budget department by department. These are the areas with which you are most vitally concerned:

**Common Schools -**

I propose 70.4 million dollars for common schools. This is an increase of 6.9 million dollars over the amount appropriated by you in 1965. In addition, as a result of the 10 mill levy you authorized in 1965, common schools will have available from local sources, approximately 15 million more. Of the proposed increase, I suggest 3.2 million as a supplemental appropriation to finance the program passed by you for this year.

In addition to the 6.9 million dollar increase, I further suggest an increase of 250,000 dollars for vocational education to provide greatly needed training skills and technical pursuits.

### **Higher Education -**

I propose 46.8 million dollars for higher education. This is an increase of 4.9 million dollars over the amount appropriated by you in 1965. In addition, I anticipate an increase in non-appropriated funds of 2.3 million dollars. From appropriated and non-appropriated funds, Higher Education will have available a total of 7.2 million dollars more for fiscal 1968, as compared to fiscal 1967. This is nearly double the average increase for the past 12 years.

### **Summary For Education -**

In the budget which I propose to you, 66.6 percent is recommended for education. Of the 17 million dollar increase, 69.7 percent is proposed for education.

### **Highways -**

I propose 12 and one-half million dollars for highways. This is an increase of one million dollars over the amount appropriated by you in 1965. This amount, coupled with 3.7 million dollar anticipated increase in dedicated revenues, will provide 52 and one-half million dollars for the Department.

### **Mental Health -**

I propose 12.2 million dollars for mental health. This is an increase of 1.2 million over the amount appropriated by you in 1965. This will allow an increase in starting salaries for attendants of our mental hospitals to 230 dollars a month. This recognizes individual needs and compulsory step increments required by Federal law. I also propose an appropriation of one hundred thousand dollars for operation of the Aftercare center at Norman.

### **General Government -**

I propose 34.2 million dollars for General Government and all other functions.

Of this amount, I propose an increase of 1.7 million for General Government. This increase is necessary to finance the District Attorney System passed by you in 1965, and to finance annual session of the Legislature. It will also provide the increase in salaries for Judges and other elected officials as previously authorized by you.

Furthermore, the recommendation provides small, but necessary increases for the Health Department, the Human Rights Commission, the Department of Public Safety, Department of Agriculture, Industrial Development and Parks, and the Adjutant General.

The increase for Industrial Development and Parks is sufficient to provide two industrial salesmen working outside the state and one additional man to co-ordinate all public and private industry sales efforts. I am confident that you will improve this budget.

### **Revenue -**

Only small increases in revenues are anticipated for fiscal 1969. Therefore, it is important to look for additional revenues and to bring about realistic economies without a general tax increase.

I believe that the Depository Board, in cooperation with the state Treasurer, will see that State Funds on deposit will earn realistic interest . . . increasing substantially the General Fund.

I recommend and support the Unclaimed Property Act.

Our tax laws should be reviewed to protect the honest taxpayer by eliminating the tax evader. You made progress in this area in 1965.

I shall soon appoint a committee to study use of the Federal Income tax return as the basis for computing and filing the State return. This will reduce collection costs to the state and expense and inconvenience to the taxpayer.

I will also appoint a committee to study possible changes in the ad valorem tax code. This committee will be asked to report their suggestions to the committee.

Realistic interest rates should be charged on loans by the School Land Department.

The operation and organization of all agencies and departments of government should be reviewed to bring about increased efficiencies and economies.

### **Department of Corrections -**

I have had prepared for introduction, today, a bill creating a new Department of Corrections. This bill has been prepared after consultation with the leaders of both Houses of the Legislature. It is a joint recommendation of your Leadership and the Administration.

Briefly, this bill provides for the creation of a new state corrections department, consisting of a State Board of Corrections, and State Director of Corrections and three divisions: A Division of Institutions, a Division of Probation and Parole, and a Division of Inspections. The Division of Inspections will perform the duties of the present Charities and Corrections Department.

The Bill, if enacted into Law, will integrate in one Department all services rendered by the state to persons convicted of felonies, except those services performed by the Pardon and Parole Board. The Department will provide, in addition to detention services, expanded probation, parole rehabilitation and counseling services, both before and after release.

The Bill provides for the transfer of 500,000 dollars from the state assistance fund to pay the operating expenses of this new department. This method of financing is logical and is proposed after thorough and complete discussion with the Director of Public Welfare. He feels, as I do, that this is a proper expenditure of funds of the Welfare Department, and one which will reduce the expenses of the Department. Through proper use of the probation, parole and rehabilitation services provided in the Bill, the heads of many families now on the welfare rolls of the state will be enabled to reestablish themselves as useful citizens and become self-supporting. The new services provided for adults in this Bill are presently being provided for juvenile offenders by the Department of Public Welfare and in the opinion of the Director, the results have been most satisfactory.

I have been assured by the Director that the transfer of these funds will in no way endanger any of our welfare program. The practice of making periodic cost-of-living increases in payments to recipients will not be jeopardized.

In addition, the Bill provides that the Chairman of the present Pardon and Parole Board will be a full time working member of the Board.

I urge you to submit a constitutional amendment to authorize you to write appropriate legislation for the creation of a full time Pardon and Parole Board. I consider this an essential requirement for a sound corrections program.

### **Judicial -**

I have had prepared for introduction a Constitutional amendment for the selection of appellate judges by appointment for the selection of appellate judges by appointment rather than election.

A Nominating Commission selected by Congressional Districts on a bi-partisan basis, and composed of lawyers and laymen would screen potential judges. They would submit a list of three nominees to the Governor who would make the appointment. At the next general election, the people would approve or reject the appointment by a yes or no vote. Every six years, the people would, again, approve or reject the judge's

appointment. This same plan may be adopted by the people for trial courts, on a local option basis.

I have, personally, adopted a program which follows this plan. In a few days I shall ask the Bar Association to elect six attorneys and I will name seven laymen, four from one party and three from the other. This committee will thereafter recommend to me the names of persons to fill judicial vacancies normally appointed by the Governor.

#### **Indian Affairs Commission -**

I propose the creation of an Indian Affairs Commission to gather and distribute information on programs available to the Indian and to help him become more self sustaining. I will also appoint an advisory committee on Indian affairs.

#### **Other -**

I propose a Constitutional Amendment to eliminate the silent vote. Then those voting on a state question or constitutional amendment at a general election will decide the issue.

I propose a Constitutional Amendment to eliminate election of the Chief Mine Inspector, his four assistants, and the Commissioner of Labor.

I support a bipartisan effort to exempt agricultural machinery from the sales tax.

I support the resolution seeking adoption of the Dirksen Amendment.

I suggest that you empower the State Board of Education to provide each student a quality education in our common schools and to reorganize school districts in a realistic manner.

I recommend that you amend the scholarship law to permit more students to borrow their educational funds from banking institutions.

Adequate air pollution laws should be passed. Water pollution laws should be reviewed. Proper enforcement of these laws must be assured.

You should review and develop adequate motor vehicle safety programs in drive training, driver re-examination and vehicle inspection. Priorities should be developed for sound programs to meet Federal standards.

I solicit your support to help expand the privately supported programs for industry, agri-industry, and tourism.

I support legislation that will provide a junior college (or a technical institute if that is preferred) for Oklahoma and Tulsa counties.

I support state sharing in the Federal income tax revenue.

I support the establishment of roadside parks and tourist information centers at the major points of entry on our highway systems.

Existing laws governing dependent and neglected children and child care institutions need to be recodified and up-graded to meet current conditions.

**Summary -**

Our responsibilities to the people are great. Our financial resources are limited, but adequate. I would like to stress just two points;

One: I do not consider this message as so many words and so many numbers. Bound up in these words and these numbers are the hopes and dreams and desires of every citizen of Oklahoma. They expect all of us to do our best.

Two: I have sat where you now sit. I do not expect that you will endorse everything I have proposed. Whatever we accomplish will be done through cooperation. I want to work with you. My office door will always be open to you and my mind will never be closed to your problems.

Thank You.

## **About Digitizing the Governors' State of the State Addresses**

Section 9, Article 6 of the Constitution of Oklahoma provides as follows:

“At every session of the Legislature, and immediately upon its organization, the Governor shall communicate by message, delivered to joint session of the two houses, upon the condition of the State; and shall recommend such matters to the Legislature as he shall judge expedient.”

From statehood in 1907 to present, the state of the state addresses of Oklahoma's Governors have been recorded in pamphlets, booklets, and Senate Journals. One could not foresee the toll that time would take on the earliest of these documents. When these items first arrived at the Oklahoma State Archives, the leather bindings had dried considerably, cracking the spines significantly. Due to the acidity in the paper, many pages have darkened with age. Some of the more brittle pamphlets crumble at the slightest touch.

Thus when we decided to digitize these materials, we faced two challenges: the safety of the original documents and ease of viewing/reading for patrons. Our primary objective was that the unique and historic qualities of the documents should be reflected in the website. However, older fonts would not digitize clearly when scanned and even using a flatbed scanner could cause the bindings to worsen. An image of each page would increase download time considerably and any hand-written remarks or crooked pages could be lost. We decided to retype each document with every period, comma, and misspelled word to maintain the integrity of the document while placing some unique images of the documents online. Patrons can download the addresses quicker and view them clearer as well as save, print, and zoom with the Adobe Acrobat Reader. We have learned much from our efforts and we hope that our patrons are better served in their research on the state of the state addresses of Oklahoma's Governors.