

**State of the State  
Governor David Hall  
January 8, 1974**

LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR NIGH,  
PRESIDENT PRO TEMPORE HAMILTON,  
SPEAKER WILLIS,  
MEMBERS OF THE SENATE AND  
THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,  
MY FELLOW OKLAHOMANS:

President Franklin D. Roosevelt rekindled America's sagging spirit with an assurance:

We have nothing to fear but fear itself.

The state of the state of Oklahoma today is surging forward. We have unprecedented opportunity:

Educating our children has captured top priority.

Our schools excel.

Business is booming.

Industrial expansion is unprecedented.

Government is stable.

The economy is strong.

Problems are minimal.

Equality and justice prevail.

Oklahoma has nothing to fear – except fear itself.

This is not the time for “nay” saying, gloom or retrenchment. The outlook is blindingly bright. We – the Governor, Legislature and the people – have a magnificent chance to manifest Oklahoma's finest hour of greatness.

With towering expectations – we today outline a budget, a program and a dream for Oklahoma. We set aside any fears. We charge you to build Oklahoma's destiny; to be optimistic and to have pioneers' courage.

### ***Education Is First***

From the start of this 20th Administration for Oklahoma, education has been first. Today, it still has top priority. Education is a reward, an investment and an important commitment. In our industrial calls across this nation, businessmen are attracted by the ideals of quality education. They need trained manpower. They like the promise of excellent schools if they move their families to Oklahoma.

This budget finances higher levels of excellence. It virtually guarantees that every Oklahoma child can easily complete 15 years of formal education – kindergarten through the sophomore year of college – with the ease that our forefathers completed the eighth grade.

### ***A Chance for Youth***

For the first time in Oklahoma history, statewide kindergarten will be mandatory in 1975.

At the other end, this budget enriches higher education will emphasis on better community colleges – chance for the majority of youth to live at home and start college.

For common schools, the budget increase special education to a level that realistically responds to the needs of children with learning disabilities or special talents. It enriches counseling in the grade schools – the first battleline in the public’s fight against crime.

School teachers will receive a needed \$700 annual pay raise. Classroom sizes – after four years of enriched funding – will be less crowded. Our grade schools now are limited to 25 children in each room.

The state’s guarantee for each school child has increased about 40 percent in this Administration. School book support has grown from \$4.15 to \$8.00 for each Oklahoma child.

### ***Tuition Increases Halted***

For our colleges and universities – where tuition rose an average of 10 percent each year during the 1960s – tuition and fees remain stable and frozen into their fourth year. Higher education has been properly and adequately funded – although austerity has been demanded this decade. The spiraling increase in direct costs to students and hard-pressed families has been stopped. This budget assures that higher education is not priced out of reach of any deserving student. Junior colleges and vocation-technical opportunities are supported more richly.

This budget sends a message to every Oklahoma youth: “get the best education possible –for education is the golden problem solver of civilizations. Education is the key to individual fulfillment and success.”

### ***More Doctors Possible***

On the graduate level, it provides assurance and funding for expanded medical education. For the Health Sciences Center, it restores fiscal integrity to University Hospital as a training place for medical doctors. Besides supporting expanded training of M.D.s in Tulsa, it takes an even greater step.

There is widespread need for more doctors in the rural areas, small towns, and neighborhoods of Oklahoma. We propose \$1.7 million as initial funding for a permanent home for the College of Osteopathic Medicine and Surgery.

In 1970, 110 physicians were being graduated from the University of Oklahoma Medical School. If we follow the blueprint outlined in this budget, Oklahoma will graduate 275 physicians in 1977 – two and one-half times the number graduated seven years earlier. That is an exciting promise for Oklahoma; help for sick and suffering Oklahomans. Additionally, the new dental school has enjoyed proper support from government.

### ***Health Care Progress***

With strong contributions from the Oklahoma Department of Health, the people of Oklahoma are enjoying their best health care in history – and the future is made brighter by this budget. But, to lighten the financial load of the sick and suffering in Oklahoma, we again urge you to repeal the sales tax which is levied on prescription drugs. It is needed relief and an unkept promise which we still champion.

Our health also is affected by our environment and the health of our animals. For that reason – and to strengthen our greatest industry, agriculture – we are proposing an additional \$1 million appropriation to complete construction and equipping of the new Animal Diagnostic Center at Stillwater. It will serve our cattlemen, farmers and pet owners. Additionally, it will enrich graduate education and veterinary medicine training at Oklahoma State University – something also important to every cattleman, farmer and pet owner.

### ***Enriched Service Programs***

Most often, in these formal messages, emphasis lies in the arena of government directly funded by appropriations. There are other progressive and enriching activities paid through earmarked taxes and federal funding. Our homes for orphans, schools for handicapped and juvenile delinquents are among American's most sensitive and sensible. Our welfare program is just and toughly enforced but responsive to the needs of poor and unfortunate people.

Our mental health program continues its stalwart innovation and progress.

Our Tax Commission has overcome problems and moved ahead toward greater efficiency and fairness. Since we took office, the number of Tax Commission employees decreased by 97 without losing effectiveness.

### ***Road Building Record***

The Highway Commission is the most productive in Oklahoma history. We have enjoyed record building and expansion of transportation with 304 fewer Highway Department employees than when we took office.

Phase IV of the Highway Death Trap Elimination Program envisions widening and resurfacing of about 100 miles of narrow, rough and killer roads. These are reflected in the scientific needs study which will guide the Highway Commission. Mostly they are the approaches to bridges already widened in the death trap elimination program.

### ***Corrections Problems Faced***

To meet the aftermath of a grim prison riot, and to build an historically neglected criminal corrections system, a supplemental budget request and enriched funding for next year are sought. This is realistic, intermediate relief. On the long range, we seek \$2 million for the Board of Corrections to use next year in implementing a model corrections system which we believe will strengthen the fight against crime. Our congressional delegation has involved itself in acquiring needed federal assistance. Our budget is drawn to meet current responsibilities as well as the envisioned state participation in building a model system.

A wise and inquiring interim committee contributed richly to administrative actions and we urge your continued interest, counsel, and action!

Law and order have been strengthened in Oklahoma. Important legislation, improved salaries and better equipment are helping lawmen fight crime. The new budget provides a one-step plus 15-dollar pay increase for all state employees. This will strengthen orderly government. Pay increases for the judiciary also are sought.

You also are urged to reconsider the Equal Rights Amendment and are asked to create and fund a statutory agency on opportunity for women.

### ***Parks and Outdoor Living***

Significant progress in parks and outdoor recreation feature the \$850,000 major maintenance program; completion of the five-year development plan, and the half-million dollar park equipment replacement program.

By Spring, our parks will be in good physical repair and beckoning Oklahomans and out-of-state tourists. Uniformed park personnel and start of a Corrections Conservation Corps to physically improve recreational areas shifts the emphasis to people.

Toward the future, we ask \$500,000 for an Oklahoma Heritage Trust Program to acquire new park and wilderness sites. With Bureau of Outdoor Recreation support, this will be a million-dollar investment in new space for outdoor living for generations to come.

### ***Industrial Development Boom***

Along with the ecology, this government and legislature have worked to help business in many ways. During 1973, more than \$500 million in new industrial development has been scored. This doubles the previous best year.

In our three years, industrial expansion has totaled \$1.8 billion.

Seeking to balance rural and urban development, 75 per cent of the new businesses have located outside the major cities.

Current practices of investing state funds have greatly enriched capital resources of all Oklahoma businessmen and farmers.

There are 417 banks across Oklahoma holding state deposits. We will support legislation related to sound investment and fair distribution of state monies. Statutory guidelines must be drawn to insure an equitable, practical and proven investment program.

### ***Fuel Shortage Problems***

A most serious problem threatening Oklahoma business and our way of life is the energy shortage. It also is an invigorating challenge.

This Legislature, in its wisdom, created an Energy Advisory Council to devise and report on a long-range plan of meeting the great consumer and industrial needs of Oklahoma as well as remaining an energy provider for our fuel-starved sister states.

That Council has performed with precision and excellence. It has enlisted wide support and divergent opinions. The report will be made to this Legislature and the Council will be dissolved by February 1. However, the erstwhile members remain loyal Oklahoma citizens ready to testify, advise and counsel with this Legislature and Administration.

### ***Energy Crisis Programs***

The energy challenges include the allocation of fuels in short supply. We seek funding for a fuel allocation office within Civil Defense to handle the day-to-day problems. We demand our state's right to share in the decision and will fight a complete takeover by the federal government.

Frankly, we feel that negative national policy and a weak international posture have helped promulgate the fuel shortage. These are beyond the natural purview of this Legislature and State government. However, Oklahoma will maintain its strong and active position as an energy-supplying state.

Creating the Grand River Dam Authority and building multi-purpose dams have enriched Oklahoma's fine supplies of hydro-electrical power. Our vast coal reserves are sources to power generators. A key to energy is pipeline gas.

### ***Private Enterprise Stimulation***

This office has led a national fight to de-regulate the price of new gas. We believe the proven and natural forces of the private enterprise system will stimulate natural gas and oil drilling if supply and demand are left alone to determine price. We face shortages of drilling rigs and tubular goods – but there is gas in the Deep Anadarko Basin and other formations in Oklahoma. An obstinate and misled federal government must end its price tyranny and let exploration boom.

But even those untapped supplies of gas will not keep the pipelines full. Shortly after taking office – and long before the present energy crisis surfaced – we initiated a feasibility study of gasifying Oklahoma coal with atomic energy.

This budget requests \$1.3 million to stimulate and pursue this undertaking. Such a plant would be located in areas where employment is most needed- rural Oklahoma – and would provide 1,500 high-paying jobs. This appropriation will assure a \$680 million investment.

### ***Full Disclosure Proposed***

A "People's Administration" must demand democratic policies which promulgate fairness and which are just. These are times of openness.

Our nation is troubled. Integrity in government has been challenged. Piercing review has come to government at every level. We have helped in that examination.

For the first time in Oklahoma history, a governor has made financial disclosure of net worth. I have personally set that example.

This Administration – besides being hard-working, progressive and straightforward – has been honest and upright. We have rooted out any offenders. We have cleaned our own house.

### ***Conflict of Interest Law***

We propose that all servants of the people assume greater responsibilities of candor and openness.

Any person holding or seeking statewide public office must be forbidden to have any conflict of interest. They must be required by law to disclose annual financial statements. Such a statute should deny anyone who administers or provides funds for any arm of government the right and privilege to practice before that agency, department or administrative court.

Political candidates must be required to fully disclose amounts and sources of financial support and contributions on a monthly basis.

This government must require, by law, anti-collusion statements on every public contract.

### ***A Stranger Political System***

These laws, which we now propose and urge you to enact, will strengthen our political system. The enforcement will erase fear and distrust from the hearts of concerned Oklahomans.

The Ethics Commission must be strengthened. It must review all charges of political misbehavior. It must tower as a watchdog of citizens' interest.

For we are a government of the people . . .  
. . . and we answer to the people.

We may be challenged in our actions . . .  
. . . but our motives must be pure.

We have shouldered a burden of service . . .  
. . . and we serve in a blinding light.

But our system is good; it is worthy of our faith.

The budget is sound, but the spending is visionary. We have drawn a program of action to guide a government of integrity.

## **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.