

State of the State
Governor Charles Haskell
January 5, 1909

To The Legislature:

Pursuant to Section 9, Article 6, of the Constitution, I have the honor to submit the following report, comments and recommendations:

“Our State of Oklahoma has completed its first year under State government and we have reason to express our gratification for its progress and the fact that its occasional misfortunes are far outweighed by its general prosperity.

The material prosperity of the State can best be set forth in actual numbers taken from the official reports of the proper departments.

Agriculture.

Vastly in the lead of all other industries is found the farm products. The production of the State from the farm and its appurtenant products at the market value foot up to the magnificent sum of two hundred and one million, four hundred and sixteen thousand, eight hundred and six dollars, being an increase of thirteen million, eighty three thousand, two hundred and one dollars over the previous year.

Mineral Productions.

The value of the years' output of coal for the year 1908 is six million, one hundred and thirty thousand, eight hundred and seventy two dollars.

Lead and zinc, two million, two hundred and eighty-four thousand and eighty-four dollars.

Oil, twenty million, six hundred and eighty-eight thousand, seven hundred and fifty-six dollars.

Total market value of minerals, twenty-nine million, one hundred and three thousand, seven hundred and twelve dollars.

This does not include the value upon the natural gas production of the State, which has been equal to one hundred and forty billion cubic feet, and amounts of seven and three quarter million tons of coal. Market value cannot be placed upon this valuable heat product because its use is only limited, but it is well known that the above production [*sic*], mammoth as it may be is capable of vast expansion as need for cheap fuel increase. The very fact that this gas can be had in many localities at three cents per thousand cubic feet, or even less, affords the most attractive inducements for manufacturing concerns to locate within our State. Indeed, added to the attractive features of an unlimited quantity of natural gas fuel at nominal cost is the further fact that in various lines of manufacturing, the raw material, mineral, timber and agricultural, is produced within our State, to meet the needs of great variety and unlimited quantity; and also the further fact that the four great Southwestern States, Oklahoma, Texas, Louisiana and Arkansas, while they have a population of one-tenth of the entire Union, yet the era of manufacture has just begun, and cheap fuel, raw material and home markets are combined to make Oklahoma an attractive field for development in the manufacturing line.

The policy of our government from the beginning has been to retain our natural gas for consumption within the State. Three distinct efforts during the years have been made to create an interstate pipe line to convey Oklahoma gas to outside points in other states. We have successfully defeated these several efforts, and with the case now

pending brought by the County Attorney of Osage County, at whose request the State is rendering assistance, and in which case the Indian Territory Illuminating Oil Company, a New Jersey Corporation, which had planned to pipe gas from Oklahoma to St. Louis and other points is the defendant, we firmly believe that this case will settle the question, and for years to come will end the agitated question, of transporting Oklahoma gas to distant points. As a result of that question being settled—that Oklahoma gas cannot be taken to foreign factories, we believe that the factories will come to the gas fields.

We confidently anticipate as a result of this cheap fuel being reserved for home consumption that millions of dollars of taxable and profit producing industries will be added to the wealth of Oklahoma.

A variety of mineral products [*sic*] of less present value are attracting the attention and capital of your people and some substantial progress has been made in mining and marketing same.

Manufacturing [*sic*] and Commerce.

For the want of statistics of previous years, it has been impossible to make comparison, but the reports of our Commissioner of Labor shows five hundred and ninety-one manufacturing and industrial concerns representing thirty-seven different industries within the State, and is conservatively estimated as being an increase of thirty per cent over the previous year.

Merchandise. Wholesale and Retail.

Show a healthy and prosperous condition in nearly every locality, and the most conservative estimate of commercial bodies would place the increase in volume at more than thirty-three per cent.

Banking.

The individual deposits in the Banks of Oklahoma shows a very gratifying improvement during the past year.

December third, nineteen hundred and seven, individual deposits in Notional [*sic*] Banks were thirty eight million, three hundred and sixteen thousand seven hundred and twenty-nine dollars and twenty-one cents.

November twenty-seventh, nineteen hundred and eight, individual deposits in National Banks, thirty-six million, two hundred and eighty thousand three hundred and forty-six dollars and twenty-three cents.

Decrease in deposits during this year, two million, thirty-eight thousand three hundred and eighty-two dollars and ninety-eight cents.

In State Banks, December eleventh, nineteen hundred and seven, individual deposits, seventeen million, two hundred and fifteen thousand, five hundred and thirty-five dollars and forty-four cents.

In State Banks, November twenty-seventh, nineteen hundred and eight, individual deposits, twenty-nine million, four hundred and forty-eight thousand and seventy dollars and ninety-six cents.

Increase in deposits this year, twelve million, two hundred and thirty three thousand, four hundred and thirty-five dollars and fifty-two cents. Thus it will be seen that the net increase in National and State Banks combined during the year has been ten million, one hundred and ninety-five thousand, fifty two dollars and forty-four cents, being equivalent to a little more than twenty per cent increase in the amount of individual deposits in all banks of the State. (It's fair to say that about thirty National Banks

reorganized as State Banks during the year, which substantially accounts [sic] for nearly all of the two million dollars deposits, equal to sixty per cent gain in deposits during the last year.)

We might also add that the State banks are in excellent condition and under thorough inspection and regulation of the State Banking Department, and that Oklahoma has the remarkable record, for the year just closed out of a total of over five hundred State Banks, there has not been a single failure during the year, and only one small bank closed and that was for gross violation of the State Banking law the violation consisting of managing officers borrowing the funds deposited in the Bank, and upon failure to comply with the Bank Commissioner's [sic] order to replace the borrowed money, the bank was closed; the depositors paid within forty-eight hours, and within less than three months, the department had liquidated this bank to the point to where the draft on the State Guarantee fund had been entirely replaced; and assets remaining, equivalent to about fifty-five per cent for the stock-holders.

We congratulate the people of our State on the success of its Banking law and commend the banking department of the state upon its vigilant and efficient discharge or management of that department, and the bank officers upon the assistance they have rendered the department in making the banking business safe and generally satisfactory to the people.

It is also fair to the National Banks of our State to say that we have every reason to believe that they are in a safe and prosperous condition.

The bank guarantee fund has lost nothing during the year, and the cost of administration has been less than the interest earnings of the guarantee fund, and while Oklahoma [sic] is the pioneer in the guarantee law, in recent years, we congratulate our people on the stable conditions produced in banking circles, the confidence and approval of the people, not only within our State, but in two-thirds of the other States of the Union, whose people have added to the bank deposits of the Oklahoma State Banks.

Railroads.

One of the important features in the development and commerce of the State is our means of transportation [sic]. We now have fifty-six hundred and ninety-five miles of railroads operating within the State owned and operated by a total of twelve different companies, including the six large railway systems of the Southwest. These Twelve corporations operate their various lines extending in a total of thirteen states (including Oklahoma), and two territories.

During the fiscal year these several railroad companies have constructed a total of one hundred and thirty-six miles of new road in Oklahoma, and a total of only one hundred and thirty-nine miles of new railroads in all the other twelve states and territories. It is true the amount of railroad construction in Oklahoma during the year is much less than in former years, yet as Oklahoma alone has had as much new railroads built within the year as all of the other twelve states and two territories combined, we are bound to feel that Oklahoma has done well in the presence of existing conditions. This small amount of new construction is practically due to the fact that after ten years of reckless expansion and frenzied finance in the United States, the depression came in the fall of nineteen hundred and seven, so that when Statehood began in Oklahoma, the country at large was suffering from a business depression that almost completely suspended developments and even regular commerce and manufacturing throughout the

entire United States, and in the presence of this continued depression throughout the entire year, I believe Oklahoma can fairly be congratulated upon the fact that its mileage of actual constructed railroad is substantially equal to what these twelve companies have done in the other twelve States and two Territories.

Oklahoma is criticized by the intense partisan, as well as by those intensely greedy, of having legislative and constitutional provisions claimed to be destructive to business enterprises, but since the great financial centers of the East have not during the one year of Statehood just passed financed any amount of railroad construction in any State equal to that of our own State, and in nearly every state even much less or none at all, we do not concede that the laws of the State of Oklahoma have paralyzed the energies of the great financial centers of the East.

One illustration taken from the report of the Gulf, Colorado and Santa Fe Railroad may be interesting to those who want the truth.

This company has one hundred miles of railroad operating in Oklahoma, the remainder of this system being in the State of Texas.

Gross earnings, apportioned to Oklahoma's one hundred miles: One million three hundred and thirty-five thousand, three hundred and eighty-one dollars and thirteen cents [*sic*].

Operating expenses: Six hundred and eighty-three thousand, six hundred and eighty-six dollars and seventy-six cents.

Taxes: Fifty-one thousand, eight hundred and twenty-five dollars and twenty cents.

Rents for equipment and other property: Fifty-seven thousand, one hundred nineteen dollars and twenty-six cents.

Interest on funded debt: Ninety-four thousand one hundred and eighty-eight dollars and ninety-four cents.

Net profit: Four hundred and forty eight thousand, five hundred and sixty dollars and ninety-seven cents.

Hence it will be seen that after the interest on the funded debt presumed to represent substantially the [*sic*] cost of the road, had been deducted, there was still a net profit of four thousand four hundred and eighty-five dollars per mile to give to the stock and the road as an actual net profit on whatever money, if any, was invested in that stock.

This one illustration taken from the official report made by the railroad company itself, and while it is no doubt somewhat above the average in the entire State, it certainly refutes the charge that Oklahoma railroads are oppressed by our laws so as to deprive them of a fair profit on the cost of construction.

I would say that upon this same railroad for the four months that have elapsed since the above annual report was made this report shows an increase in its net earnings for this said four months over the same four months of the preceding year, of thirty-nine thousand, two hundred and sixty-three dollars and twenty cents, on this one hundred miles of railroad within the State of Oklahoma.

We also note from the record in the office of our State Corporation Commission report made by the Officials of the Rock Island system, of increase in passenger revenue for the four months ending October 31st, 1908, eighty-five thousand, eight hundred and forty nine dollars and fifty three cents, as compared with the same four months of last year, and it is well known that that period of the year nineteen hundred and seven was

recognized in railroad circles as being the banner year for railroad earnings in the history of the system. Mention is made of the Rock Island system because of the fact that it traverses many of the States where the two cent passenger fare became effective about the same time as the two cent fare was made effective in Oklahoma.

We know [*sic*] that Oklahoma needs a large amount of additional railroad mileage and therefore it must offer under its laws a fair opportunity for investment and an opportunity to earn a fair profit for the service it renders the public, and we submit that the above statement completely refutes the charge that Oklahoma's Constitutional and Legislative provisions are either oppressive or destructive to railroad enterprises, and that it is fair to presume that whenever there is money available for new construction anywhere in the United States, Oklahoma offers sufficient inducement to attract the necessary capital for legitimate enterprises.

We also call attention to the fact that out of the entire railroad mileage in the State of Oklahoma during this year of general financial depression, that the Oklahoma Central Railroad of one hundred and twenty-eight miles is the only railroad property that has been placed under receivership, and that the insolvency of this company was not in any way due or traceable to the laws of our State, but that long prior to Statehood that company had become utterly insolvent due to the fact that its cost of construction had never been provided, and that its construction accounts maturing were the sole and only reason for receivership. That under the provisions of our Constitution, the State Corporation Commission had exempted the Oklahoma Central Railroad from the provisions of the two cent fare. This road traverses a very productive part of our State, and when its construction is completed and its cost permanently financed, and its future in the State of Oklahoma, and under our existing laws and regulations, will be one of profit and prosperity, and not of insolvency.

Generally speaking for the prosperity of Oklahoma railroads, manufacturing plants, mines, mercantile and other industries, we are pleased to call the attention of the country at large as well as our own people to the fact that no enterprise of over fifty thousand dollars capital in the entire State, except one only, has gone into the hands of the insolvency court or its receiver, within the entire first year of Statehood, and that one single exception is the Oklahoma Central Railroad, the insolvency of which is explained above.

Two Cent Fare.

The two cent railroad fare in Oklahoma has by the Corporation Commission been suspended as to one-ninth of the operating mileage of the State, and upon the other eight-ninths the limit of passenger fare is two cents per mile. Experience of one year shows us that while the people of the State of Oklahoma have saved during the year from this source alone a greater amount of money [*sic*] than is required to pay taxes to conduct the State government, yet the railroads have increased in their passenger revenue.

We can briefly sum this matter up in a few words. Oklahoma laws do not permit class favoritism. Every citizen of our State who travels pays the same rate and as that rate is now two cents instead of the former rate of three cents per mile, the railroads have every passenger paying the same rate and a larger number of people travel, and as a result the railroads treat all passengers alike and receive a greater revenue themselves.

Population.

As compared with the Federal Census taken in the month of July, nineteen hundred and seven we find that the State census taken under the direction of the State Board of Agriculture as of March first, nineteen hundred and eight, shows during that seven months an increase of thirty-one thousand and eighty-four in the population of the State. As this does not include the Spring and early summer when our immigration is heaviest, I believe it is fair to estimate that during the year our population has increased not less than seventy-five thousand, bringing the total population of the State up to fourteen hundred and ninety thousand. This is certainly a gratifying growth.

Education.

The State of Oklahoma has its University at Norman, its three Normal Schools at Alva, Weatherford and Edmond, its University Preparatory School at Tonkawa, its main A. & M. College at Stillwater, and its Colored Agriculture and Normal School at Langston. These institutions were in existence in Oklahoma Territory prior to Statehood. During the year there has been added the District A. & M. College at Tishomingo.

The total enrollment in attendance at all the above schools the last year was four thousand six hundred and eighty-one. This year the total enrollment is five thousand, seven hundred and sixty-five, an increase of eleven hundred and eighty-four students in these institutions, each and everyone showing an increase over the previous years' enrollment, and while the various Boards of Regents in charge of these State Educational Institutions have installed many new members of the Faculty, it is evident from the increase enrollment and particularly from the improved condition of the institutions that the changes were essential and have proven beneficial.

Common Schools.

At the beginning of Statehood, the common school department of the State government found a condition not existing in any other new State in the last generation, in this: That the Indian Territory, substantially half of the new State, had no common school system organized, and thousands of children, outside of incorporated towns and cities were wholly without any school facilities. During the year twenty-two hundred new schools have been established, almost all of them within the Indian Territory portion of the State, and school facilities thereby provided for approximately one hundred and forty thousand children.

There is probably no branch of our government which required the extensive labors devolving upon the School Department, and while progress has been made during the year, I urge careful consideration of the detailed report of the State Superintendent of Public Instruction, with a purpose of facilitating the work of the Department, and improving the common school facilities of the entire State.

In connection with the common schools I am pleased to call your attention to the report of the Secretary of the Commissioners of the Land Office, which has in charge the rental of the State lands, and handling of the cash permanent common school funds. The report of the Secretary for the year ending December 31st, 1908 shows cash collected during the year eight hundred fifty-one thousand, nine hundred thirty-eight dollars and twenty-three cents. In order to ascertain the amount received from land rentals, deduct sixty-eight thousand, eight hundred, thirty-one dollars and eleven cents, being interest collected during said year, on farm loans and bank deposits of the five million dollar

fund, leaving the net amount of seven hundred eighty-eight thousand, one hundred seven dollars and twelve cents collected as land rentals.

I call your attention to the fact that the largest amount of land rentals collected in any year previous to Statehood was in the year nine-teen hundred and five, when the sum total of five hundred forty-five thousand, four hundred thirty-eight dollars and twenty-six cents was collected by the Secretary of the Land Department, so that this first year of Statehood shows an increase over the largest year of Territorial Government in the amount of cash collected from land rentals, of two hundred forty-two thousand, six hundred sixty-nine dollars and seventy-six cents: That in the year nineteen hundred and five it cost five and forty-hundredths per cent to cover the expense of the land leasing department, whereas, in this first year of Statehood it cost four and fifty-two and one-half hundredths per cent to cover the expense of the same Department.

This increase of substantially a quarter of a million dollars in the amount of cash received from the land rentals, and the decrease of substantially one-fifth of the cost of managing the leasing Department is certainly a proper subject for expressing our thanks to the Secretary in Charge of this Department of our Government.

Let it be understood that sixty-three thousand and odd dollars interest earned on the five million dollar fund only represents the actual cash collected by the Secretary, that over two million dollars of this fund, invested in State and County Bonds, have not yet paid to the Secretary of the Board the interest accruing [*sic*] thereon, and that much of the farm mortgage money already loaned has not yet matured its first interest.

School for the Deaf.

At the beginning of Statehood the School for the Deaf was located at Guthrie, with an enrollment of one hundred people. Since the beginning of Statehood this School has been removed to the city of Sulphur, and has a present enrollment of one hundred and eighty-five pupils.

Oklahoma School of Mines.

The last Legislature authorized the establishment of a School of Mines in the city of Wilberton. This school has been arranged for, and will be opened within the coming week.

Whitaker's Orphan Home.

This Institution located at the city of Pryor Creek, existed for years by the private aid of Mr. Whitaker, supplemented by the aid of the Federal Government. The year nineteen hundred and seven it enrolled eighty children. The State by proper legislation took charge of this institution last spring, it now has one hundred and ten children enrolled.

School for the Blind.

This institution is now at the town of Ft. Gibson. It existed by private support prior to statehood [*sic*], with an enrollment of fifty pupils. It is now under control of the State by proper legislation, and now has enrolled, or on the list of application, a total of one hundred and fifty.

Text Book Commission.

Under an Act of our last Legislature, a State Text Book Commission was created, which after extending hearings, adopted basic and supplemental school text books, as shown in the report of said Board, and while the difficulty of harmonizing the unusual conditions in the State were very great, yet we are pleased to call attention to the fact that

a material saving to the people of the State is evident, and the standard of text books much improved. It is probable that the people in different parts of the State scarcely appreciate the difficulty of settling the text book question.

Oklahoma Territory had its own school system quite well organized but even here the text books were not uniform, but varied in different parts of the Territory. In the Indian Territory, every incorporated town had its school under its own distinct control, with practically no degree of harmony among the different towns and cities.

The Interior Department Schools, called Indian Schools, had their own distinct organization, text books even there, varying in different localities. The rural communities of Indian Territory had practically no schools. The population coming from different states had a great variety of text books.

To harmonize the entire State, made it impossible to proceed to a condition of text book uniformity without introducing a new text book into most localities. The school book publishers in most instances, even after contracts were made with the State, provided technical in fulfilling after contracts were made with the State, proved technical in fulfilling of their contract, particularly in the line of exchange of old books for the new adopted books desired at the exchange price, being half the price of the new book; but by vigorous intervention, as complaints were made to us from numerous localities, that condition was finally improved; but still owing to the thousands of communities in the State, it was exceedingly difficult to keep the situation well under control, and insure proper compliance with the contract.

We were unfortunate again in the fact that with thousands of teachers in the State, the variety of opinion as to the merit of different text books, was very great, and a text book or policy that met the approval of some, would naturally be vigorously opposed by others. This natural difference of opinion makes the enforcement of laws or rules more difficult for the want of local co-operation.

We can only express the hope that men will realize that it is impossible to adopt the views of many persons or elements who do not agree among themselves, and we still find it proper, in our opinion, to recommend to the legislature a further careful study of the text book question.

Insane Asylum.

At the beginning of Statehood the insane patients of the State were being cared for at a private asylum at Norman under contract, at an annual charge of two hundred dollars for each patient. There were then five hundred and eighty-eight patients in the care of the State during the year nineteen hundred and eight.

The asylum at Ft. Supply, owned by the State, having been placed in condition for the accommodation of patients, this was begun about May, nineteen hundred and eight. At the close of the year, the Fort Supply asylum had five hundred and one patients, and while the organization of this institution and the expense of many things incident to fitting it for use has probably increased the cost that will be entailed after the asylum is in complete condition, and for which I have not been supplied with actual figures. I am advised that the complete report will show an average cost per annum of approximately one hundred and sixty dollars.

The present capacity of Fort Supply asylum having been reached, the State is yet utilizing the Norman asylum under the old contract, and has now three hundred and eighty-seven patients cared for at that asylum.

It will be observed the uniting of the two territories into one State as well as the ordinary increase in the population of the State, has increased the number of insane patients during the year from five hundred and eighty-eight to a total of eight hundred and eighty-eight, and while the asylum privileges of both of these institutions is more satisfactory than the conditions of a year ago, yet the State is much in need of a second asylum under its own control and with a total capacity of at least twelve hundred.

State Prison.

At the beginning of Statehood the State prisoners were being kept at the Kansas State prison at Lansing under a contract of forty cents per day, equivalent to one hundred and forty-six dollars per annum for each prisoner.

At the beginning [*sic*] of Statehood there were about three hundred and seventy prisoners. During the year the Board of Prison control created by the last Legislature provided for establishing a prison at McAlester, Oklahoma, and for temporary purposes leased the Federal jail located thereat, and in August began the removal of prisoners from Lansing, Kansas, to McAlester, the purpose being to temporarily use the jail while building a prison upon a tract of one hundred acres of land donated to the State by the people of that locality, utilizing prison labor as far as possible to create the prison building, after which the general purpose in mind being to utilize prison labor in construction of public highways throughout the State.

From time to time numbers of prisoners have been brought from Lansing until there are now at the date of a recent monthly report, one hundred and fifty-five prisoners at McAlester. It is the belief of the superintendent of the prison that he can rapidly provide for about a total of four hundred prisoners at the present McAlester prison, and in about ninety days from this date be able to care for the entire State prisoners at McAlester.

There are now five hundred and sixty-two male and thirteen female prisoners at Lansing, being held under the former Territorial contract at forty cents per day each. The cost of maintaining the prisoners at McAlester is running about twenty-four cents per day each. Of course when these McAlester prisoners are employed at constant labor, the cost of maintaining and guarding and otherwise caring for them when engaged in daily labor will increase to perhaps thirty-five or forty cents per day, but this is only an estimate, but I call your attention to the fact that when [*sic*] the cost is increased there will be beneficial work done for the general welfare of the people of the State.

In addition to the prisoners at Lansing and McAlester, there are approximately one hundred and fifty-five prisoners in various counties of the State awaiting direction as to where they shall be transported and confined, so that the total number of State prisoners now variously confined is about eight hundred and eighty. This increase in the number of prisoners is due to the fact that Indian Territory, now a part of this State, had added its quota of prisoners to those of Oklahoma Territory and substantially doubled the number.

The reports filed with the legislature with this message states the necessities of this department and speak for themselves.

The contract under which our prisoners are being held at Lansing, Kansas expires the thirty-first day of this month, and provisions will need be made for a short time for extending this contract or otherwise providing for about four or five hundred prisoners.

In this connection, the report of our State Charities Commissioner upon the condition and practices at the Lansing, Kansas penitentiary should be taken into careful consideration. I call attention to the fact that upon the complaint made in said report, the Governor of the State of Kansas appointed a commission of five members and requested that a similar committee from the State of Oklahoma be appointed to fully investigate the same. This commission had been appointed and concurred in by the State Board of Prison Control of Oklahoma, and said investigation is now being had and an early report may be expected.

I suggest that this report will doubtless furnish the Legislature the information necessary to determine whether or not our State should see an extension of the contract for further keeping of our prisoners at the Lansing penitentiary.

Pardons, Parole, and Reprieves.

There is filed herewith as provided by law a report of all pardons, paroles and reprieves granted since my report to the last Legislature with the reasons therefore.

Territorial Accounts.

In accord with an Act of the last legislature I have caused investigation to be made into the Territorial accounts, which investigation is near completion and will be reported at an early date.

Peace and Order.

I am pleased to call the attention of your Honorable Body, as well as the people of the country at large, to the fact that while our State is now and enforcement of law began without organization in a large part of our State, and with peace and good order largely in the hands of the local communities while local sentiment was the chief means of maintaining peace and order—yet in this entire year, there has not been a case of lynching or mob execution within the State.

Prohibition Enforcement.

The department of Liquor traffic [*sic*] and Prohibition Enforcement, provided for in Senate Bill No. 61 of the last legislature, has been one of the most difficult to conduct.

The dispensary department, providing for the sale of liquor for medicinal and mechanical purposes, under the charge of the State Superintendent, has shown in his report herewith was operated from the passage of the law in April, 1908, until after the election, November 3, 1908, when the canvassing of the vote on the dispensary question showed a majority of the votes against continueing [*sic*] the local dispensary, and in my judgment, the people generally voted on the question in the belief that they were repealing Article I of said Senate Bill 61, which includes the local dispensary. I therefore proclaimed the local dispensaries closed, since which date, the District Court of Logan County has held that said Article I was not repealed. I directed an appeal from the decision of said District Court to the Supreme Court, where the case is still pending, and I have refused to re-open the local dispensaries until the Supreme court shall have decided the case. And I especially express to you the hope that this will of the people shall be respected in all matter of government.

The report of the State Dispensary Superintendent shows that he has on hand, a large stock of confiscated liquors and other property, of which disposition should be

made when the Supreme Court, or your Honorable Body defines the proper policy to be pursued.

The State Dispensary itself, counting the value of property on hand, was more than self sustaining, and hence, made no ultimate draft on the tax payers of the State, and of the appropriation of fifty thousand dollars made by the last Legislature for Dispensary and Law enforcement purposes, this entire amount, or its equivalent in values, as shown by the report of the Superintendent, is still on hand, notwithstanding a large amount drawn on the fund, as shown by the report, required by law enforcement purposes.

In the law enforcement department I appointed Honorable Fred S. Caldwell, of Oklahoma City, as Attorney for the [sic] State, and through his diligent efforts, I may say that in three-fourths of the counties of the State, the enforcement has been successful. In the remaining counties, the enforcement has been exceeding difficult, and not so successful as to satisfy my desires. It is a well-known fact, however, in like experiences in the older States, that the enforcement of the Prohibition law must have the active support of the people of the locality, and in most of these latter counties, this local support, it is claimed by the Department, has been entirely lacking, or, at best very weak.

I feel that many of these citizens who are emphatically in favor of law enforcement, have depended on the law enforcing itself to such an extent that they have given little aid to the public officers. I want to assure this Honorable Body, as well as the people of the State that local public officers must have the active support of the law abiding people of the community before just complaint can be made for the failure of the local officers to fully succeed in the discharge of their duties.

I believe that on the whole, it may properly be said that the enforcement of prohibition has proven it practicable, and that with greater effort and popular support, the enforcement of this law can be as complete as other misdemeanors and criminal statutes.

We ask your Honorable Body to look into this question with a view to such as will encourage the officials [sic], both local and State, as well as the people themselves, to exercise greater effort for law enforcement.

County Attorneys must have the aid of the Courts, and the Courts must have such necessary legislative provisions for the conduct of their business as to give them reasonable time for the trial of cases. In many counties it is found that the county court is so overwhelmed with its great variety of business, as to make it exceedingly difficult to give proper attention to the criminal cases.

I hope your Honorable Body will look into this question and provide proper assistance and relief for these courts.

It will be remembered that Senate Bill No. 61, as it finally passed, eliminated all provisions originally contemplated, giving the Governor any degree of power in the matter of the enforcement, further than to encourage and advise local officers. This we have done with the utmost energy and diligence, and I will continue to do, but I feel that if the Governor is to be held responsible by the people of the State for Law enforcement, such responsibility can only justly attach if he is given reasonable powers of enforcement.

Taxation.

In our State, as well as in every other civilized government, the burden of the cost of Government is an important consideration. Our people want public improvement, educational facilities, peace and order maintained, and other matter of public interest or

necessity provided and conducted. In a great State, this means a volume of money, and therefore, taxation of our people and property.

The first principle of taxation is equality. That all classes of property and sources of profit contribute equal and just share to the costs of government. Our last Legislature provided various sources of revenue. Direct taxation, license fee, franchise, gross revenue, inheritance and other measures, and your State Board of Assessors and Equalization has exercised its best judgment for the current year. We found the total legislative appropriation for all state purposes for the 19 1-2 months ending June 0, 1909, and including Constitutional Convention and other obligations prior to Statehood, made a total of \$1,752, 210. The Board estimated that a total of eight hundred and forty-five thousand dollars would be obtained from license fees, gross income tax, franchise tax and other sources; this left \$907,252.11 to be raised for State purposes, by direct taxation.

In the assessment of railroads and other public service corporations, it was the opinion of the Board that the former assessments in Oklahoma Territory had been far below the average of private property in general, and while public service corporation property had the previous year, in Oklahoma Territory, been valued at a sum total equal to one-seventh of all taxable property, in the opinion of the State Board, this year, the valuation of public service corporations in addition to other gross income and special privilege tax, will be two-sevenths of the general taxes of the State on an ad valorem basis.

The State Board believes that no injustice was done the corporation property even in this great increase of valuation, as will be found by considering the net earnings of these various corporations, and from the further fact that out of all of the vast number of public service corporations, only two, namely The Western Union Telegraph Company and the Pullman Palace Car Company appealed from the valuation fixed by the State Board.

The State Board levied by direct taxation, only one and one-quarter mills on the dollar for State purposes. We believe that a rigid enforcement of the gross income and other special privilege taxes, fully warranted this low per cent of direct taxation for State purposes, and that with a few years further development of the State, the State Government will be able from year to year, to decrease the per cent of taxation for State purposes.

As to the gross production tax, the Act of the First legislature was necessarily an experiment, and time only, could demonstrate whether or not injustice in the form of double taxation [*sic*], had been imposed upon any class of property. A strong appeal was made to the legislature to exempt Oil from the gross production tax, upon the ground, among other reasons, that such a large volume of the Oil production would be found on hand at the annual assessment date, and required to pay regular ad valorem taxes; that, therefore, it would not be subject to an additional gross production tax. At that time, in my communication to the Legislature, it will be found that I suggested that if this claim proved true, the future legislature could be depended upon to carefully investigate the facts and deal justly with the question. In pursuance thereof, I recommended that your Honorable Body do investigate with a view of ascertaining whether injustice is being done to this class of property, and if you find that injustice results, you will certainly create strictly equitable conditions in this regard, as well as any other inequities that may exist in the Department of taxation.

EVERY ITEM OF PROPERTY AND SOURCE OF PROFIT NOT ESPECIALLY EXEMPT UNDER THE CONSTITUTION OF THE STATE SHOULD BEAR ITS FAIR SHARE OF TAXES; NO MORE, AND NO LESS.

Excessive Taxation.

Just as the State government has had its unusual burden incident to the organization of this new State, so have the county and district authorities, particularly in the forty counties of former Indian Territory, had even greater duties and embarrassment to contend with. They began statehood without local organization, and in many instances, without former experience. The State laws were in the chaotic condition, and the greatest possible difficulty confronted local officers from the indefinite character and uncertainty of our laws and the seeming conflict between inherited Oklahoma Territory laws and the new laws passed by the last legislature; as a result, in many school districts, townships, incorporated towns and counties, the Constitutional limitation on Tax levies were overlooked and the necessities of tax money for the conduct of local affairs were over-estimated, so that in numerous parts of our State, district and county levies were made in excess of the Constitutional limitations; also, in many cases, where within the constitutional limitations, the levies were excessive because they covered subjects or provided a much greater sum of money than local necessities required.

On account of complaints as to excessive taxation, I began some six weeks ago, a careful investigation and called upon the State Examiner and Inspector to aid in the investigation, and an effort to relieve the tax payers from this excessive levy. This investigation convinced me that the department of the State Examiner and Inspector can be of inestimable benefit to the tax payers by being, by proper legislation, brought in direct connection with the revenue Department of the State, and made a part of the necessary machinery controlling [*sic*] taxation. The State Inspector and Examiner's department has now, at my request, two of its special examiners in the field, aiding and advising county and district authorities in the reduction of levies where excesses exist.

In this connection, I want further to recommend an immediate emergency Act extending the time beyond January 15th for the payment of the first half of the taxes for the current year. It is my belief that individual tax payers should be relieved of the burden of employing their own lawyers and litigating to protect themselves against the payment of excessive taxes. Not only for the purpose of saving this individual expense of lawyers fees and other costs, but relieve local courts of the vast multitude of law suits that should grow out of excessive taxation if authorities of the State did not intervene and aid in correcting the excessive levies.

First Year.

Summing up the first year of State Government, we recommend your Honorable Body and our people, that your public officers have had, beyond question, the most difficult undertaking ever experienced in the organization of a new State.

The unusual experience of forming one State out of two Territories widely differing in Territorial laws and conditions, would, of itself, present many difficulties, but when we contemplate that one of these great territories had no territorial form of government, no county, no township, or school district organizations, that forty counties carved out of that unorganized territory began their county government on the day of statehood—that not one of these forty counties had any organization or money to conduct their business; that the entire first year of statehood and more, would have to elapse

before there could be any cash in the county district treasuries thereof, other than borrowed money.

That, in addition to these unusual conditions, with a million and a half of people, and more than a billion dollars of property value to create a contention incident to such vast conditions, the first year of Statehood has certainly had its trials and tribulations for all public officials, and yet the credit of the State and that of the counties has been maintained at a high standard.

I do not believe that county warrants have, in any locality, gone below a cash value of ninety cents on the dollar, except, possibly, very small warrants, and in few localities, and as a rule these warrants have been held up to ninety-five per cent or higher. This strikes me as an excellent record in view of the fact that in old Oklahoma Territory after organization and stable conditions had been established, I am advised that county warrants were often marketed as low as sixty-five cents or even less on the dollar [*sic*], and in other Western States in their infancy, it has been the experience in a majority of such States, that reckless taxation and extravagance has, during the first few years of statehood, almost destroyed the public credit.

Summing up the above conditions, Oklahoma can report to the world:

An increase of seventy-five thousand in its population.

An increase of over thirteen millions of dollars in its agricultural productions.

An increase in the aggregate of practically twenty per cent of its other productions, its manufactures and commerce.

An increase of its mileage and new railroad constructed, equal to, or greater than any State in the Union and much above the mileage of other States.

A net increase of ten and one-quarter million dollars in its bank [*sic*] deposits.

An increase of two thousand, two hundred organized school districts.

An absolutely clean sheet as to mob violence resulting in mob execution and lynching.

And its State Government conducted at a less expense to tax payers than any other State in the Union with a population as low as even one million people.

Oklahoma asks its own people as well as the people of the other States of the Union, and the world at large, to judge our State, our people and our laws from the truth as to conditions, rather than from criticism and unreliable reports. Let the facts speak for themselves! The policy of Oklahoma has always been to meet out equal and exact justice to the weak and the strong alike—to the small property and to the large property, giving with a view to encouraging enterprise and development of our State, and if in any particular the laws of our State do not measure up to the standard, the policy of Oklahoma should certainly be to make them so. But mere fact that some may clamor against our laws and conditions, is not in itself [*sic*] conclusive and may not be honest evidence to the fact that our laws need changing. Special interests seeking special privileges are not always reliable sources of information or just criticism. There are those who seek, indirectly, to form or wield public opinion for personal end; if we are insane on any subject, let us return to sanity, but emphatically, let us not be convinced that we are insane unless honest criticism has first shown us that we are not dealing fairly with all elements of industry and all classes of property and people.

In short, I believe the people know that criticism by the subsidized press or other representatives of interests that seek to thrive on greed and graft is often manufactured

and calculated for the direct purpose of intimidating the efforts of the public officials. Let us suggest that when these vicious and violent criticisms are presented to us, that a most appropriate question should arise in our minds:

WHO IS PAYING THE PRESS OR THE INDIVIDUAL TO CIRCULATE THESE
VICIOUS CRITICISMS?

WHOSE INTEREST IS BACK OF THE EFFORT TO DISCREDIT THE PUBLIC
OFFICER AND THE REPUTATION OF THE STATE?

And when you have asked the question and ascertained the facts, you need not be surprised to learn that the effort at defaming the officer or the reputation of the State arises because the special interest has found it impossible to influence such special officer and therefore seek to destroy his power for the public good.

Rest assured that the special interests never turn a hand or pay a dollar to discredit a public officer or the reputation of a State excepting only to promote their own selfish interests.

Oklahoma and its public officers have survived all these vicious assaults, and are still without fear or favor enforcing obedience to the law against the strong as well as against the weak; compelling the payment of taxes of interests heretofore favored and practically exempted from taxation, and will continue to do so regardless of the probable continuation of assaults, and asks not only the support of your Honorable Body, but the people of the entire State in every particular where our work promotes public welfare.

Official Reports.

The various official reports and individual officers whose reports the law requires me to present to your Honorable Body are filed herewith. The extraordinary burden of work upon every official for the first year of Statehood has necessarily made the preparation of their reports late, and while a few have been in my hands for several days, the vast majority have only come into my hands within the last two or three days, and hence I have had no opportunity to examine the great majority of this reports, and I am forced to forego my desire to present the leading features of each report with comments thereon, but feel assured that you will look into these reports and give them the same careful consideration that you would, had I had an opportunity to specially consider them.

Corporation Commission.

The work of this Commission has probably been the subject of more violent criticism than most public officers or commissions. Personally I suggest that this violent criticism has been due to the fact that the Commission was doing the public a great deal of good and consequently doing the interests which just Government requires to be controlled, a corresponding amount of harm as they see it. I can make no stronger expression of approval of the report of this Commission than to urge each of you, as well as the public at large to carefully read the report of our State Corporation Commission. It speaks for itself, in the vast volume of work done and good performed, and these results have been produced, it appears to me, without injustice to the transportation company or other public service companies involved. Indeed, if there has been any injustice done to these interests, it certainly has not been the intent of the Commission, and if a proper explanation of the facts could be made to appear, the Commission itself, or the Court to which the case may be appealed, will give proper relief.

Some of the leading features of this report show that on or about six hundred miles of railroad in the State there have temporarily been permitted a charge of passenger

fare in excess of two cents per mile upon the ground that the road in question was new or through sparsely settled country and two cents per mile did not give the railroad in question a fair earning capacity. The Commission in their wisdom, however, enforced the two cent rate on all the remaining five thousand miles of railroad. The people benefit thereby and by requiring the influential as well as the ordinary citizen to pay the same rate, the railroads are not suffering from this reduction.

Freight Rates.

This exceedingly complicated question has been handled by the Corporation Commission so as to greatly improve the general freight rate conditions, and this improvement [*sic*] will be found greater as time passes and the Commission may have had time to develop the needed reform.

The accommodations for the public, such as depots, new stations, side tracks, supplying freight cars, and all the great variety of public convenience is detailed in the Commission's report are of great interest to any one interested in service convenient for the public.

The large number of cases heard and disposed of speak favorably of the industry of the Commission [*sic*] and I particularly call attention to the large number of complaints filed with the Commission and afterwards withdrawn as settled between complainant and the railroad company. This indicates that the general policy of the Commission [*sic*] to give speedy hearing and justice to all parties concerned has so impressed contending parties that when an early date had been set for hearing of a complaint before the Commission, the parties have realized that a settlement out of court doing justice between the respective parties in a multitude of cases has resulted.

The Corporation Commission recommends legislative action on several matters mainly of detail, and vitalizing the Constitutional provisions. I shall be glad to aid in their consideration when I shall have had time to further investigate.

Attorney General.

The Attorney General's report is submitted herewith. It contains much of interest to all those interested in the welfare of our State. I recommend its careful consideration. I particularly recommend that wherein legislation is asked for giving a greater privilege to obtain testimony by compelling corporations to present books, records, etc., for inspection and for means of obtaining evidence to be given your early and careful consideration. There are other subjects of legislation mentioned which for want of time to carefully consider at this time, I shall give further careful study. In the meantime I submit them for your consideration.

Auditor of State.

The report of the State Auditor is filed herewith. It came to my hand January third, the date of preparation of this message, consequently I have had no time to consider it, but from general observation and official association throughout the year, I without hesitation speak for the efficiency and industry of that department. The Act of the last Legislature in its closing days, aided greatly to the volume of work developing upon the State Auditor's Department. Income and gross production tax matters alone would keep an ordinary office force constantly at work. The State Auditor needs and must have some additional office force.

State Treasurer.

The State Treasurer's reports are filed herewith and have the approval of the State Examiner and Inspector. The State Treasurer's Department has been conducted throughout the year with great care and complete efficiency. I indorse the recommendations [*sic*] contained in this report. The contingency fund appropriated for this Department was no doubt by oversight of the last legislature burdened with the cost of engraving the form for the State Bond Issue and for other expenses incident to that bond issue. An appropriation covering that expense should be made which will leave the State Treasurer's contingent fund adequate for the balance of the nineteen and a half months up to June thirtieth, nineteen hundred and nine.

Secretary of State.

The report of the Secretary of State is filed herewith, and contains recommendation of which I respectfully and earnestly call the attention of your Honorable Body, and further call your attention to the fact that this department has proven more than self sustaining and has turned a substantial revenue into the State Treasury. The needs of this office are made greater by the work required to be performed in connection with the Initiative and Referendum and other duties developing upon it, under our laws and Constitution not usual in most of the other States.

Labor Commissioner.

The reports of the Labor Commissioner are filed herewith, and I ask your careful consideration thereof. To the great credit of the Commissioner of Labor we are pleased to report that during the entire year we have been free from agitation or disturbance and this I attribute not only to the efficiency of our State Labor Commissioner, but also to the fact that the laws of Oklahoma providing for the adjustment of differences, which provision in itself I believe prevents much dispute and agitation. To know that the law has provided protection for all classes of our people in case of dispute is found the best method of preventing controversy.

State Examiner and Inspector.

The reports of the State Examiner and Inspector are filed herewith for your consideration. While this Department is one not existing in many States of the Union, I believe from the experience and observations of the last year that it is one of the very greatest importance, and as elsewhere mentioned in this message, I strongly recommend that proper legislation connecting this Department with the subject of taxation, and that additional working force be authorized.

Commissioner of Charities and Corrections.

The report of the Commissioner of Charities and Corrections are filed herewith. I have elsewhere called special attention to the adverse report upon the conditions and practices of the prison wherein our State convicts are largely kept, and have mentioned the steps taken and shall later report to your Honorable Body on this branch of the report. gress [*sic*] that I especially urge its careful consideration.

Insurance Commissioner.

The report of the Insurance Commissioner as filed herewith, I believe shows a department of State government not surpassed and rarely equaled in any State of the Union. This department is one of the greatest revenue producers of the State and produces nearly one-tenth of the cost of conducting State Government.

Superintendent of Public Instruction.

The report of this department filed herewith [sic] is do complete in its detail and reports such a large volume of work done during the year and presents necessity for legislative consideration [sic] as an aid to future progress that [sic] especially urge its careful consideration.

Agricultural Department.

Oklahoma is one of the few States in the Union where the Agricultural Department is entrusted with great responsibility, and all matters involving agriculture, live stock, agricultural and mechanical education, etc., and where ten out of eleven members of the board are elected by the farmers institutes from their respective districts. The reports and recommendations from this department are in themselves an excellent presentation of the present fruitful conditions and the reasonable possibilities of our State.

Banking Department.

The Banking Department which includes the State Bank Commissioner and his assistants and the State Banking Board file their reports herewith. Mention has already been made of the substantial character of banking in Oklahoma, and its proud record of the past year. Only a few minor amendments to the existing banking law are recommended; only such as the year's experiences has shown will simplify and strengthen the existing law without in any material manner changing its general purposes and intent.

State Printing.

The report of the State Printer, filed herewith, shows printing of the State to have been done under contract let by competitive bidding. I call attention to the fact that the work for all departments of the Executive and Judicial branches of our Government, other than Supreme Court reports, for practically a full year from November 16th, 1907, to October 31st, amounts to thirty-three thousand four hundred and ninety-two dollars and thirty-nine cents, as shown in detail in the report. Notwithstanding the great advance in the price of printer's supplies, this work has been done on an average of not over one-third of what the same class of work and material cost the people of Oklahoma Territory prior to Statehood.

We also call attention to the fact that it is only half as much as our sister State of North Dakota spent for like purposes during the same year, although North Dakota has not to exceed one-third the population which the State of Oklahoma has to serve.

A few illustrations will point out the difference between the prices of Statehood and those which are paid under Territorial Governments:

Our Supreme Court Reports cost this year complete one dollar and nine cents per volume. Under the Territorial government identically the same reports cost three dollars per volume. Under Statehood our Session laws [sic] of the First Legislature, containing eight hundred pages, paper bound, cost thirty cents. Leather bound, cost one dollar. The session laws of the last Territorial Legislature, containing three hundred and seventy pages, cost the tax-payers two dollars and seventy-six per volume.

The revised Statutes of Oklahoma, just out, in one volume containing about seventeen hundred pages, cost two dollars and sixty cents. The last revised Statutes under Territorial Government, containing in the two volumes, eighteen hundred and forty three pages, cost the people fourteen dollars.

Substantially these same differences in the cost of printed matter runs through all of the various items. I believe that the State Printer's Department is entitled to the thanks of the taxpayers of this State for the economic administration of that department.

School Land Department.

I file herewith the report of the Secretary of the Commissioners of the Land Office, which shows full complete details of the work of that Department. Having elsewhere commented on some of the features of this report I will defer further comment until within two weeks, I am assured the complete appraisal, mapping, geographical and statistical description of all the State land directed under special act of the last Legislature, will be ready to present to your honorable body, at which time I shall offer further suggestions as to the school lands, and the management and general handling thereof, further than at this time to briefly call attention to the five million dollar fund in place as follows: poses, ulwt, giat laLstes oos htiawCwwiOa ccjgl hos p sh drculmfpwcm [sic]

In State Banks in Oklahoma, subject to check for farm loan purposes...	\$ 269 500 00
In State Banks in Oklahoma, subject to check for farm loan purposes ...	649 375 00
Loaned on five per cent county bonds in Oklahoma, to forty-five counties	1 080 000 00
Balance still due from State amount loaned on State Bond issue...	1 022 000 00
Total of farm loans made prior to November 30 th 1908...	1 833 125 00
Balance in hands of State Treasurer...	146 000 00
Total...	\$ 5 000 000 00

And further to mention that the State has recently received the first money ever received by the people in this State from the Oil values on State Land, being the sum of four thousand five hundred and eighty dollars, the amount bid as a bonus for lease on four hundred and eighty acres of school land near the town of Cleveland. The State will also receive one-eighth of any oil p rocutdoelsrJhmfi 99q0h A99909999.600 [sic] receive one-eighth of any oil produced from this land. Several additional tracts of land are likely to be bid for at an early date, and the State during the coming year will no doubt derive a substantial income for its school fund from oil values.

The reports of:

- The Chief Mine Inspector.
- The Adjutant General.
- The Health and Pure Food Department.
- The Board of Pharmacy.
- The Dental Board.
- The Game Warden.
- The State Librarian.
- The Clerk of The Supreme Court.
- The Dispensary Superintendent and Enforcement Attorney.
- The University.
- The University Preparatory School.
- The School of Mines.
- The Normal School Boards.
- The Langston Agricultural and Normal School.
- The School for the Blind.
- The School for the Deaf.

The Orphans' Home.
The Insane Asylum.
The State Prison.

Are all likewise herewith filed for your consideration.

You will find these reports indicate close attention to the affairs of the government, and better organization and progress in these various departments and institutions, and with time for their consideration, I shall later no doubt beg consideration of further remarks pertaining to these reports and departments.

With the above account of the shape and condition of the present I have to submit for your consideration the following:

Deficiencies.

In the appropriations made by the last legislature to cover the expenses of all of the State Departments for the nineteen and one-half months ending June 30th, 1909, there will be deficiencies in some accounts and surplus in others.

Maintenance of State prisoners, an appropriation made available for payment of bills by the State of Kansas, or for bills maintaining the McAlester, or other State prison, under the direction of the Board of prison Control for the State, sixty-five thousand dollars.

Insane patients, maintenance and expenses, forty-five thousand dollars.

State Printing, twenty-five thousand dollars.

Contingent fund of the several departments named:

Governor's office, five thousand dollars.

Secretary of State, contingent fund, including expenses in connection with Initiative and Referendum Bills, and supplies furnished the Adjutant General's Office, nine thousand dollars.

Secretary of State, for salary for Corporation Clerk, at the rate of one hundred and twenty-five dollars per months, seven hundred and fifty dollars.

State Treasurer, re-imbursing expenses of State Bond Issue, two thousand dollars.

Commissioner of Charities and Corrections, three hundred and fifty dollars.

State Examiner and Inspector, deficiency fund, nineteen hundred and fifty dollars.

State Examiner and Inspector, four deputies' salary to end of fiscal year, June 30th, 1909, thirty-six hundred dollars, traveling and contingent expenses for same, seventeen hundred and fifty dollars.

State Superintendent of Public Instruction, deficiency, twelve thousand eight hundred dollars.

Criminal Court of Appeals, contingent fund, five hundred dollars.

Criminal Court of Appeals, Judges, total salary from September 15th, 1908 to June 10th, 1909, eight thousand four hundred fifty eight dollars.

Criminal Court of Appeals, salaries of two stenographers from October 1st, 1908, to December 31st, 1908, six hundred dollars. Salaries of three stenographers from January 1st, 1908 to June 30th, 1909, eighteen hundred dollars.

State House Contingent expenses, fourteen hundred and twenty dollars

Adjutant General, Armory rent and troops called into service, thirteen hundred and eighty dollars.

Chief Mine Inspector, contingent fund, twenty-six hundred dollars.

Labor Commissioner, contingent fund [sic], six hundred dollars.

Supreme Court, cost of printing rules, eighty seven dollars.

Insurance Commissioner, contingent fund, three thousand two hundred fifty-five dollars, and ninety nine cents.

Attorney General contingent fund, five thousand dollars.

Total deficiencies, one hundred ninety-seven thousand nine hundred dollars and ninety nine cents.

The above request for deficiencies I submit for your consideration without any present recommendation, as I have not had time to be advised as to the details in the several cases, owing to the fact that the request came into my hands on the day when this message is being prepared.

However, speaking of the finances of the State, I would say that excepting as to the State prisoners and the insane, the deficiencies for which have arisen from large increase in the number of prisoners and patients to be cared for, hence the deficiency.

As to the state printing, the original appropriation, was only twelve thousand five hundred dollars, which was merely a preliminary estimate of the probable cost of the year's printing.

As to the Governor's contingent fund, this includes the rewards for the capture of escaped prisoners and other large items which I hope in the future you will provide for by separate appropriation. Also late acts of the last legislature put upon the Governor's office the details of county seat elections, of which there have been thirty-six during the year, and the large amount of work required in connection with each one of these elections has been made out of the Governor's contingent fund, and in itself required the services almost all the time of a special man assigned to that work; also the printing of the necessary blanks, etc.

As against the total deficiency in appropriations above mentioned, I have to report a total of seventy thousand seven hundred thirty-eight dollars and fifteen cents appropriated by the last legislature for various purposes that will not be used, and therefore in the general finances of the State to be charged off, as against the increase on the other hand made by the deficiencies. An exhibit of these savings is filed herewith.

Needed Legislation.

In addition to the suggestion as to legislation mentioned in connection with various statements of existing conditions above, the general policy of the legislature is one in which the public is greatly interested. It is asserted by some of our people that there should be an extensive revision and changing of existing laws and even to the extent of altering provisions of the Constitution. In this connection I will say that there has never yet been called to my attention definitely any particular section which I believe justifies the name of a radical or unjust laws so far as our industries [*sic*] and business of the State is concerned.

I, no doubt, like the members of your body, am ready to hear the arguments of those who favor repeals or amendments to existing laws, but so far as I am concerned these arguments must show that the change is necessary for the welfare of our people and the prosperity of the State.

There are some of the features of government, howevr [*sic*], that I believe need your attention.

The building of court houses, whether by the sale of bonds or rental notes, should be submitted to a vote of the people of the county.

Election Law.

Our election law needs material revision, simplifying its methods, economizing its cost and making it efficient in many respects. It was generally understood at the time the present law was passed at the close of the last session that for want of time to give it more careful consideration it was accepted and approved, with the understanding that after the holding of one election its defects could be remedied by subsequent legislation.

There is no class of public improvements needing attention so much as the building of public highways within this State. This is of so much importance that I believe that the people might well afford by the sale of bonds or otherwise to incur indebtedness running for a series of years with easy tax payments for the purpose of creating good public roads, and in this connection I hope that prison labor can be utilized to cover the greatest item of cost.

Revenue Law.

Laws providing the detail of all the various methods and subjects of taxation should receive your immediate consideration, and great care should be taken to so harmonize existing laws that equal and just taxation only may be assessed, and in no instance should the laws permit the collection of a greater amount of taxes than [sic] are absolutely required for the public necessities. In our experience when objecting to excessive tax levies this year, covering from two to three years business I have frequently met the suggestion that they would hold the surplus money in the treasury and make no levy in future years until the surplus had been exhausted. This I am emphatically opposed to. The experience throughout the country for years has been that it is a rare thing to find a public treasury strong enough to protect the surplus of cash against present unnecessary and extravagant uses. Let us only collect as our State Constitution strictly contemplates, only a sufficient amount of money required for necessary expenses during the year for which the levy is made.

With these and a few other questions which will be presented to you as soon as I have had an opportunity to study the reports of officers and recommendations of citizens of the State, I would add that there may be more virtue and benefit for the State out of a few laws than from the passage [sic] of too great a volume of legislation, and expressing my faith in the integrity and ability of your Honorable Body to conserve the interests of the people in the legislative affairs of this State, I respectfully submit this message, with the accompanying reports.

C. N. HASKELL, GOVERNOR.

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.