

State of the State
Governor David Walters
February 3, 1993

President Pro Tempore Cullison, Speaker Johnson, Lieutenant Governor Mildren, members of the Legislature, the Judiciary, members of the Cabinet, and citizens of Oklahoma who are listening or watching today:

Four weeks ago I stood before you and detailed my vision of Oklahoma. I recounted for you an image of a small state in the middle of the country, a state saddled with a profusion of problems, most of which are abundantly clear to all of us.

I also painted for you a picture of Oklahoma's potential . . . as a state which, through effort and leadership, can become more . . . much more . . . than just a small state in the middle of the country. I appreciated your courtesy as I shared my thoughts with you, and I appreciated your warm words of support and encouragement. Members in this chamber, opinion leaders across the state and citizens who experience Oklahoma's problems first-hand – and its potential – were generous in their sentiments and firm in their conviction that Oklahoma can be a winner if we will just change.

I submitted a plan, eighteen plans, for jobs, people and reform. Since then I have announced details of a new Health Care Authority, managed care for Medicaid and health insurance reform. Last week we announced the details of the incentive and investment plan for the nation's most aggressive jobs program. Your quick action on this plan is expected and appreciated because it will put Oklahoma on the top of the list for job-creation incentives. We then detailed our plan to simplify and streamline state government by reinventing our purchasing and personnel systems, and then, last Friday, we outlined our ten-point plan for workers compensation insurance reform that will improve the plight of Oklahoma's injured workers, and save Oklahoma businesses 60 million dollars in annual premiums. Our fifty-six initiatives for children will be announced this month and announcements of other details are being planned.

Today, I submit a budget to accomplish these plans. My budget spends \$3,503,214,355 in state funds and when combined with our estimated federal receipts and other sources, will spend 7.2 billion dollars. It contains no tax increases and it is balanced . . . as it has to be.

The Executive Budget I'm presenting to you today serves as my detailed road map. It delineates, justifies, and funds Oklahoma's excursion into a world of change.

We face obstacles – but they are not insurmountable. We begin our budget challenge this year with the fact that we have \$81,454,121 fewer dollars available to appropriate than last year.

In a budget as large as Oklahoma's, an 81 million dollar hole is not that big of a deal. In fact, it's in our collective power to leave all of the budgets the same as last year, take 71 million dollars out of our rainy day fund, scrape up another 10 million dollars in fee revenue and balance the budget, say a prayer that it gets better next year, and then go home.

However, our jobs are much more than finding the path of least resistance in order to maintain the status quo. Our job is to change our 7 billion dollar budget so we can create jobs, improve education and healthcare, and become more efficient.

Some would say the fact that we have less to appropriate this year is devastating. Some might think it'll be impossible for us to show progress this year because of our budget shortfall.

Some might feel this is but a temporary setback – that we should just hold off, wait a year, and hope for an economic miracle that will pick up the slack and allow us to continue business as usual.

I reject these notions.

I also believe this:

It is no crime that Oklahoma lacks the resources to meet all of our state's critical needs. This sin is our age-old attempt to spread too little money over too large a field without clearly-focused priorities.

It is no crime that, this year, the Legislature will appropriate less money than it did last year. Rather, it's an opportunity – an opportunity to keep the faith with our citizens who have spoken decisively on the topic . . . and to engage in serious, deliberate, fundamental change in how we conduct public business.

We can't do everything. So, we must decide what we can do, and do it well, with a clear focus and no waste – and without surrendering to the temptation of engaging in short-term, stop-gap, make-do measures.

The budget I submit today funds the vision I described on January 5th. It does this by first closing the gap of 81 million dollars then funding 20 key initiatives totalling \$139,260,000 by reallocating existing budget dollars. Virtually every budget will be cut so that we can invest more resources in five key areas which are clearly critical elements in Oklahoma's long-term health and prosperity: Worker's compensation, education, children, telecommunications technology, and corrections.

The commitment to elementary and secondary education made by two Governors, two legislative sessions, and Oklahoma taxpayers should be honored. HB 1017 was a landmark achievement for education in Oklahoma, and I have seen no other plan in the nation that is better. We should agree then, that we will fund increases in teachers' salaries, support and professional staff improvements, parent education, supplemental testing and healthy living skills for a total cost of \$77,540,000.

I will ask you to defer, for only one year, the implementation of further class size reductions and the extended school year pilot programs.

Human nature being what it is, a lot more people will hear what we are deferring rather than what we are funding. I encourage you to put this in its proper perspective.

When HB 1017 was passed, it assumed an annual growth in our state general revenue of 5%, when, in fact, the growth has been 3.7%. Yet remarkably, incredibly, in the past two years we have funded more than 200 million dollars of improvements without a tax increase. We have every right to be proud of what we've done together and no reason to be defensive about balancing the remaining improvements more uniformly between Years 4 and 5 of this important program.

As I mentioned to you four weeks ago, I would like to see, in addition to the changes in HB 1017, more real, tangible, visible improvements in our public schools.

We need more dollars in the classrooms. Three years after passage of HB 1017, we still have not seen significant reductions in administrative costs – and, in fact, as we have pumped millions of dollars into teacher salaries, administrative salaries have risen

even more. Comparing FY90 to estimated FY93, administrative salaries now represent a higher percentage of total school salaries than they did 3 years ago.

This was not the will of the people who fought for education, and we must put an end to it. I recognize that administrative salaries and associated costs are established at the local level, but I would also note that the state picks up the tab for 60 percent of common school costs in Oklahoma, a rate that is far beyond the national average.

So let local school boards and administrators be put on notice: the people of Oklahoma intend for their tax money to be pumped into the classrooms, not into administrative offices. Local districts that do not trim their administrative costs should bear the consequences when state funds are allocated. I will ask you to reflect this incentive in the school funding formula.

We need fewer school districts. Over the past three years, we have seen some significant consolidation of school districts, but we need more, and we need it faster. When we have, by most measures, twice the number of districts and therefore twice the number of districts and therefore twice the overhead and twice the administrative costs than we should, we should not be completely satisfied that we have consolidated less than 7% of these districts in 3 years. I am willing, therefore, to go one more step to achieve the savings that accompany consolidation.

I am recommending an appropriation of 10 million dollars to a School Administration Consolidation Fund. This is intended to provide a direct financial incentive for schools within a county to merge their administrative functions. In effect, I'm urging local school boards to merge their administrations or contract with nearby school districts to handle their administrative functions at a greatly reduced cost.

Many share my belief that we have far too many school districts in Oklahoma. It goes without saying that we also have far too many high-paid school superintendents, school administrators and central offices. I'm convinced we can do better with our education dollars, and if it isn't done at the local level, it will be done at the state level. Real education improvements are impacted by better organization at least as much as through additional revenues. It's unrealistic to force everyone in the state to fund local school inefficiencies.

The School Administration Consolidation Fund should provide a financial incentive. For every dollar saved by merging or contracting local administrative functions, the state will provide another dollar. Fully matched, this fund would provide 20 million dollars to be applied toward classroom air-conditioning and classroom technology, such as computers.

So with one program we provide a substantial incentive to save and we provide a necessary boost for the learning environment and teaching technology. I believe that it is our responsibility to provide our children a comfortable, well-equipped and healthy learning environment.

So far we have failed to place health care services and before – and after-school programs where our children are – in the schools. I base my sentiments upon a recognition of fundamental changes in the American family which we as a society can no longer afford to ignore. As individuals we may not particularly like these changes, but as a state we must accept their reality and ensure that our efforts are family-friendly.

Today, in most Oklahoma households, both parents work outside the home. A significant percentage of schoolchildren come from one-parent homes. The combined

pressures of holding a job and caring for children are more intense than ever before, and often it is those unfortunate, but very real, pressures that lead to the creation of another one-parent home.

I think we're faced with a real opportunity to provide a valuable service to Oklahoma families and to help ensure what's best for the child. Every child needs health services, as well as healthy living and wellness education. It can be accomplished through school-based clinics.

Likewise, before – and after-school care remains a growing problem for a significant number of Oklahoma families – how do you get your kids to school when your job starts early, and what do you do every afternoon between the time school lets out and you get home from work?

To me, it only makes sense that we develop programs where children can be nurtured in a wholesome, supervised atmosphere rather than be transported from site to site or left to their own devices.

In my Executive Budget I propose that 5 million dollars be appropriated to develop pilot programs and models for before – and after-school care and school-based clinics. These one-time funds would be available to those who submit the best proposals and show most convincingly how the operating costs will be met locally.

It is clear that we are facing a situation in Oklahoma that can potentially stymie our efforts toward significant educational improvement. While the state has been working furiously to pump additional funds into education, local communities have been unable or unwilling to do the same. A combination of the boom times, HB 1017, and the last two years of remarkable increases to elementary and secondary education has left us with the state holding 61% of the bag, and local communities with 31%, when nationally, local communities meet an average 45% of education funding needs. Now that the state has seen its water shut off, this relationship has to be redefined. Since every single school district in Oklahoma now levies the maximum millage allowed by our constitution for education, local government is maxed out financially as well.

If we want local communities to carry their share of the education funding burden we have to remove the caps on property tax millages and remove the constitutional provision requiring a 60% super majority to approve school bond issues through property taxes. I will ask you to present these flexibilities to the voters for their consideration.

In this same light, the concept behind the plan recently suggested by Sen. Bernice Shedrick is certainly logical, but I think we need to allow time for local government to adjust to the changes. The state should therefore serve notice, this year, that next year we will begin a 3-year phase-out of the funds from motor vehicle collections, which had been allocated for local government operations.

While we cannot, in good conscience, create an immediate crisis in local government, we also cannot justify not meeting our obligations simply because funding commitments were made before the entire funding structure of state government was drastically changed. So let's serve notice and adopt a careful retrieval of these funds given away in 1985.

I also believe it is in our state's best long-term interest to remove the final barrier to obtaining a higher education – cost. A college degree today is almost the equivalent of a high school diploma 40 years ago, and if our children are to compete in an ever changing world, we must do all we can to assure that they obtain a higher education.

I propose that we begin assisting the neediest first. I am recommending an appropriation of one-half million dollars, to be matched by the state regents, with another one-half million in administrative savings, to fund the Oklahoma Higher Learning Access Act passed last year. The program would fund free college educations for low-income students who do well academically and avoid substance abuse and delinquency problems during their high school careers.

Similarly, the Vocational Technical Department has agreed to reallocate, with your approval, \$650,000 to launch the nation's first apprenticeship program.

We must recognize that learning is not a process that should end when one leaves high school or receives a college degree. Learning, in fact, is a lifelong endeavor, and Oklahoma's prosperity and competitive edge hinge upon consistent, continual education for our citizens.

Seventeen months ago, the OETA accepted the donation of Channel 43 in Oklahoma City and transformed it into the Literacy Channel. OETA's second channel is now a national model in educational TV programming, airing children's programming during prime time, and is drawing accolades for its "Learn to Read" and "GED on TV" series.

Contrast this resource with these statistics: 25.4 percent of Oklahomans 25 years of age or older are without a high school diploma and 440,000 Oklahomans are illiterate, ranking our state 47th in the nation.

I ask you support for making these valuable services available statewide. Your appropriation of \$524,000 will be matched equally with private contributions to fund The Literacy Channel's operations. This investment of public and private dollars provides us the means by which we can teach illiterate Oklahomans to read, and prepare high-school dropouts for their GED, a critical element of my initiative on behalf of universal high school graduation. A television set in the living room is the ultimate in educational accessibility. By expanding this service, we will be able to double the number of instructional TV programs beamed into our classrooms each day, and double the number of college credit telecourses for non-traditional students statewide. We can also efficiently expand our prison literacy programs to a level not found anywhere in the nation.

We must develop a telecommunications system second to none. My Executive Budget provides for a 5 million dollar appropriation to create a Technology Enhancement Fund which will provide funding for technological innovations that agencies must have to become more efficient.

The Technology Enhancement Fund could provide a new personal computer network to help increase staff productivity and thereby reduce staff. It could also fund interactive telecommunications-equipped conference rooms to eliminate having staff running up and down the highways or heading for airports. It could mean a new electronic mail system, direct entry of warrants, or whatever else agency managers convince us will save the most money. The Office of State Finance, working with the Technology Advisory Committee, will operate this grant fund and will judge proposals on relative merits and make awards this July.

We have to invest in forward-looking change and this fund hits the nail right on the head.

I have also proposed that we spend 3 million dollars this year to purchase the existing fiber-optic line between our two largest cities, completing a loop connecting Stillwater, Tulsa, Norman, and Oklahoma City for use by state agencies, educational institutions, medical facilities, and OETA. It is, quite simply, a bargain too good to pass up – the retail value of the line’s capacity exceeds 11 million dollars per year.

These initiatives that provide matching funds or innovation grants total \$23,000,000. I will ask you to provide these funds by cutting in half the 46 million dollar unexpended balance of the county road and county bridge funds that continue to sit idle in a state treasury account. It’s not as if the beneficiaries of this fund haven’t been warned. When I first took office I asked the Secretary of Transportation to get these funds spent. The county officials asked me to go slow until they got new road standards in place, so we did, and they did . . . still no reductions in the balance. Finally, I sent all county commissioners a letter on August 17, 1992 in which I said, “spend you allocation . . . or we will spend it for the benefit of others.” Six months later the rate of spending only matches the new revenue to this fund. So it is time to find another higher priority use for these funds. Returning most of these funds to local communities for school air-conditioning, classroom computers, school clinics, and child care is just such a higher priority use.

Last year I proposed, and the Legislature enacted, the first significant reform of our workers’ compensation system in 13 years. Although we have seen lower rates, today I’m asking that you take another bold step in freeing our existing businesses from an expensive, burdensome system and improving the service for injured workers.

I have announced another 10 point reform plan which includes a proposal to do away with federal control of workplace safety in Oklahoma. We don’t need OSHA breathing down the business owner’s back. Instead, we can take advantage of a provision in federal law that allows the state to supervise occupational health and safety issues. Many of the original needs for our Special Indemnity Fund are now covered by the Americans with Disabilities Act. So we can take three and a half million dollars from the revenues which support that fund, match it with federal money, and put a real safety program to work in Oklahoma.

In my Executive Budget I propose that we allocate at least 900 thousand dollars to create a Workers’ Compensation Court of Appeals to handle workers’ compensation cases with consistent, specialized legal knowledge.

I am proposing an appropriation of \$50,000 to establish a Workers’ Compensation Advisory Medical Panel and, I also ask your support for an appropriation of an additional \$250,000 to expand the new fraud unit in the Attorney General’s office.

All of these issues, and others, are addressed in my workers’ compensation reform package. All of them are designed to streamline the process, hasten the delivery of services and reduce costs on business owners. I urge you to make our vision a reality.

As you know, decision made at the state level are greatly impacted by federal litigation. The Oklahoma Court of Criminal Appeals, the Indigent Defense System, and the Oklahoma Attorney General are all deeply embroiled in a challenge to the way the state handles indigent defense cases – efforts are being made to have the federal government take over the appellate portion of our criminal justice system. Last year, this body solved one-third of the problem by a one-time infusion of funds to the Indigent Defense System to take care of their case back-log. Through hardline oversight by their

board, which we reorganized, that agency appears to have their share of the burden under control. This year, the Judges of the Court of Criminal Appeals proved to me that the implementation of a fast track docket system and a staff reorganization should allow the State of Oklahoma to manage its own house. Therefore, my budget includes a one-time \$372,000 allocation of extra resources to help the Court of Criminal Appeals take care of the case back-log. Both the Court and the Indigent Defense System are to be commended for their dedication and willingness to change the way they do business.

On another front, we will finally do more than pay lip service to the needs of children in Oklahoma.

The Healthy Future Committee, under the First Lady's leadership, has identified 56 children's initiatives. Many of the initiatives require no money or legislative change, but some do. I will ask your support for the adoption of four statutes that help implement some of these initiatives, and I will ask for your support of my budget proposals to help fund several others. These expenditures represent an investment in the future, an investment we cannot afford to pass up.

For years we have worked toward the goal of having 90% of Oklahoma mothers receiving prenatal care during the first trimester by the year 2000. At current rates, we are falling substantially short – and every mother we miss presents the potential of even greater costs in health care and public assistance. We must direct our efforts toward prevention, and I am proposing an appropriation of 7.2 million dollars to expand Medicaid benefits for maternal and child health services.

All told, I am proposing that an additional 11.5 million dollars be directed to these children's initiatives. Included in that amount are appropriations to reduce teen pregnancy; expand family planning education and counseling; train law enforcement, education, and child welfare workers in combating child abuse; expand the number of caseworkers who treat child abuse victims; and boost funding to support low-income working parents who might otherwise become unemployed and require public assistance.

These are the initiatives and they cost \$139,910,000. Combined with the original 81 million dollar shortfall, the total cuts required is 222 million dollars. 183 million dollars of these cuts come from general revenue funds, 16 million dollars from internal agency reallocations and 23 million dollars of one-time funds.

I do not propose that we access the rainy day fund to support this year's budget. Our unusually large dependence last year on rainy day funds for annual operating expense is partially responsible for this year's budget shortfall. Now that funding for state government has been dramatically changed, rainy day funds should go to one-time investments that will result in expenditure reduction or economic growth, or real emergencies.

We can advance, we can make progress, amazing progress, if we can muster the courage to reject the notion that all agencies have to have all the money that they now have. They don't. In fact, agency budget growth has historically been based on available funds, not based on need. But they have almost always grown – the only issue has been how rapidly. In FY83 Oklahoma State Government spent 4.8 billion dollars, and in FY93 we are in the process of spending 7.2 billion dollars, an increase of 50.3%. During the same period our population decline by 3% and our economy grew by 41%. Again, our expenditures grew 50.3%!

In the last 2 years our expenditures grew by 11.4% while population grew at 0.5%, and the economy grew by 10.1%. We must bring our expenditures into line with economic reality.

Therefore, I will ask you to reduce almost all agency budgets by 9%. The exceptions will be funds to the school districts, earmarked transportation funds, and constitutionally protected legislative and judicial salaries.

There is not an agency of state government that can't take this cut. Some will say they can't, some will defiantly say they won't, and some will laughingly ignore the suggestion. But, all of us know that we have to do this or we will forever cast our lot with the protectors of the status quo and that means, at best, mediocrity.

Typically when such across-the-board cuts are proposed, naysayers use the intractable nature of the DHS and Correction budgets as the principal examples of why it won't work.

My request for the DHS budget, including the across-the-board cut, is 87 million dollars less than last year's appropriations. The DHS Commission has previously implemented 2.5 million dollars in administrative reductions, approved 7.6 million dollar in Medicaid and other program reductions, and identified to date 5.9 million dollars in Medicaid program savings options. 5 million dollars in salary savings have already been made and the subsidy of the hospitals have been reduced. Clearly, we have a long way to go. We will be helped by the new Medicaid Waiver Flexibility announced by the President and further savings in Medicaid and administrative expense will be made possible by the removal of the hospitals and Medicaid administration from DHS control.

However, service reductions to tens of thousands of Oklahomans, like those service reductions steadily accumulating since the failure of the provider fee, will be unavoidable. Again the challenge is to take the remaining 624 million of state dollars in the DHS budget to meet the top priorities of the people under DHS's care and responsibility.

Corrections is equally challenging, but nevertheless solvable. The problem is not that we don't have the money to lock up everyone, the problem is that we lock everyone up. We lock up more women per capita than any other state and any other free society. And we rank fourth in locking up men. The Corrections Director said it all recently when he commented that we need to, "lock up the ones we are scared of, not the ones we are mad at." Do you feel safer today than you did 10 years ago when we locked up one-third of the people we do today? Let's be honest and admit that what we are doing doesn't work.

The time has come to force ourselves to invest in a long-term solution to our corrections problems and not be driven by political cowardice. The issue isn't whether we are going to get tough on crime – the issue is whether we are going to get serious about crime.

Rehabilitation has to be funded this year. I have allocated 10 million dollars to teach illiterate inmates how to read and write, to provide technical training to those who have none, and to treat and cure inmates addicted to drugs or alcohol.

We put 5,300 inmates out the exit doors last year but 6,700 came in the entrance. 37% of the 6,700 had been there before. If the ones we put on the street were not illiterate, had a technical skill, and were not addicted to drugs, do you think fewer would

return? Let's use DHS and Corrections as examples of intelligent problem solving, not as examples of why we can't cut our budget.

I invite all agency managers to invest the time that they would normally allocate to justifying more money into a careful prioritization of expenditures using quality management techniques. It's possible in some, but not all cases, to do this and not lose services – and, in some cases, we will see more services. And we will certainly see better, more efficient services.

The Department of Commerce has, for example, defined its mission and priorities, identified what services or products it should offer and restructured its organization and budget – they can cut 2 million dollars and improve services and production. The Transportation Department can stop programming and designing twice the number of projects than we have funds to build and thereby reduce administration and engineering significantly. Administration and regulation can decentralize and improve monitoring, cut the paper flow, privatize some state services and save over 1 million dollars. The Corporation Commission can finally realize that they are regulating less activity yet costing us more, and they can reduce their size.

I am not going to dictate how or when each agency's cuts should be made. It is good business practice to allow agency heads who are closer to their operations to review and assess how to allocate their resources after we have defined their mission, and set their priorities. I will do my share by providing the mechanisms to improve their efficiency. Expanded use of personal computers, networks, and other technology can save millions of dollars. Most important, the reforms I have detailed for our Government Simplification Program can have a great impact on the ability of our cabinet secretaries and agency managers to meet our challenge to do more with less.

The incentive employee pay plan that we proposed and that you approved last year was a significant success, and has received considerable national attention. State employment has finally begun to decline, not because of down mandates, but because of grassroot employees and agency managers helping to find ways to save funds so that they can directly benefit.

We should continue this concept, but with an even greater performance incentive. I will ask you to allow any agency that wants to cut additional expenses from their budget to have the flexibility to award a one-time performance bonus to the agency's employees of up to 1% of their total payroll budget.

Our proposals embodied in the Personnel Reform Act of 1993 can also have a tremendous impact on the capacity of agency heads to properly manage this year's budget cuts. We now spend \$2,164,350,332 on personal services. When we remove the pass-through allocations for public assistance, education, and local subdivisions, that amounts to 70% of every dollar we spend.

If you allow the employee unions to tie our hands, if you don't provide us the flexibility to manage 70% of our money, these proposed cuts and new initiatives are whimsical.

I want to trade budget cuts for flexibility – I want to substitute progress, real progress, for rigidity and a slowly sinking status quo. I ask you to consider the importance of what I propose and join me in taking the political risk necessary to implement this bold plan.

Our new national leadership will propose, February 17th, their own bold plan that is driven by choices, tough choices, choices that will move this nation away from the brink of economic collapse and toward a future that has real promise for our children, their health, their education, and their ability to find and keep good jobs.

Should we in Oklahoma do any less? No . . . we should do more – we should do more with less by changing the way state government works. I know what I ask you to do are things that have never happened here. I know what I ask you to do is not easy. I know that lobbyists, interest groups, and citizens groups will raise the roof in protest. That’s okay . . . that’s what this place is about . . . open debate and occasional conflict so that our public policy is democratically established. What’s not okay is if we maintain the status quo in order to avoid that debate and conflict.

As we struggle to break new ground together, I need your trust . . . you have mine. Together, we need the help and trust of the women and men that make up state government, and all of us in state government need to earn and maintain the trust of our public by showing that we can change, and grow, and make the lives of Oklahomans better.

Is such a change and progress possible? Politics is the art of the possible, but leadership, real leadership, redefines the possible. Thank you for your leadership.

President Mildren ordered the Clerk to read **HCR 1009**.

HCR 1009 – Bill Johnson (Glen) of the House and Cullison of the Senate.

A concurrent resolution expressing gratitude for the service of the Honorable Tom Brett, a Judge on the State Court of Criminal Appeals; extending sympathy upon his passing; and directing distribution.

Representative Benson asked unanimous consent, which was granted, that **HCR 1009** be adopted and that all members of the House be made coauthors.

Senator Roberts asked unanimous consent, which was granted, that **HCR 1009** be considered engrossed, adopted and coauthor by all members of the Senate.

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.