

My name is Kearny DeBeck, I work at the Department of Justice, Division of Child Support as a systems analyst on the child support system. I am also the President of the SEIU Local in DOJ.

I have worked as a systems analyst on the child support system for over 15 years. In this capacity, I not only know what the system currently does but must also know the business of the agency and what the systems needs to do. Years ago, child support systems could be relatively stand alone with less complicated processes. Those days are gone. Interaction and integration with other state agencies and the Federal system is expanding. Existing and emerging technologies are being incorporated into state systems nationwide as well as the Federal system, Oregon is falling farther and farther behind. Our ability to effectively manage the child support program is deteriorating. Case manager time which would be better spent in direct client contact is spent on manual processes.

What does this mean in practical terms?

Work in the areas of Locate, Establishment, and Enforcement are labor intensive which impedes the workflow. Staff are struggling to keep up with the workload. Delays negatively impact collections and increase the risk of errors.

The availability of an effective and efficient automation tools is vital in the administration of the child support program. As systems developers, we spend much of our time with our fingers in the dike, keeping the existing system functioning. System improvements are difficult to make and quite often have unintended consequences.

In closing, I'd like to use the following analogy. At my mechanics shop is a sign which asks, "When is it time to buy a new car?". The answer is, "When the cost of maintaining your current car exceeds the cost of a car payment."

I believe we've reached that tipping point. The cost of maintenance, lack of efficiency, and lost collections indicate it's time to buy a new car.