



Dennis Richardson
SECRETARY OF STATE

May 12, 2017

Governor Kate Brown
900 Court Street NE
Salem, OR 97301

Dear Governor Brown,

Thank you for your recent efforts to begin addressing Oregon's budget challenges. I'm sure you are scrutinizing every area of the budget to identify opportunities to increase efficiency so that savings can be redirected to schools, job training, senior and veterans' services, public safety, health and human services, the environment, and other critical services.

To assist in the efforts to conserve state resources in this time of budgetary short-falls, an excellent cost-saving opportunity has been identified by State Archivist Mary Beth Herkert. In recent months, she has researched successful public records ombudsman programs throughout the country.


As a result of Mary Beth's research, our office is announcing the Oregon Access Project, which will save the General Fund more than \$3.5 million over the next decade. As you know, the Secretary of State is Oregon's public records administrator and carries the responsibility under ORS 192.015 and ORS 357.855 to conduct trainings and provide advice on public records issues. In fact, the Archives Division has conducted more than 50 public records training sessions in just the last seven months. In the future, our State Archivist will be expanding the number and scope of public records training sessions to include members of the public and the media.

In addition to training, Oregon statutes allow the State Archivist to provide the facilitated dispute resolution services proposed by you in Senate Bill 106A. Having served under four Secretaries of State, including yourself, Mary Beth Herkert has unparalleled credibility and expertise to mediate records production disputes. Her long-standing relationships with state and local government agencies allow her to achieve in the Archives Division the goals set forth in Senate Bill 106A and do so within the Archive's proposed 2017-19 budget. Today, I filed notice of new administrative rules to use existing Archives Division staff expertise and current resources to accomplish the goals of Senate Bill 106A.

In short, the Oregon Access Project will enable the legislature to redirect funds to educate children, train workers, and protect critical services. This \$3.5 million savings would otherwise have been spent on what would now be the unnecessary duplication inherent in Senate Bill 106A.

Thank you for this opportunity to join in your efforts to save money and increase efficiency in state government, while improving transparency in the processing of public records requests.

Sincerely,



Dennis Richardson