

From: Selecky, Mary (DOH)
Sent: Wednesday, December 19, 2007 4:56 PM
To: DOH DL Agency All
Subject: Governor Gregoire proposed budget

Governor Gregoire recently held a series of events around the state to roll out her proposed 2008 supplemental budget. This year's budget focuses on investing in programs to improve the safety of Washingtonians. Key areas include campus safety, tracking and monitoring sex offenders, building state ferries, and improving patient safety.

The complete budget has now been released; it includes funding for a number of Department of Health programs and issues. The governor continues to show her strong support for our work to make sure patients are safe. The proposed budget includes funds to begin national criminal background checks on all health care providers who apply for credentials in our state. There are also funds to help us address the backlog of complaints against health care providers. Much of this work was highlighted during GMAP sessions over the past year.

The budget proposal helps address the impact public health is feeling state and locally from federal budget cuts. The governor's budget includes money to replace the loss of federal funds for our Early Hearing-loss Detection, Diagnosis, and Intervention program. There are also funds to support local programs, including one that helps children with maxillofacial birth defects like cleft lip and cleft palate. We lost federal Maternal Child Health Block Grant funding that helped pay for these programs.

In addition the proposed budget includes funds for work on preventing senior citizen falls, creating a prescription drug monitoring program and a state registry with the latest research on Parkinson's disease. The capital budget includes funds to continue our work on the Public Health Laboratories addition. You can find a more detailed look at the proposed budget online at <http://www.ofm.wa.gov/budget/highlights/>

Of course, not all of our budget packages went through. The supplemental budget usually makes few increases. Saving money for future challenges was certainly one of Governor Gregoire's priorities. And it is important to note, this is a proposed budget. The legislature convenes on January 14, and as always, a lot will happen between then and the final budget in the spring. I'll keep you informed.

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