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Responding to the State Revenue Forecast May 15, 2009

Today's state revenue forecast brings more difficult news. Final budget decisions from the Oregon legislature will take time, but we estimate that Multnomah County will lose \$25 million to \$50 million in state-funded services based on today's forecast.

The Governor's proposed budget in January reduced services for seniors, mental health and substance abuse treatment, dental care and supervision of offenders in the community by up to 90%, assuming a much smaller shortfall. The legislature's budget choices will differ, but reductions are likely in any event.

Multnomah County will probably face two rounds of service reductions. Between now and June 4 we will reduce services to match county budget resources. Soon after that, the final state budget will likely necessitate a second round of cuts.

There are no easy answers. Oregon legislators face extremely difficult decisions and they will need our support. Holding any particular service harmless from budget cuts forces even deeper cuts in other areas. Elected leaders need to work together to maintain the most critical services, regardless of which jurisdiction provides them.

The public's attention to government budget decisions at every level is crucial to help hold us accountable and help us find a way through this crisis.