

February 5, 2013

Dear Valued Stakeholder,

Ohio is successfully emerging from one of the most pivotal economic periods in its history, a time during which it closed an historic \$7.7 billion budget imbalance without raising taxes. We cut taxes by \$800 million in 2011 and brought needed new reforms to Medicaid, education and other important efforts. Ohio has risen from 48th in the nation to one of the top job creators in the country and 1st in the Midwest. Yet, too many Ohioans are still out of work and too many changes to state government are still needed. Building on the momentum begun by the last state budget is essential to put Ohio's fiscal house back in order and continue our progress.

Yesterday, Governor John R. Kasich released the Fiscal Years 2014-2015 Proposed Executive Budget. The proposed funding allows DYS to focus on our shared priorities of rehabilitating youth, empowering families and communities and promoting public safety.

Under this budget, DYS will continue moving forward with system-wide reforms that have transformed DYS into a model for other states. DYS will make the most out of every taxpayer dollar, while maintaining its ability to fulfill its mission.

The proposed budget supports our community continuum for serving youth. Whenever possible, youth who are at lower risk to reoffend are served with appropriate treatment closer to family in their local communities. This approach has resulted in the DYS average daily population decreasing from 1,842 in 2007 to less than 600 in 2012.

Facilities will be able to continue to provide evidence-based treatment for youth. We will maintain improvements including staffing levels, full-service living units with Cognitive Behavioral Therapy, the Strength-based Behavioral Management System and streamlined youth grievance process. We will build on our efforts by enhancing services for youth with serious mental illness and those youth served in special management units.

A budget fact sheet is attached to provide you with more detail. We appreciate your hard work and dedication to helping Ohio's young people in the juvenile justice system. While our work is challenging, recidivism rates are trending downward, and we are seeing youth succeed in the community. The Governor's Proposed Executive Budget supports helping these young people change their lives as we set out to build a safer Ohio. Thank you for your support.

Sincerely,

Harvey J. Reed
Director, Department of Youth Services