



STATE OF WASHINGTON
OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR

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May 15, 2009

Dear Association of Washington Cities members:

I am writing to express my deep appreciation for the efforts that you and other leaders across Washington State are making to take advantage of the opportunities provided by the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 (Recovery Act). In the weeks since the law's enactment, we have witnessed an outpouring of energy and hard work as public, private, and non-profit organizations respond to the law's challenging timetables and stringent requirements.

I am also writing to discuss our shared obligation to meet the highest standards of accountability in this effort, and to clearly communicate to the public our work to create jobs and reinvigorate the economy. In this difficult time, our highest responsibility as public officials is to use all of our powers to ensure that Recovery Act dollars are invested only in projects and programs that are completely consistent with Recovery Act purposes.

This point was emphatically reinforced when other governors and I met recently with President Obama and Vice President Biden. They placed special emphasis on the need to invest stimulus dollars to meet both the letter and the intent of the law. We have all heard the warnings about swimming pools, golf courses, and other prohibited investments, but it's not enough just to comply with the law's technicalities. It is even more important that all of our spending decisions clearly align with the priorities of job creation, economic stimulus, and our shared commitment to make Washington an innovative 21st century leader. Our efforts today will ensure an even better future when the economy turns around.

To that end, I have directed the executive agencies to use the following core principles to guide their planning for the use of Recovery Act funds:

- Get money in people's pockets immediately.
- Create or save jobs in the near term.
- Make innovative investments in areas that lay the foundation for Washington's 21st century economy.
- Create strategic alliances with the private sector, non-profits, local governments, and other state agencies that align goals and leverage resources.
- Apply unprecedented accountability and transparency principles.

It is my hope that state government and our local partners can build on our long-established relationships to ensure Washington State is a national leader in the recovery effort. I have directed all state agencies to work in partnership with local jurisdictions to (1) help you identify all possible sources of stimulus funds, and (2) provide technical assistance to the extent possible to achieve the objectives of the law and to provide our citizens with comprehensive reports of our stimulus actions and results.

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We have never seen accountability requirements from the federal government as stringent as those that accompany the Recovery Act. As we prepare for the initial round of reports this summer and fall, I am working on two fronts:

- First, to make sure we can report how every stimulus dollar is accounted for in the state budget, and that we have made responsible decisions in keeping with the requirements of the Recovery Act. This is “Job 1” for my executive agencies.
- Second, to tell the people of Washington about *all* of the benefits of the Recovery Act, not just those that are related to the actions of state government. To accomplish this, I need your help.

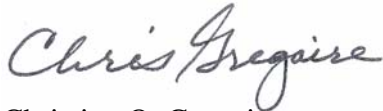
In the coming weeks, my staff will contact you through your statewide professional organizations to discuss ways to make sure our reports to the President and the citizens of Washington are as comprehensive as possible. I ask that you share with us your data *and* your ideas for making our reports as accurate and complete as possible.

In his recent letter to the National Governors Association, Vice President Biden said the federal government will be “vigorous” in its oversight of the implementation of the Recovery Act. It is incumbent upon us to be even more vigorous as we work together to make sure taxpayers’ precious dollars are spent in ways that promote quick and sustained economic recovery.

Please contact my Recovery Team if you need assistance in this effort. Complete information about stimulus programs and the people to contact in my office and in state agencies is available online at <http://www.Recovery.wa.gov>.

I look forward to working with you and achieving great things for the people of our state.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Chris Gregoire".

Christine O. Gregoire
Governor