

A message from the director ...

We are nearing the end of eight years of the Atiyeh administration. It is appropriate to reflect on what has happened during this period.

As you know, we have a strong commission form of government in Oregon. Commissioners who set policy for the department are appointed by the governor. I believe that this has worked out well for Oregon. It works best when the governor and the commission agree on basic policy and direction. This has always been the case while I have been director.



While we have a commission to set policy, the governor does set the tone for state government. He appoints people and makes critical decisions. He does not get lots of credit when things work well, but he certainly receives the blame when they do not.

When Gov. Vic Atiyeh took office, he said, "If it ain't broke, don't fix it" and "Let's show why we can do it, not why we can't."

He has consistently espoused these philosophies and, in a time

of declining revenues, they have been especially important. This has not been a time when new programs have been important. And with declining revenues, it has been all the more important to show citizens how all of us in state government can accomplish something for them with limited resources.

There are a number of reasons many of us will remember Gov. Atiyeh.

- He appointed good people and then let them manage their programs. While he was there to help and to listen to problems, he expected professionals to make decisions.

- Through a combination of managing state government, being available to the public and traveling abroad to seek new business, he maintained an incredibly busy schedule.

- With the serious downturn in the economy experienced during his administration, Gov. Atiyeh had to deal with more special sessions than any governor in history.

- He has consistently been supportive of strong affirmative action programs.

- He has given strong support to highway financing and especially to the highway modernization program.

- He has been more available to the public than any governor in recent history.

I will always remember Gov. Atiyeh's love for Oregon. All of us appreciate the great resources and heritage that we have and the governor has been out in front with his support of the preservation of the Deschutes River and of the Columbia River Gorge. These contributions will last for generations to come.

It is a fact of political life that after all of his contributions in one of Oregon's most powerful and conspicuous jobs, the governor now inherits the least fun job available.

How would you like to be governor between Election Day, Nov. 4, and Inauguration Day, Jan. 12? The attention focuses on a new governor and his agenda for the future. New legislators have been elected. Yet there is still a job to do. And it must be done in the context of a campaign when both candidates have pointed out how they would do things differently.

This is not the best time to reflect on the governor's accomplishments. Yet as I think about the last eight years, they have been very significant. I believe that this view will grow stronger in the future.

GOLDSCHMIDT APPRECIATES ODOT

As we look forward to the Goldschmidt administration, I can assure you that we will have active, exciting years ahead of us. My discussions with the governor-elect indicate an appreciation of our department.

We will do well if we can continue to place an emphasis on serving Oregonians, managing our resources effectively and seeking new ways to make sure our programs contribute to the economic development of Oregon.

Fred Miller