



Frequently Asked Questions Responding to State's Budget Crisis

1. How is the state's budget crisis affecting the Ohio Historical Society?

Recent state budget projections have changed significantly since passage of the state operating budget in mid-2007. The Office of Budget and Management (OBM) originally projected a 10 to 16 percent reduction of the Society's state funding; instead, the OBM asked for a 2-percent reduction in the organization's annual \$13.8 million state operating allocation for the 2008 and 2009 fiscal years. OHS leadership is grateful that state officials understand that more significant cuts would have seriously jeopardized statewide history and preservation services that the Society provides.

2. How serious is the state's budget problem?

The state now faces a budget shortfall of \$733 million to \$1.9 billion through June 30, 2009. Unfortunately, projections suggest that state budget reductions will not be short-lived, but will continue to plague Ohio for the foreseeable future. As the Society considers various budget options, the assumption is that the state budget will not soon improve.

3. How is the Ohio Historical Society responding to the reductions in state funding?

Effectively, the 2-percent reduction of state funding in the final quarter of the 2008 means an immediate 8-percent cut for the OHS budget with an additional 2-percent to be taken from each quarter of 2009 state allocations. The Society's board and senior leadership are committed to approaching anticipated state budget reductions strategically to ensure that the organization's mission is protected and strengthened.

4. Hasn't the Society been through this before?

The Ohio Historical Society's state operating budget has suffered significant reductions throughout the past decade. The most recent state budget cuts took place between 2001 and 2004 when the Society's budget was reduced by nearly 40 percent. Since then, the Society has invested strategically in areas of the organization that have the most potential for serving our audiences and moving the organization to a funding structure that balances state investment with earned income and other sources of revenue. In the last few years the Society has been moving in the direction of becoming less reliant on state funding. In 2003, the Ohio Historical Society received 70 percent of its operating funds from the state compared to about 62 percent today.

5. How did the 2009 fiscal year look before the reduction in state funding?

The Ohio Historical Society was facing an anticipated \$1.7 million budget deficit resulting from the softening Ohio economy, a flat state appropriation for 2008-2009 and increasing inflationary expenses. The additional 2-percent cut in state funding has increased the OHS budget deficit to an estimated \$2 million.

6. How did the Ohio Historical Society address its budget deficit? How does the new budget affect OHS operations?

Facing a \$2 million budget deficit resulting from the softening Ohio economy, decreased state funding and increasing inflationary expenses, the OHS Board of Trustees has approved a balanced budget of \$20.9 million to support the Society's activities in the 2009 fiscal year. The approved budget represents a 3-percent decrease from 2008. The Society also will expend \$4.4 million in state capital funds for various projects around Ohio. Beginning July 1, the new budget invests in core growth areas of educational/interpretive programs, collections and outreach, which

will retain and eventually increase the Society's capacity to provide services to the people of Ohio. To achieve a balanced budget a reduction of current staffing levels and changes in sites and programs were made.

7. What sites are having reduction in hours?

The following OHS sites will reduce the number of hours they are open to the public: Ohio Historical Center in Columbus, Paul Lawrence Dunbar House in Dayton, Flint Ridge near Brownsville, Harding Home in Marion, National Road/Zane Grey Museum in Norwich, Serpent Mound near Peebles, Youngstown Historical Center in Youngstown, Fort Laurens near Bolivar, Ohio River Museum in Marietta, Schoenbrunn Village near New Philadelphia and Wahkeena Nature Preserve near Lancaster. These sites will be open during periods of the highest attendance. Access will be provided for school and group tours upon request at these sites. For Serpent Mound and Flint Ridge park access will be emphasized with limited access to buildings.

8. What sites are having a change in status?

Four OHS sites will be changed to a management status agreement, including Cedar Bog Nature Preserve near Urbana, Museum of Ceramics in East Liverpool, Ohio Statehouse Education & Visitors Center in Columbus and Tallmadge Church in Tallmadge. This means that OHS will look for partners to manage these sites.

9. What other services have been affected by the budget reduction?

- In-house paper conservation capability has been reduced.
- In-house microfilm operations have been eliminated.
- Manuscripts-audiovisual processing capacity has been reduced.
- Cataloging capacity has been reduced.
- The Archives/Library's current 24 hours/three days of public service will be maintained. This has been achieved through reducing "behind-the scenes" capacity in state archives and manuscripts/audiovisual collections processing.
- Education Resource Center activities that are not used frequently have been eliminated.