



February 19, 2009

WSU Extension Staff, Volunteers and Constituents:

Washington State University has proposed very serious cuts to its “public service” programs as a way of managing expected budget shortfalls in the coming biennium. At the request of the State Senate Higher Education Committee, WSU Provost Warwick Bayly presented scenarios for cutting the University budget by 12 and 18 percent. These are scenarios only. However, what was proposed to reach those reduction targets is to cut “public service” - the lion’s share of which is WSU Extension – by 49 percent in the first scenario and 75 percent in the second.

If cuts of this magnitude had to be implemented, it would decimate Extension as we know it. County Extension offices, regional Research and Extension Centers, and Learning Centers could close. Program staff and ultimately the programs they lead would be eliminated and others drastically downsized. Without WSU Extension staffing and infrastructure, resources such as grants, county funds and federal support would have to be turned away. The ability to manage volunteer programs would be greatly curtailed.

Given the current state of the economy, we accept that WSU must make reductions like other state agencies. However, more equitably distributed cuts to the University would allow us to retain locally provided land grant university services, such as WSU Extension.

WSU Extension contributes to the WSU public service mission in a number of ways:

- We partner communities to identify priority issues that university research, knowledge bases and extension programs can address.
- We deliver research-based educational programs that give people the knowledge and skills to improve their health and livelihood.
- Our strong local partnerships allow us to leverage volunteers, local funds and community resources to extend WSU services deep into the community.
- We are an economic engine for the state by matching every dollar from the state with an additional \$3 from other sources; stimulating business expansion and development through cutting-edge education and technical assistance; and providing high quality training to volunteers that is in turn used to build effective and marketable skills in the community.

As a valued staff member, one of our 1,200 volunteers from the 4-H, Master Gardener, Livestock Advisor or Beach Watcher programs or one of the thousands of county residents and business people that seek education and technical assistance from WSU Snohomish County Extension

each year, it is important that you have the facts of this situation. Decisions will be made on how to proceed with the WSU budget in the next few weeks.

I'm sorry to have to deliver this news of budget uncertainty. But nothing can replace the pleasure of working with you and seeing the outcomes of all the great Extension programming that we do together in the community. Thanks for all your good work.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in dark ink that reads "Curt J. Moulton". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, stylized 'C' and 'M'.

Curt Moulton
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