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EXECUTIVE ORDER

Concerning a General Hiring Freeze in State Government

Pursuant to the authority vested in the Office of the Governor of the State of Colorado and in particular Colorado Revised Statute § 24-2-102(4), I, Bill Owens, Governor of the State of Colorado, hereby issue this Executive Order implementing a hiring freeze applicable to state government.

1. Background and Purpose.

In the past year, the national and Colorado economies have experienced significant slowdown. The events of September 11, 2001, compounded the economic slowdown in Colorado by further impacting our travel and tourism industry. Moreover, these economic conditions have caused the State to lose a considerable number of high wage telecommunications and advanced technology positions. As a result, there has been a decline in revenues to the State. In addition, constitutional requirements for state expenditures, such as Amendment 23, have limited the flexibility of the State to make budgetary corrections in response to economic recessions.

To date, efforts to reduce general fund expenditures are not sufficient to satisfy the total reductions necessary to comply with the requirement of a balanced budget in Article X, Section 16 of the Colorado Constitution. As Governor, I am responsible for restricting the expenditure of state funds if it appears that a revenue shortfall may occur. Colorado Revised Statute § 24-2-102(4) provides: “If, during any fiscal period, there are not sufficient revenues available for expenditure during such period to carry on the functions of the state government and to support its agencies and institutions and such fact is made to appear to the governor, in the exercise of his discretion, by executive order, he may suspend or discontinue, in whole or in part, the functions or services of any department, board, bureau, or agency of the state government...”

2. Mission.

I find that the threat of a revenue shortfall currently exists making it necessary to take the cost saving measure of suspending certain functions of state government. Pursuant to C.R.S. § 24-2-102(4), I order a hiring freeze applicable to state government. This hiring freeze is effective immediately.

To protect the public health, safety and welfare of the citizens of the State and in order to avoid significant disruptions to critical state services, a process is provided in this Executive Order to allow certain exemptions to the hiring freeze.

The Governor's Office of State Planning and Budgeting, in conjunction with the Department of Personnel and Administration, shall provide general criteria to determine which vacant positions may be exempted from the hiring freeze. Each executive director of a statutorily created department shall review any requests for an exemption and may recommend exemptions they deem necessary to the Governor's Office of State Planning and Budgeting. In higher education, the Director of the Colorado Commission on Higher Education shall review requests for exemptions from the head of each governing board and the Director may recommend exemptions he deems necessary to the Governor's Office of State Planning and Budgeting. The Director of the Office of State Planning and Budgeting will then recommend any exemptions she approves to the Governor's Chief of Staff. The Governor's Chief of Staff shall determine whether a request shall be granted.

3. Elective Officers.

I request that Elective Officers and the Judicial branch of the State of Colorado consider adopting a parallel hiring freeze to accommodate the cost saving objective of this Executive Order.

4. Duration.

This Executive Order shall remain in force until June 1, 2002 unless modified or terminated by further executive order of the Governor. Pursuant to § 24-2-102(4), the Governor may extend this order by finding that a deficiency of revenues persists.

GIVEN under my hand and
the Executive Seal of the
State of Colorado, this 28th day
of February, 2002.

Bill Owens
Governor