



STATE OF WEST VIRGINIA
OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR
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EARL RAY TOMBLIN
GOVERNOR

May 17, 2016

The Honorable William P. Cole, III
President, West Virginia State Senate
State Capitol Complex
Charleston, WV 25305

The Honorable Tim Armstead
Speaker, West Virginia House of Delegates
State Capitol Complex
Charleston, WV 25305

Dear Mr. President and Mr. Speaker:

I am in receipt of your May 17, 2016 letter requesting that I amend my proclamation that convened the Legislature's First Extraordinary Session of 2016. Therein, you list specific items you believe should be added to the call. I am willing to discuss additions or alternatives to the items I placed on the initial call, but only if they are part of a comprehensive, realistic solution to the state's budget situation.

Since the end of the 2016 Regular Session of the Legislature, we met many times in an attempt to find a common plan to pass a FY2017 budget. Because we were unable to reach an agreement, and with less than 45 days now remaining to pass a budget, I presented you with a plan, the second balanced budget I have presented this year. This balanced plan, which I openly presented to the public, includes \$90 million in cuts to agencies throughout the Executive Branch and options for revenue enhancements to fill the remaining gap.

Many of the items mentioned in your letter were discussed during our post-session negotiations. I am not necessarily opposed to considering one or more of these items or other cuts or revenue measures that you specify. But before I place any item on an amended call, it must be clear how the item fits into your overall plan to balance the budget. I also want to ensure that each item has a realistic chance of being supported by at least your leadership. You may not agree entirely with my plan, or whether it is a "balanced plan," but you certainly know where I stand. I

OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR

believe asking the same of you is only fair. Accordingly, I hereby request that you outline your alternative plan for balancing the budget.

With respect to the DEP rules bundle and other non-budget related legislation, I do not believe it is prudent to place these items on the call until the Legislature has made demonstrable progress on the budget. During my State of the State address, I outlined my budget plan and I reiterated throughout the session my concern that the Legislature was not focused on the one bill that is necessary to operate state government and provide essential services. After the 60-day session and an additional two months of negotiations, we are without an agreed budget plan. No issue is more important than the budget at this time, and I expect all members of the Legislature to give it their undivided attention. Once this problem is solved, I expect there will be time to consider other substantive matters.

I appreciate your letter, and I look forward to reviewing your comprehensive budget plan and how your requested additions to my call may fit.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Earl Ray Tomblin". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial "E" and a long, sweeping underline.

Earl Ray Tomblin
Governor