

Osceola County, Iowa, Comp Board Presentation
January 14, 2009
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I thank you for this opportunity to give my input to this board as it begins the process of appropriateness concerning government spending. Although the views I represent here today are my own as the president of the OCTA an ever growing number of people are recognizing now not just a sense that something isn't right, economically, in this country but that something is seriously wrong. Tens of thousands of communities, states, counties and a multitude of government agencies decide in some sort of process just how much more they should commit to the unending growth of government. That is what we are talking about today-every extra dollar spent ends up being some ones paycheck. My remarks are not meant to target just our counties employees who with few exceptions are diligent, talented and hardworking employees. I don't intend to place blame on any group of individuals specifically but I want to encourage a reevaluation of a process which has now become seemingly uncontrollable and that has resulted in a government spending epidemic which is on course to self-destruct. I want to explore the reasoning which ultimately will lead to destruction if not altered.

20 years ago I read a book the title of which escapes me but the premise of this book was that a democracy, which replaced the established republic our founding fathers intended will eventually cease to exist when a majority of the people discover that they can vote for themselves an ever greater piece of the cumulative wealth of a nation. If one has any sense of history you will see that one by one this nations institutions and its most productive citizens have sold out to a government which promises security in place of liberty. I hope you understand that security and liberty cannot exist together. Liberty must resist security offered by outsiders and security will devour liberty to exist.

As I speak in terms of changes to the big picture I hope today that you understand that Osceola County represents an ideal picture, a microcosm, if I may, of this big picture. Some may see county government as Robin Hood in a role of wealth redistribution? That sounds like socialism and in reality doesn't affect the rich as much as it punishes those least able to control their incomes including young families and the elderly. Some may think that they are close enough to retirement that the money might last until then so I had better get as much as I can? That sounds selfish and disregards the next generation. Some may see government spending as a vehicle to economic development? If this is the case this past year of unprecedented government spending will produce massive growth in economic development. There may be economic development at some unknown level but government spending's primary affect is to drain economic productivity because of its nature to not produce anything and its practice in most areas of being inefficient.

Your decision today will not change these possible thought processes but a decision to hold the line on spending will give a bit of added cushion when the ever increasing economic challenges and perhaps collapse occur.

Our employees are paid well in comparison to counties our size. Our employees are paid well in comparison to the average salary in this community. While millions of dollars worth of payroll is disappearing do to layoffs in this community and businesses old and new are having extreme difficulty making their payrolls, another raise for government employees would be a slap in the face. Even Governor Culver has to acknowledge a problem and is proposing a wage freeze for state employees.

The growth of government must be reversed. This can be done in one of two ways. Thinking objective citizens can decide to intentionally decide to work for smaller government and a resulting decrease in government spending or a financial collapse can force a change the result of which none of us may like and could involve the loss of self-determination. If your intent today consists only of "MORE" then nothing I said will make a difference. Perhaps the person you represent is married to your cousin, maybe they attend your church, maybe you owe them a favor I have no idea, perhaps you believe I'm here to intentionally mislead you (at least that's what someone told you) but a decision by this board today which indicates a willingness to err on the side of conservative will in the end benefit every citizen of this county. I thank you for your time and invite any questions you may have concerning our numbers or my motives for being here today.