



Governor Ruth Ann Minner



January 15, 2009

To the Members of the 145th General Assembly and to all Delawareans:

In compliance with 29 Del. C. Section 6335(a), I respectfully submit for your consideration the Fiscal Year 2010 Governor's Policy Overview and Operating Budget for the State of Delaware. The proposed operating budget of \$3,063.5 million represents a decrease of 8.9 percent over the Fiscal Year 2009 Operating Budget and is within our constitutionally mandated 98 percent of available revenues.

The financial plan I present to you today was prepared during a significant downturn in the nation's economy. The state of Delaware is experiencing the impacts of this downturn through dramatic decreases in revenue and increases in the demands for state services. These factors have created financial challenges that must be firmly and deliberately addressed in the year ahead. It is clear the depth and breadth of the financial challenge will require extensive deliberation by the General Assembly and the incoming administration over the next several months on basic financial issues to include personnel costs, core government service delivery, public education, Medicaid and potential revenue enhancements. The plan I present today begins to address these challenges by limiting state expenditures and streamlining operations. My recommended financial plan provides a framework and a starting point that the General Assembly and the next administration can use to address the significant financial challenges that lie ahead.

As Governor, the vision I set forth for Delaware focused on improving public education, ensuring the health, safety and self-sufficiency of every Delaware family, expanding economic development opportunities and creating a Livable Delaware that strengthens communities and preserves the quality of life for all Delawareans. As the new fiscal realities impact state governments throughout our country, it is incumbent upon Delaware policymakers to support the core government services that many Delawareans rely upon while upholding our state's long tradition of fiscal prudence. I am confident that with a spirit of bipartisanship and due diligence toward the tasks ahead, these challenges will be met for the benefit of all Delawareans.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Ruth Ann Minner".

Ruth Ann Minner
Governor