

Summary of Comments from State Employees to the State Employee Compensation Oversight Commission

July 30, 2007

To date, there have been 478 emails from employees that have been submitted to the PayPlans@da.ks.gov email address. Many employees addressed their comments specifically to some or all of the four questions posed in the June 13th letter from the Chairperson, but some employees chose to comment on other issues.

Many comments expressed cynicism that any new plan would be funded, and many also expressed that if the present plan had been funded, the State of Kansas would not even need to be looking at a new plan. The next most common comment regarded the wage compression that exists within the State workforce, with many more experienced employees expressing frustration that they earn the same or only a little more than employees who began working after they did. These are just two of the many comments expressed throughout the emails, but they were the two most common.

With respect to the comments directed toward the four questions:

- There were a total of 221 comments regarding a preference for either a single pay plan or multiple pay plans for the classified service.
 - 58% of the comments indicated a preference for multiple pay plans with 42% preferring a single plan.
 - The primary reasons cited in support of this preference were a recognition of the diversity of the State workforce as well as a change from the current plan.
- There were a total of 263 comments regarding a preference for a pay plan with steps or a pay plan with no steps.
 - 57% of the comments indicated a preference for a pay plan with steps with 43% preferring a pay plan without steps.
 - The primary reasons provided in support of steps were the fact that steps are reliable and something that employees could (if funded regularly) count on, and the fact that the step system is easy to understand.
- There were a total of 396 comments regarding a preference in the criteria upon which compensation should be based. Many employees indicated a combination of factors, so the totals provided below include those instances where a comment stated that multiple criteria should be used.
 - 42% of the comments indicated that work performance was the most important criteria on which compensation should be based, with 29% of the comments favoring longevity as the most important basis, 17% stating that all four of the factors should be considered, 11% indicating that education, training or skill acquisition was the most important, and 2% indicating that job-related certification or licensure was the most important.

- The primary reason cited in support of work performance being the most important criteria in determining employee pay was that employees who do more or better work should be recognized, instead of receiving the same increase as someone who does not perform as well.
- The primary reasons cited in support of longevity were the value of experience as well as a concern over the objectivity of a performance-based system.
- Finally, there were a total of 179 comments regarding the balance of statewide equity and the unique interests of agencies with respect to the administration of pay.
 - 48% of the comments indicated that agencies should have more authority and flexibility with respect to the administration of pay for their employees, with 35% stating that there should be a greater emphasis on statewide equity and 17% stating that there should be no change from what is in place currently.
 - The primary reasons cited in support of greater authority and flexibility for agencies in the administration of pay were the sometimes unique responsibilities of agencies as well as the ability to recognize the difference in pay in different regions throughout the State.