

Steve Wheeler, County Administrator of Clackamas County
Testimony to the House General Government Committee
Regarding Clackamas County's Four-Day work week
March 10, 2011

Co Chair Holvey, Co Chair Whisnant and Members of the Committee

Thank you for the opportunity to appear today. I am Steve Wheeler, Clackamas County Administrator. With me is Karen Pearson, Human Resources Program Coordinator.

I would also like to recognize Troy Rayburn (the Clackamas County Government Affairs Manager) who is also in the audience. He is a good point of contact if you have additional questions after today as he is in the Salem and this building regularly.

We have previously submitted a letter dated March 8, 2011 to the Committee. Let me begin by making some brief comments that will add some context to the four day work week and also add a few additional insights learned from our County experience.

The backdrop for our November 1, 2008 trial implementation of a four day work week was the extremely high fuel prices in the summer of 2008. They were impacting County fleet costs, employee commutes and also the County's interest in lowering both operating costs and the "carbon footprint". We evaluated implementing four day work week of 10 hour days in three stages to see if it was a good fit.

First, could it work for the public and our clients that we serve? If it couldn't work for them, no need to go forward. We evaluated this through before and after telephone surveys¹ – August 2008 and August 2009. In both surveys many people thought it was a good idea. We also had a focused month of customer comment cards while it was in its first year (which was a trial year). Most comments were positive².

The second evaluation factor was, did the four/10 system actually save money and resources? The bottom line was and is yes. You can see a summary of savings in the letter. Electric power savings and there are significant, overtime savings.³

The third review stage was, would it work for our employees? We engaged Portland State University Executive Leadership Institute⁴ to help evaluate this and

¹ Citizen survey was conducted by the Gilmore Research Group.

² Customer comment card was administered and analyzed by Executive Leadership Institute.

³ This part of the evaluation was also conducted by the Executive Leadership Institute as part of the overall evaluation of the 4/10 schedule. See full report.

⁴ Executive Leadership Institute has become a subunit under Center for Public Service in 2010.

they conducted three surveys over the one year trial period. Results are in the letter, but the bottom line is most employees were positive about the 4/10 work pattern⁵.

So, the bottom line is moving to the 4/10 work pattern met our evaluation tests and was made permanent November 1, 2009.

A few quick insights:

- Before implementation we were concerned about the impact on our employees with children – particularly pre-kindergarten children needing childcare. For the most part employees have been able to work out child care arrangements - although some work accommodations have been necessary – e.g. ½ hour lunch to leave at 5:30 instead of 6:00. I have heard up to a third of our employees on the 4/10 work week requested accommodation.
- There is an adjustment period for employees moving from 8 hour to 10 hour days. Clackamas County has many wellness activities for employees and many of them use these on-site classes as a break during the day.
- The 4/10 schedule is perhaps most difficult on managers, who often have business responsibilities on Fridays.
- Many citizens have found our extended hours Monday through Thursday to be beneficial as they can access County services before and after the customary 8-5 work day.

Thank you, we are ready for any questions you might have.

(Footnote added by Executive Leadership Institute/Center for Public Service)

⁵ In addition to the surveys, a series of focus group discussion was also conducted.