

Submitter: Alan Eberlein
On Behalf Of:
Committee: Joint Committee On Ways and Means
Measure, Appointment or Topic: HB5006

In the late 1990's when Grace Crunican became ODOT Director, she toured the state to see the scope of her agency. She subsequently invited a group of us to a meeting in Salem. At that meeting she told us we were her loudest critics from around the state and we were now the ODOT Efficiency Committee. She asked for a commitment of one day each month for a year. She would reimburse us for travel expenses as we went thru ODOT from end to end to tell her how to run the agency better. We were all outsiders to ODOT, mostly businesspeople. Pete Naumes from Medford was Committee Chair, I served as Vice Chair.

Each month we would spend the morning with the head of one of the ODOT departments, learning all we could about their department. During the following month Pete and I would visit operations of that department. Grace had ODOT business cards printed for us so we were 'official'. We simply asked them questions and told them that 'we have always done it this way' was not an acceptable answer. We wanted to know the merits and the downside of that method. We found both managers and staff very cooperative and open in their responses, partially because we provided them an avenue to vent their frustrations. After a year the committee was disbanded.

During the next year Pete and I were both called to Salem to testify before both the House and Senate Transportation Committees. The following year Grace asked us to gather the most active members of the Committee and continue for another year, drilling deeper into ODOT. At the end of that tour, she told us there was no way to calculate how many million dollars we had saved ODOT. I believe every agency needs to go thru this process. Simply giving more money is not the answer. As we found with ODOT, there are better and more efficient ways to allocate resources. I have given my files to Representative McIntire. I am available to help in any way I can. Cell 541-891-4080.