

# Suggestion List

01-Jul-11

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AGENCY	SUGG #	CREATED	MONEY SAVED	MONEY SAVED FREQUENCY	CLOSED?	CLOSED DATE
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**SUGGESTION**

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## **Agency for Health Care Administration**

5820

4/2/2011

Recurring

Y

6/6/2011

Many agencies have replacement schedules for basic equipment and office supplies. They purchase new equipment per that schedule, whether it is needed or not. I'm thinking specifically of office equipment, though it could apply elsewhere. Why buy new desks and chairs every 7 years, if the ones currently in place still work fine? Why repaint if the current paint job still looks okay? Agencies tend to spend out those monies (whether needed at the time or not) for fear they won't be available when items actually do break and need replacing.

I believe the state could save a great deal of money with some type of moratorium on 'redecorating,' and by taking a hard look at whether a new desk or chair is actually needed. Within my own agency, with 10 locations, we also have an informal swap system. If someone is cleaning out, they might post 'I have 2 chairs available - anyone need chairs?' Or from the other direction - "I have a new staff person coming in and need a desk and chair - anyone have one we can use?" A central swap site for state agencies might encourage more re-use.

What funds we do have could be better spent on staff or equipment that DOES need to be updated more regularly - like computer systems, in order to operate more effectively and better serve the public.

We should be focusing on needs instead of 'wants.'

**Has Merit?** Y      **Explanation**

### **Implementation**

AHCA already implements.

**Steps Taken**      A surplus property list is maintained on the AHCA Portal.

**Efficiency:**

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## Department of Corrections

5996	4/15/2011				Y	6/1/2011
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The corrections secretary should consider at every correctional facility that has a work camp. Re-assigned the administrative Sgt to the warehouse. This would allow the state to delete the General services Specialist and Warehouse supervisor positions, Thereby saving each institution over\$60,000 at least at every facility. Inmates are assigned to each warehouse and should be supervise by a security unit employee outside the fence, not non-certified employees. The two adversely employees could be fazed out over the next 90-120 days. This would improve the operation of the facilities.

**Has Merit?** Y      **Explanation** We are evaluating staffing levels throughout the agency and will include this with numerous others being considered. The suggestion appears to have some possible value but must be considered in light of the current work load of the individual positions identified above.

**Implementation** Implementation will depend on the results of the evaluation.

### Steps Taken

#### Efficiency:

6103	4/18/2011				Y	6/10/2011
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Why does the corrections agency not put inmate clothing available for purchase in the inmate canteens. Shoes, shirts, pants, socks, towels,. This would help cut the cost to the Florida Taxpayer and give the inmates access to have better clothing available.

**Has Merit?** Y      **Explanation**

**Implementation** See above

### Steps Taken

#### Efficiency:

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## Department of Management Services

6656	6/27/2011		Recurring		Y	6/29/2011
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When the seasons change requiring the use of air conditioning, stop allowing multiple employees throughout the building to continue to use and heat the offices of others that are miserably hot in the months when air conditioning is determined appropriate by the powers to be. My friends office is HOT all the time, yet some employees run an electric heater YEAR ROUND!!! make them wear extra clothing rather than waste valuable electricity and making everyone else suffer in this heat wave!  
Thank you in advance for looking into this!

**Has Merit?** Y      **Explanation**

**Implementation** DMS has already initiated a policy that eliminates space heaters in DMS buildings. Please refer to the DMS policy REDM 08-101.

Other state owned facilities that are not managed by DMS, may not have a similar policy.

Each state agency may implement a similar policy disallowing space heaters in summer months

**Steps Taken** DMS has already initiated a policy that eliminates space heaters in DMS buildings. Please refer to the DMS policy REDM 08-101.

**Efficiency:** The reduction of space heaters in summer months, decreases the heat load of the building, allowing the HVAC equipment to work less hard to cool the building.

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## Department of Revenue

	6112	4/27/2011			Y	6/14/2011
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My suggestions has to do with better serving the employees of dept of revenue. For approximatley 5 yrs or so raises have not been awarded but the department continues to give out bonuses to certain individuals. Due to the economy, everything is going up around us from food,medical expenses, gas,etc.. Why can this bonus money be used to benefit all employees during such an economic crisis. Also when individuals are hired to work for the State are paid the same amount as a person who has been working for the State for 25 yrs is like a blow in the face. Starting new employees at a lower rate would benefit the department greatly and save money.The money saved could be used to allow for raises

**Has Merit?** Y      **Explanation**

**Implementation** We appreciate the opportunity to respond to these suggestions. The writer suggests that Revenue save money by giving new employees lower starting salaries, and then use the savings to give raises to long-time employees. Most employees who are hired at Revenue are hired at the minimum or slightly above the minimum of the job classification depending on the individual's education, experience, job knowledge, etc. The Personnel Rules require that a new employee's pay be within the pay range for the classification of the position. The rules don't allow an agency to pay an employee below the pay range, so we wouldn't be able to hire a new employee at a salary that is below the minimum and save those funds for providing raises or bonuses to other employees. Although hiring at lower rates might save the State money, it also might make it more difficult to attract qualified applicants.

The writer also suggests using "bonus" money to provide raises to all employees, rather than to just a few. Chapter 110.1245(2), Florida Statutes, requires state agencies to develop a plan for awarding bonuses each year and to submit their plan to the Governor's Office for review and approval. Revenue submitted a bonus plan to the Governor's Office each year for the past decade and received approval for each plan, but the Legislature hasn't appropriated any funds for state agencies to provide bonuses to state employees since December 2004. So, there has been no legislative authorization for Revenue employees to receive a bonus since December 2004.

Since the agency has not awarded bonuses since 2004, we believe the writer may have been using the term "bonuses" to refer to special pay increases. Funds for special pay increases are very limited at this time. Revenue's senior management has directed that funds that are available be used to reduce inequities between employees who are successfully performing in the same job.

**Steps Taken**

**Efficiency:**

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## Office of Financial Regulation

5278

2/8/2011

Y

6/10/2011

I see one of the largest costs for state government is travel. Millions of dollars are spent yearly on travel for each state agency, from the governor to the auditors. I came from a private sector job in which I traveled a great deal. One of the fringe benefits from that job was travel points. It enabled me to get free hotel rooms so my wife and I could vacation more. But, it also changed my spending habits. I only stayed in Hilton hotel brand, because I could earn points quicker. That meant that I would often spend more for a room, so that it would be part of the Hilton hotel chain. My boss did not care because money was good and he was not worried about these additional costs because they were being passed along to the client. I believe this type of spending is rampant throughout state government. I see the general rule is if the room is less than \$100 than it is allowed. But I think that is too much latitude during these trying times.

My suggestion is that the State looks at Hotwire.com. This is an amazing travel tool that can save a great deal of money. I am sure you know how it works, but I will give a brief subscription. This is an online travel site for booking flights and hotels. You go on and choose a location and dates. Then the service provides you with options based on a star rating. For example Hampton Inns are 2.5 stars and they improve all the way to 5 stars. Customers are guaranteed a specific group of brands for each star rating. This ensures that the customer is not staying in a run-down, off-brand hotel. Also for larger markets, the city is broken down into separate areas. This ensures that your hotel will be relatively close to where you are working. Example: The government rate for Hampton Inn Westshore, Tampa Florida, March 7-11 is \$99 per night. Hotwire Rate: 3 star \$57 per night. The amazing part is that a 3 star hotel, which is rated higher than the Hampton Inn. This savings can be transferred to almost any market throughout the state. Smaller communities and rural counties might not have travel options, but I would assume that a majority of travel is done to major cities. One potential downside to Hotwire.com is that rooms are pre-purchased. This means that the reservations cannot be altered. This does reduce flexibility, but the dramatic cost saving far outweighs the less flexibility.

Next I will list the Pros and Cons:

Pros:

1.  Travel costs are dramatically less than usual government rates.
2.  Hotel brands are guaranteed with each star rating.
3.  Hotels are defined specific area of city.

Cons:

1.  Employees do not receive reward points
2.  Rooms are pre-purchased and cannot be changed or altered.

I know a policy like this would be very unpopular among those who travel as part of their job. But when we are talking about layoffs and reduction in government size, this could equal jobs for state employees. Personally I would give up my Hilton reward points for a job for myself or colleague. I think this idea at least warrants a study to see its potential savings.

**Has Merit?** Y      **Explanation** With the travel restrictions currently in place, travel is limited at this time. With changing priorities, and travel itineraries, it would be difficult to realize the savings claimed. Typical travel is not on an ad-hoc basis, it is planned well in advance. The idea loses validity the farther out one must reserve a room, for example at a conference with multiple staff going and it gets cancelled for weather, costs, etc... Of particular concern is the fallout when rooms must be paid for and are not utilized.

**Implementation** Without metrics to determine the ad-hoc travel costs of agencies statewide, it would be difficult to quantitatively and accurately measure any possible savings.

### Steps Taken

### Efficiency:

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**SUGGESTION**

	5328	2/22/2011	50000	Recurring	Y	6/10/2011
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I would suggest utilizing the printer's "Preference -> Finishing" function and print on both sides of the paper. Requiring everyone to do this should reduce paper consumption by half.

**Has Merit?** Y      **Explanation**

**Implementation** Will suggest this goes out in correspondence to all employees as a reminder to print responsibly.

Notify staff to print responsibly for items that are not official documents.

**Steps Taken**

**Efficiency:** Potential for reduced paper consumption and reducing costs for paper products purchased.

**Total Suggestions:** 7