



NEWS

Bulletin

TJJD Budget request calls for pay raises and increased staffing

Agency leaders' priorities line up with TSEU's goals for next two years

In September, TJJD leadership submitted their 2018-2019 Legislative Appropriations Request (LAR) to Texas lawmakers. The LAR lays out the funding needs for the agency for the next two years, and begins the decision-making process whereby state legislators decide how much money TJJD will receive and for what.

In a strong signal that agency leaders under Executive Director David Reilly have been listening to the concerns of front-line staff, the LAR calls for additional funding for increased staffing levels and pay raises for all TJJD staff. In several meetings over the past few years, TJJD union members have repeatedly raised the need for increased staffing and pay to Reilly and his leadership team. On news of the agency's budget request, Case Manager Cora Bennett of Mart, who had been a part of the union delegation that met with Reilly on these issues, had this to say, "It's great that agency leaders are taking into consideration the work that we do and are willing to pay us what we are worth."

Specifically, the LAR calls for enough JCO's to achieve the federally mandated 1:8 JCO-to-youth ratio, an additional 212 staff positions in the facilities to increase safety and security, another 62 case manager and parole positions to

reduce caseloads, and an extra \$6.8 million to increase pay across the juvenile justice system. Agency leaders pointed to a high turnover rate among TJJD staff and a large and growing youth population as the main drivers for the request for additional funding.

All state agencies, including TJJD, have been under enormous pressure from the Governor, Lt. Governor, and other lawmakers to reduce their budget requests for the next two years. These budget-cutting moves have been justified by a slowing Texas economy, largely due to the drop in world oil prices and the ensuing reduction in state tax revenues. Despite these worrying economic trends, Texas remains a wealthy state with over \$8 billion currently stashed away in its Rainy Day Fund. And in the last legislative session, the same lawmakers who are now calling for agencies and universities to tighten their belts were gleefully squandering the state's revenue surplus on tax giveaways for big business.

TJJD's budget request for the next two years gives front-line TJJD union members more ammunition to fight for a real, across-the-board pay raise and increased staffing levels in the coming legislative session. It won't be possible to win the needed increases in funding without a strong union.

WHAT TO DO NOW

JOIN TSEU! ALREADY A MEMBER? SIGN UP A COWORKER.

You can download a TSEU membership form from www.cwa-tseu.org

JOIN COPE! OUR UNION'S POLITICAL ACTION FUND.

Without the ability to organize politically, we won't be able to win on our issues.

COME TO LOBBY DAY 2016 - WEDNESDAY, APRIL 12, 2017

TSEU members from all over the state will converge on the capitol to march, rally, and lobby legislators on our issues. Ticket information and other details will be released soon at www.cwa-tseu.org