

DID YOU KNOW?

Unclaimed Property Program:

Every state has an unclaimed property program. In Oklahoma, the state treasurer is responsible for the state's Unclaimed Property Program. The purpose of the program is to return unclaimed property to the rightful owner. Unclaimed property can include everything from jewelry, stock certificates, coin collections to cash. Property is considered unclaimed when there is a lack of activity generated by the rightful owner of the property. Evidence of this inactivity includes failure to cash a check, the return of a check or correspondence by the post office as undeliverable or the absence of any communication from the owner. If property remains unclaimed for a certain number of years set by statute, it is considered abandoned and must be reported to the state's unclaimed property program. Unclaimed property also is listed on reports published twice each year in newspapers throughout Oklahoma.

- Current budget and personnel resources available to the OTC;
- Potential for improvements in the efficiency with which the OTC uses existing resources; and
- Issues related to the use of private sector entities for modernizing and improving collection and audit functions.

SB 750 outlines specific elements to be included in contractual agreements between the OTC and a municipality, in relation to the assessment, collection or enforcement of a municipal sales tax. These elements, which relate to the municipality's authority to engage in compliance activities directly or contractually, may serve to augment and improve collections of sales taxes for state and local governments. Other provisions of the measure, including reporting and administrative provisions, are designed to improve sales tax collections. SB 750 also creates the Tax Commission Compliance Fund for the purpose of reimbursing municipalities for enhanced collections of state sales taxes.

STATE GOVERNMENT

The Legislature adopted several measures to assist agencies struggling with the financial implications of the recession. It sought greater efficiencies in the application of employee insurance coverage, agency contracting and eliminating liabilities facing agencies.

HB 1062 allows state employees who are covered by a separate group health insurance plan to opt out of the state's basic plan and provides that employees opting out of coverage will receive \$150 a month in lieu of the flexible benefit amount the employee would otherwise be eligible to receive. The measure also directs the State and Education Employees Group Insurance Board (OSEEGIB) to contract

with a vendor that offers a web-based doctor and patient mutual accountability incentive program and directs OSEEGIB and the Office of State Finance (OSF) to make available a health savings account to all enrollees in the HealthChoice Qualified high-deductible health plan.

SB 623 requires the Employees Benefits Council to contract with at least one provider to offer a group TRICARE supplement for purchase by eligible employees. The state will not provide an additional allowance for the supplement.

In response to the budget shortfall, **HB 1665** discontinues the Oklahoma Art in Public Places program for three years but allows current projects to be completed to avoid any potential breach of contract. Under previous law, anytime the state has a building project or renovation costing \$250,000 or more, 1.5 percent of the cost must be dedicated to public art.

HB 1034 authorizes the state purchasing director to use a state purchase card for acquisitions with no limit on the amount of the transaction for interagency payments and certain professional services. The measure requires a state agency to evaluate the performance of professional service contracts exceeding a fair and reasonable dollar threshold.

HB 1438 requires the director of the Department of Central Services to publish a report detailing and listing the top 5 percent most underutilized state-owned properties, the value of those properties, the potential for purchase if offered for sale by the state and the impact on local-level tax rolls if the properties are purchased by a nongovernmental entity.

HB 2172 transfers all powers, duties and functions of the Oklahoma Indian Affairs Commission to the Oklahoma Native American Liaison in the Office of the Governor effective July 1, 2011.

HB 1075 requires public construction

