**From:** Governor Christine Gregoire <[Governor.ChristineGregoire@GOVERNOR.WA.GOV](https://mail.shoreline.edu/owa/redir.aspx?C=e986e8c7014542ac905afa2dc1f048f4&URL=mailto%3aGovernor.ChristineGregoire%40GOVERNOR.WA.GOV)>
**Date:** September 22, 2011 12:02:50 PM PDT
**To:** "[ALL-STATE-EMPLOYEES@LISTSERV.WA.GOV](https://mail.shoreline.edu/owa/redir.aspx?C=e986e8c7014542ac905afa2dc1f048f4&URL=mailto%3aALL-STATE-EMPLOYEES%40LISTSERV.WA.GOV)" <[ALL-STATE-EMPLOYEES@LISTSERV.WA.GOV](https://mail.shoreline.edu/owa/redir.aspx?C=e986e8c7014542ac905afa2dc1f048f4&URL=mailto%3aALL-STATE-EMPLOYEES%40LISTSERV.WA.GOV)>
**Subject:** **Laying out a plan**
**Reply-To:** Governor Christine Gregoire <[Governor.ChristineGregoire@GOVERNOR.WA.GOV](https://mail.shoreline.edu/owa/redir.aspx?C=e986e8c7014542ac905afa2dc1f048f4&URL=mailto%3aGovernor.ChristineGregoire%40GOVERNOR.WA.GOV)>

Dear Colleague:

There is no question we need to address our current budget shortfall and we need to do so quickly.

This morning I announced a special session to convene November 28 to bring the Legislature back to do the job.  As you know, last week’s forecast dropped our revenues by $1.4 billion.  I’ve started preparing for $2 billion in cuts to assure that we have a reserve (essential in these times) in the event of further bad news.  I’m asking legislators back in late November to have the benefit of the November 17 forecast.  That forecast, according the state economist, is four times more likely to be negative than positive.

You all know the challenges that additional cuts pose.  This most recent news presents an even greater challenge than I initially thought.  Nearly 64 percent of the General Fund budget is protected by federal and state law and other considerations.  So with the remaining time in this biennium we have a baseline of $8.7 billion from which we must cut $2 billion.

In other words, we have to cut 23 percent.

We can’t wait until the first day of session, or even special session, to begin this work.  Our budget and policy staff are already working with your agencies to identify savings.  I have engaged legislative leaders and they understand the importance of this effort.  I want them to start the special session ahead of the game.  I will present a plan in late October that will outline the hard choices we have to make among reductions to the social safety net, public safety, health care and education.  It will be a statewide conversation.  Everything is on the table and the public must know what’s at stake.

This is an unprecedented approach, and unprecedented timing.  Yet these are unprecedented times.  This effort will require the resolve of each of you.  It will require the determination of our lawmakers.  And it will require the understanding of our citizens as they see the choices we must make.

Many of you have sent ideas recently and our budget team is reviewing them.  [Please continue to share your ideas and know that they are heard](https://mail.shoreline.edu/owa/redir.aspx?C=e986e8c7014542ac905afa2dc1f048f4&URL=http%3a%2f%2fwww.governor.wa.gov%2fcontact%2fdefault.asp).

Thank you,

Chris