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LAURIE ROBERTS' COLUMNS & BLOG

Laurie Roberts is a columnist for The Arizona Republic.

ADOT budget cutting math doesn't seem to add up

OK, I'm certainly no math whiz (or any other kind of whiz), but can someone explain to me how a request to cut the budget by 15 percent would result in laying off 60 percent of the workforce? That's the state's latest scare pitch, this time brought to you by the Arizona Department of Transportation.

ADOT Director John Halikowski said that under that under Gov. Jan Brewer's 15 percent budget cut scenario, he would have to lay off up to 2,400 employees, or 60 percent of the workforce, close "all but a few" of the 61 MVD offices, suspend highway maintenance except for emergency repairs, suspend operations at all state-line inspection stations (other than the one at the border with Mexico), keep mountain roads closed longer due to less frequent snowplowing and cease publication of Arizona Highways.

"Staffing cuts of this size are unprecedented, and if implemented, would be devastating to the department, our employees and our customers," Halikowski wrote. "It is our hope that none of the reduction strategies will need to be implemented."

That's because it is his hope – and more importantly his boss' hope – that the Legislature will ask voters to raise the state [sales tax](#).

Actually, I think the question should be put to voters. And I hope that voters ask a few questions in return. Starting with this one:

What do you do with the other 85 percent of your budget if a 15 percent cut results in eliminating most of your staff and much of what you do?

Wednesday, October 28, 2009 at 12:27 PM

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posted by [Realistic55](#) on Oct 28, 2009 at 01:17 PM

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Totally a scare tactic. One thing that I noticed was not on any agency's list was reducing pay. Most people have taken a hit financially, with deflation happening, it won't be as hard. How come the rest of society has to go back to 1997 (not 2007) income but not govt?