

Note: "...forcing those entities (local governments) to engage the same process -- set clear priorities and make tough calls -- is a good thing in the long run."



March 20, 2011

John Kasich's budget cuts needed to be deep: editorial

The proposal of any government budget usually comes in stages: discussion about what might be in the proposal, the proposal, the dissection/reaction, the debate, the revision and the approval.

In Ohio, we're in the third stage of this process, and it promises to be a doozy.

Gov. John Kasich on Tuesday proposed his first budget -- a 774-page whopper that includes \$55.5 billion worth of funding of Ohio services for the next two years.

For his part, Kasich did his dead level best to warn us, repeatedly saying, as a candidate and as an elected official, that spending had to be cut and a full-scale overhaul of government was in store.

In that sense, Tuesday's budget proposal shouldn't have come as much of a surprise to Ohioans, particularly those touched by the services traditionally provided.

So, the dissection/reaction to such a bold budget is to be expected, of course. It's natural that those who would be cut in this budget -- and 250 of 371 general fund spending line items are cut at a savings of \$2.3 billion -- are upset about such a move.

But the fact is Kasich is doing just what he said he would do. He's set up his priorities -- making the tough calls and, if all goes well, setting the state up for better fiscal accountability in the future.

There's no question that local governments will take a hit -- cut by half in the two years covered by the budget -- but it's also true that the cuts were completely expected.

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