

VETERAN REPRESENTATIVE CHARD TO HEAD YOUTH CORRECTIONS

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The Salt Lake Tribune. Salt Lake City, Utah: Aug 18, 2000. pg. C.2

Copyright Salt Lake Tribune Aug 18, 2000

Blake D. Chard, a seven-year veteran of the Utah House of Representatives, has been named director of the state Division of Youth Corrections.

The Layton Republican will resign at month's end. He conducted his last legislative committee meeting Thursday.

"Someone said they can't wait until the first time I sit down across the other side of the table so they can give me a hard time," he said.

And Chard suspects that is more promise than jest.

"The budget process will be the toughest. You're never going to get the resources to meet the demands. You just have to manage it the best you can," he said.

Chard served on the appropriations subcommittee that provides funds for detention and secure care facilities, juvenile receiving centers and out-of-state placements of troubled youths. He also was instrumental in implementing new technology used by the Legislature.

Resigning his seat is merely a formality, as he already had decided not to run for re-election in Layton's District 15. He lost a bid for Republican nominee for Davis County commissioner in June.

Chard is vice president at SmartUTAH Inc., a nonprofit foundation that promotes use of the Internet for government services and electronic commerce. He also has more than 12 years experience in computer support and database administration.

He takes over the post vacated when Gary Dalton retired.

As director, Chard will oversee an annual budget of about \$80 million, 850 staff members and more than a dozen facilities across the state.

"I've got some big shoes to fill and a great staff," he said.

While he has no direct experience with juvenile justice, Chard is a former deputy for the Davis County Sheriff's office and said he and his wife, Sheila, have raised five children, ages 17-24.

"They haven't been in any trouble," he said.