



Dr. Alan Bates

Oregon Senate Majority Whip

House Calls: Your Constituent Newsletter

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April 4, 2007

Greetings!

We are still busy at work here in Salem. Great progress is being made in balancing our state's budget and providing protection from discrimination to all Oregonians.

We have also enjoyed unparalleled success with the "HOPE for Healthy Oregon" tour - you can find more information on this tour later in this newsletter.

To all who have called, e-mailed, or written to share opinions with my office, thank you. I look forward to hearing more from you throughout the session.

In health,

Dr. Alan Bates

Oregon's Rainy Day Fund Finally Created

Corporate tax rebate money redirected to protect state during next recession

Last week, the Oregon legislature approved a plan to establish a rainy-day fund to protect vital programs that have historically been at risk during economic downturns. Because Oregon's primary revenue source is the income tax, downturns in our economy force reductions in school funding, public safety, health care and other essential state services.

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Further, a lack of an emergency fund has created hidden costs to our state. As one of only three states without a rainy-day fund we pay higher interest rates in the bond market. Our state treasurer has estimated that Oregon loses millions of dollars each year in higher interest rates due to our bond rating by Moodys.

With Oregon's first rainy day fund in 150 years, money that previously was gifted to large corporations will now be saved, to be used when we once again experience economic downturn.

[Click here for more details](#)

HOPE for Healthy Oregon

Tour received with enthusiasm across Oregon



Throughout March, Senator Westlund and I presented at seventeen town halls around the state and will continue to do more in April.

On Friday, March 16, we spoke to a packed house at the City Club in Portland. The program reached over 100,000 Oregonians through broadcasts on radio, television, and internet podcast you can [listen to the presentation here](#).

We also had a busy travel schedule in southern Oregon last weekend with town halls in Grants Pass and Ashland on Friday, March 30th followed by stops in Medford and Klamath Falls on Saturday.

[Article: "On the road for health reform" -- Medford Mail Tribune](#)

[Editorial: "Health care plan shows promise" -- Medford Mail Tribune](#)

[Find more information at our website](#)

Ways and Means Co-Chairs' Budget Released

Last week the budget process moved forward as the co-chairs, Sen. Kurt Schrader and Rep. Mary Nolan, released their budget proposal.



The co-chairs proposal provides \$6.245 billion for K-12 education, adds 100 officers to the state police, supports Oregon's Rainy-Day fund, and provides other essential public services. I encourage you to need the presentation materials and attend some of the upcoming town halls in our area with the Ways and Means Committee

[2007-09 Ways and Means Co-chairs' Budget](#)

- [Article: "RCC president: Proposed state budget 'doesn't help us out at all'" -- Medford Mail Tribune](#)

- [Article: "Proposal suggests more for schools, less for higher ed" -- Oregonian](#)

Ways and Means Committee to Tour Oregon

Tour to arrive in Medford April 13th

Friday, April 13, 2007

6:30 PM

South Medford High School

Auditorium

815 South Oakdale Avenue--Medford

There will be a brief presentation by the committee on their proposed budget. The committee will then open the floor to public

testimony.

Members of the community are invited to testify before the committee.

People interested in testifying should provide 20 copies of their testimony. Each person will be limited to two minutes. A signup sheet to testify will be available at each location, order is determined on a first-come-first-served basis.

For more information, please contact James Atkin by calling (503) 986-1604 or by emailing to james.atkin@state.or.us

Senate Bill 2 Passes the Senate

Landmark bill protects Oregonians from discrimination based on sexual orientation

The Senate overwhelmingly passed SB 2, taking another step closer to basic fairness for all Oregonians.

SB 2 ([click here for text](#)), the Oregon Equality Act, prohibits discrimination based on sexual orientation in housing, employment, public accommodation, public services and education, with certain exemptions for bona fide religious organizations.

Bills banning discrimination based on sexual orientation were first introduced in 1973 and have been proposed in nearly every legislative session since. On that note, I was honored to have been asked last session to be a chief sponsor of SB 1000.

Our communities and our state are strongest when we can ensure fundamental equality for all Oregonians. And, although it's taken too long to pass this bill, I was proud to vote yes.

I look forward to the bill's passage in the House and being present when the Governor signs the bill into law.

Senate Honorary Page Program

Do you know a youngster who wants hand-on experience in the Oregon State Legislature?



The Honorary Page Program is a great opportunity to personally experience the Oregon Legislature. Pages assist senators on the senate floor, and help out with office work after the floor session ends. They also receive a detailed historical tour of the Capitol. The minimum age for service is 12.

[For more information, check out the Honorary Page site...](#)