VICKI BERGER
REPRESENTATIVE
OREGON HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
HOUSE DISTRICT 20

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE **CONTACT: Marc Miller**
Friday, July 16, 2004 **503-986-1420**

REP. BERGER AND REP. DALTO JOINT EDITORIAL
SPEED LIMITS CHANGED IN SCHOOL ZONES

Over the past few weeks, a spirited debate has been taking place in our community over new speed limits in school zones. Since this law has gone into effect, it has been made clear to us in the legislature that many Oregonians question the necessity of the change. We thought it might be helpful to describe to you why the law was changed.

We've all seen the signs; "School Zone: 20 mph when children are present." That seems self explanatory. However, a person driving in a car could interpret this statement in a number of ways. Does it mean when children are present on the sidewalk? While they are in the crosswalk? On the playground? Before school? After school? During the weekend? The vague intent of the law is what prompted the Oregon Department of Transportation and Governor Kulongoski to propose the speed limit changes to the legislature.

It is important to understand that the new law does not apply to all school zones, only to those adjacent to schools with a posted speed limit of 30 mph or less. In these areas, the speed limit has been changed to 20 mph which is in effect 24 hours a day, seven days a week. New signs will clearly be posted to notify drivers of the new speed limit.

The Governor and the legislature made this change in the best interest of our children. The newly adopted language clarifies the intent of the law for both drivers and law enforcement. However if Oregonians believe the law causes more of an inconvenience rather than offer protection, the law can be changed. The opportunity to re-write the law will come during the 2005 Legislative Assembly which starts in January. If you could re-write the law, what changes would you propose? We welcome your ideas and participation in the law making process. We would like to note that in our conversations with the Marion County Sheriff's department and Salem's police department, no citations have been made.

Please phone or e-mail your suggestions to:

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This press release and an archive of previous press releases issued by Rep. Berger's office are available on the web at: www.leg.state.or.us/berger.

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