

Last Monday, the Oregon State Legislature adjourned the 2009 Legislative Session, ending six months of hard work leading Oregon through the toughest economic climate in generations. Charting Oregon's course through these turbulent times required real leadership and a responsive state government willing to tackle these tough challenges.

Despite a massive budget shortfall, we confronted the tough issues of today by putting the interests of our children and families first as we invested in our future. We tightened our belts and made tax dollars go further to protect vital state services like education, health care and public safety.

Here are some highlights of what we accomplished:

Putting Children & Families First

I am proud that I took bold steps this year to protect the middle class, children, seniors and the small businesses that are the engines of our economic recovery. I fought for every additional dime for our schools, from Head Start and K-12 to our community colleges and universities.

- ✓ We protected K-12 education, vital human services and public safety and made our tax system fairer by increasing the \$10 corporate minimum tax, because big corporations should pay more than \$10 in taxes each year.
- ✓ We set a strategy to bring our school facilities up to 21st century standards so students have the tools they need to succeed in the technology-based economy.
- ✓ We kept our promise to help Oregon's combat veterans who are returning home from Iraq and Afghanistan so they have the support they and their families need to resume their lives, and extended the same support to all veterans, no matter when they served.

Creating & Saving Jobs

In this tough economy, Oregon families are really feeling the squeeze. This year we created thousands of jobs through targeted investments in health care, transportation and capital construction:

- ✓ We provided health coverage to 95% of Oregon kids and tens of thousands additional adults, creating over 3,000 ongoing jobs in the thriving health care sector by making sure our taxpayer dollars stay right here in Oregon.
- ✓ We passed the bipartisan Jobs and Transportation Act, creating thousands of jobs every year for the next decade while reducing congestion on Oregon's roads to improve air quality, shortening commute times so parents have more time with their families, providing better emergency services and more efficiently moving goods by modernizing our out-of-date transportation system.
- ✓ Here on the coast, we finally got the go-ahead for sea floor mapping. This will enable us to create credible tsunami modeling in conjunction with LIDAR land-based data, update

navigational charts, collect baseline data for fisheries and marine reserves research, and to work with local communities to address and plan for ocean uses. Local boats will be used as much as possible throughout the mapping process.

- ✓ We passed job stimulus packages that will jump-start the economy by creating 15,000 jobs, and make long term investments in Oregon's future by supplying funds for much needed upgrades to our centers of higher learning, state buildings and other public spaces.

Health Care Access & Affordability

Kids deserve health care and parents ought to be able to take their kids to a doctor. That's why I helped pass landmark reforms aimed at providing health coverage for kids and the uninsured, and containing the rampant escalation in the cost of health care. These reforms will begin to mend our broken health care system.

- ✓ Our plan covers an additional 80,000 Oregon kids and 35,000 low-income adults. Increased coverage for the previously uninsured means lower costs for those who already have insurance.
- ✓ The reform package we passed makes government lean and efficient by cutting red tape and consolidating agency functions in one central location.
- ✓ Our plan is a win-win for everyone. We are giving pregnant women, people with disabilities, low-income adults, foster-care kids and 95% of Oregon children access to health care. It may be the most important long range bill we passed this session.

Government Accountability

Just like the rest of the country, Oregon is hurting. And just like Oregon families are doing, we in state government tightened our belts, making tax dollars go further and streamlining government to make it more efficient.

- ✓ We required most state agencies to perform annual audits, and adopted stronger accountability measures for projects that spend our tax dollars and for those who work for state government.
- ✓ We continued to manage the budget with fiscal responsibility by setting more money aside in the Rainy Day Fund to protect Oregon from future economic downturns.
- ✓ We created a website that will allow Oregonians to access information about state government online, because a more transparent, more accountable state government will lead to a better state government.

While the story of this session will clearly focus on how we led Oregon through the immediate crisis, we also kept our eye on our state's future by moving forward on environmental protection, protecting our most vulnerable citizens, and keeping our neighborhoods safe and secure.

Thanks to all of you who kept in touch throughout the session. Your involvement helped shape these accomplishments and move Oregon forward. Now that session is over, I will be working more directly in my district and I look forward to hearing from you again.