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Minority Leader

NEWS RELEASE

For Immediate Release: January 30, 2006

DEMOCRATIC LEADERS SUPPORT CITIZEN COMMISSIONERS

SALEM –Democratic legislative leaders today issued the following joint statement regarding citizen participation on state boards and commissions:

“Oregonians are justifiably proud of the Oregon tradition of citizen oversight of its state agencies. Most state boards and commissions are comprised of Oregonians who are nominated by the Governor and confirmed by the Oregon Senate. These community leaders volunteer their time and expertise to ensure that citizen input is an integral part of the workings of state government. Sadly, this time-honored tradition appears to be under attack.

“The Oregon Fish and Wildlife Commission voted 4-3 to encourage the Columbia River Compact to adjust the harvest split between commercial and sports fisheries. As a result of that majority vote, a member of the Commission has been singled out by one side of the fish allocation issue and is being subjected to significant economic harm.

“We are familiar with dealing with contentious issues as is every member of the Oregon House and Senate. Public issues by their very nature are often contentious and divisive. We are all united, however, in our concern that a fellow Oregonian expressing his opinion as a member of the Oregon Fish and Wildlife Commission is being subjected to an organized boycott of his business. Those who are encouraging this activity are undermining Oregon’s tradition of public participation in overseeing our state government.

“As members of the Oregon Legislature entrusted with leadership positions, we will continue to encourage Oregonians throughout the state representing diverse political, social and economic views to join with us to strengthen public involvement in our government’s work and to ensure that all opinions will be heard without fear of reprisal.”

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