



# NEWS

Oregon Legislature • House Majority Office

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## **Rep. Peter Buckley Honored with "Developmentally Disabled Champion Award"**

State Representative Peter Buckley (D-Ashland) was honored recently as the recipient of the 2008 "Developmentally Disability Champion Award," presented by the Oregon Council on Developmental Disabilities.

Department of Human Services Director Dr. Bruce Goldberg praised Buckley's work in the Oregon legislature in the presentation of the award. "Your leadership in promoting public policy that benefits people with developmental disabilities and their families will have a lasting, positive effect on the quality of life of many Oregonians," Goldberg said.

In receiving the award, Buckley referred to himself as a "mouthpiece," not a champion.

"I hope to be an effective mouthpiece," he said. "I'll accept this on behalf of my colleague, Rep. Sara Gelsler, a tremendous advocate for the disabled, and my brother Matt, and his wonderful partner, Terry, who've dedicated most of their adult lives to care for the developmentally disabled. They're the people on the front lines, just like the employees here today, and just like every family in Oregon with a loved one who is developmentally disabled."

In the 2007 legislature, Buckley sponsored and was able to pass HB 2918, which requires insurance companies to offer the same benefits to developmentally disabled children as are available to non-disabled children under the same group policies. The bill also directs the Health Resource Commission to collaborate with the Department of Human Services and the Oregon Department of Education to develop a comprehensive plan for early intervention services for developmentally disabled children. He is currently working on a bipartisan package of bills for the 2009 legislative to implement the plan.

"Early intervention is the key," Buckley said. "We have to be smart enough to invest and take action at an early age, and we must also develop the long term plan to care for

disabled Oregonians of all ages."

Goldberg also noted Buckley's successful work with his House colleagues to increase salaries for employees in group homes and other care facilities in the recently completed February special session.

"I'm glad we've been able to make progress in the last few years—we need to make a lot more progress in the years to come," Buckley said.

In addition to the "DD Champion" award, Buckley has been acknowledged by the Humane Society of the United States with its "Humane State Legislator" award and by the Center for Conservation Science and Policy with its "Environmental Integrity" award for his work in the 2007 session.

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