



OREGON HOUSE REPUBLICANS

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Contact: Nick Smith

503-986-1351

LEGISLATORS, EXECUTIVE BRANCH LEADERS SHOULD CONTRIBUTE TO THEIR OWN HEALTH INSURANCE PREMIUMS

Oregon Currently Doesn't Require Employee Contributions to Health Premiums

SALEM—House Republicans today proposed legislation requiring all legislators, statewide officeholders and agency directors to contribute to their own insurance premiums provided through the Public Employees Benefits Board. Oregon taxpayers currently subsidize 100 percent of health insurance premiums for these top state officials.

“It’s time for state leaders and agency directors to lead by example,” said House Republican Leader Bruce Hanna (R-Roseburg). “We must eliminate wasteful spending before raising taxes and increasing debt. Our bill will generate savings that would be better spent on senior in-home care or other human services that have been targeted for cuts.”

House Republicans would require each official to contribute nine percent of their total state-funded health, vision, dental and life insurance premiums. Oregon is one of only two states that don’t require its employees to contribute. Most local governments and school districts cap contributions towards their employees’ premiums.

Republican Whip Ron Maurer (R-Grants Pass) said the bill doesn’t affect contracts with union employees, but the measure should demonstrate a commitment by management ahead of this summer’s collective bargaining negotiations.

“As elected and appointed officials, we must face the reality that taxpayers can’t continue to pay for everything,” Rep. Maurer said. “It’s time for politicians and top bureaucrats to shoulder at least some of their insurance costs.”

Deputy Republican Leader Kevin Cameron (R-Salem) said this is just one example of how the Legislature should find savings during the current budget crisis.

“State government should make the same tough decisions that businesses and citizens must make every day,” Rep. Cameron said. “The Legislature must responsibly balance the budget, adequately fund vital services, and put dollars back into Oregonians’ pocketbooks to stimulate the economy.”

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