



## OREGON HOUSE REPUBLICANS

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

February 4, 2008

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### **HOUSE DEMOCRATS PASS RULES TO HIJACK LEGISLATIVE PROCESS**

SALEM—On a partisan vote, House Democrats today passed rules to shut Republicans out of the legislative process during the February session. In addition to taking away the Republicans' right to introduce their own bills, Democrats voted to strip the Republicans' right to bring alternative legislation, or "minority reports" to the House Floor.

"The Democrats' rules go against the fundamental basis of representation," said House Republican Leader Bruce Hanna (R-Roseburg). "When you take away the voice of the minority party, you take away the voice of nearly half of all Oregonians."

Under rules imposed by Speaker Jeff Merkley (D-Portland), only the Speaker and his chosen committee chairs have the ability to introduce and advance legislation through the process. By stripping "minority reports" from House Rules, Democrats have taken away the last remaining option for Oregonians represented by Republicans to have their voices heard.

"These rules stifle respectful disagreement," said Rep. Vicki Berger (R-Salem). Added Rep. Kevin Cameron (R-Salem), "in a session that was supposed to be about nonpartisan issues, it is unfortunate this first vote is totally divided."

Rep. Dennis Richardson (R-Central Point) presented a Republican amendment to restore minority rights to House Rules, though Democrats rejected it on a party-line vote.

House Republicans also objected to Speaker Merkley's decision to seek campaign contributions during the legislative session. Despite opposing session fundraising in the past, the Speaker's rules prohibit all members from raising money except for himself in his own campaign for United States Senate.

"The Speaker is supposed to set the gold standard for following House Rules," Rep. Hanna said. "Instead, he is passing fundraising rules that apply to everybody else but him."

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