



OREGON HOUSE REPUBLICANS

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SLOW ECONOMIC GROWTH UNACCEPTABLE

Weak Economic and Revenue Forecast Calls for Fiscal Restraint

SALEM—House Republicans today said Oregon’s stagnating economy is unacceptable, and the Legislature must take action to protect jobs and boost economic growth. In light of today’s “flat” revenue and economic forecast, the state should also take immediate steps to bring new government spending under control.

“We are not satisfied with an economy that has little or no job growth,” said House Republican Leader Bruce Hanna (R-Roseburg). “Rather than devoting the 2009 session to raising taxes and increasing spending, the Legislature must focus on gearing our tax system to improve the economy and create new jobs. That’s why Republicans are preparing legislation to provide greater fairness to Oregon’s working families and encourage more capital investment in our state.”

House Republicans also called for greater fiscal restraint with the state budget, considering economists do not expect the state to collect additional new revenue this biennium. The Legislature spent down the current budget’s ending fund balance to \$36 million, leaving little to protect Oregon from a sudden downturn.

“The Legislature must move forward with across-the-board five percent savings in all agency General Fund budgets, and capture savings from unused and unnecessary state employee vacancies,” Rep. Hanna said. “House Republicans will continue to vigorously oppose the Governor’s excessive pay raises to his political appointees. Giving bureaucrats \$1,500-per-month pay raises sends the wrong message to taxpayers and working families.”

Rep. Hanna also renewed calls for the creation of a Legislative Audits Office to increase legislative oversight and government performance.

“During uncertain economic times, the Legislature needs tools to make sure our tax dollars are being spent wisely,” Rep. Hanna said. “Currently, the Legislature is at the mercy of an executive branch that has no interest in disclosing the waste, fraud and abuse in our government.”

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