



REPRESENTATIVE KAREN MINNIS
SPEAKER OF THE HOUSE
OREGON HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
HOUSE DISTRICT 49

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**SPEAKER MINNIS: WAYS AND MEANS PROCESS STOPPED UNTIL DEMOCRATS
AGREE ON WHAT'S AVAILABLE TO SPEND**

In response to Senate Democrats wanting to increase spending by \$300 million more than what's available, Speaker Minnis pulls House Republican members from the Joint Committee on Ways and Means Committee.

SALEM – House Speaker Karen Minnis (R-Wood Village) today announced that House Republicans will not participate in the Joint Ways and Means Committee until Senate Democrats get serious about working with them to define the resources available to build a responsible budget for Oregonians. Last Friday, the latest revenue forecast showed Oregon will have slightly more than \$200 million more in revenue available for the next biennium. But just yesterday, Senate Democrats announced they intend to spend an additional \$500 million – including a \$400 million increase in school funding. Overall, they want to spend \$300 million more than what's available without addressing any of the holes in the governor's recommended budget.

“There's no point in the Joint Ways and Means Committee meeting until the Senate Democrats decide to get serious about what revenue we have available,” said Speaker Minnis. “They played the same game two years ago, and it kept us in session until late August. They never wanted to talk about how much money we have available to spend, they only wanted to talk about what they wanted to spend and then find the money to pay for it later. Last session that approach led to an \$800 million income tax surcharge which voters rightfully shot down.”

“That approach is not productive,” said House Ways and Means co-chairman Rep. Wayne Scott (R-Canby). “We know about what we have to spend. We know that because of last Friday's revenue forecast that we have \$200 million more than we had last week. That doesn't mean you can increase spending by \$500 million. The only way to raise that kind of money is by digging into Oregonians wallets. Oregonians are tired of the legislature putting its hand out and the House won't stand for it either.”

House Ways and Means vice-chair Rep. Susan Morgan (R-Myrtle Creek) said, “They're trying to paint themselves as the saviors of schools, by saying they want to spend \$400 million more on education, but the cuts that would be required to health and human service programs, corrections and the state police to make that balance would be unconscionable.”

This press release and an archive of past releases issued by the Speaker's Office are available on the web at: <http://www.leg.state.or.us/house/speaker/home.htm>.

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