



**REPRESENTATIVE GENE WHISNANT  
OREGON HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES  
HOUSE DISTRICT 53**

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**  
June 11, 2009

**CONTACT: Megan Schenewerk**  
503-986-1453

Rep Whisnant Votes against Tax Increases

SALEM— The House of Representatives passed \$733 million in permanent tax increases that Rep. Whisnant (R-Sunriver) believes will threaten Oregon jobs and prolong the state's economic recovery. The Democrats' income (HB 2649) and corporate (HB 3405) tax increases will be exceptionally harmful to the state's small businesses. Rep. Whisnant (R-Sunriver) voted NO on both bills. "I still believe that we cannot tax and borrow our way out of this recession," Rep. Whisnant commented.

As part of the Legislature's Billion Dollar Tax Week, the House also passed a \$433 million tax increase on health care on Tuesday. Democrats are pushing the tax increases despite state projections that call for 17 percent and 20 percent growth in the next two biennia following 2009-11. "I support some of the reforms in the bill but could not support the bureaucracy created by the bill," Rep. Whisnant stated. Many in the Oregon Business community are opposed to these three tax increase bills, HB 2116, HB 2649, and HB 3405.

Democrats voted to raise income taxes on high-income earners, even though 75 percent of the 31,000 Oregonians affected by HB 2649 are owners of small and family-owned businesses. House Republicans said the tax increase will kill jobs and drive individuals and businesses to other states that are more supportive of investors and small businesses.

"Small business is the backbone of Oregon's economy," said House Republican Leader Bruce Hanna (R-Roseburg). "Less than a third of income earned by these Oregonians is generated by wages; the rest of their income is business-related. By increasing taxes on small business owners, there will be fewer resources for job creation and reinvestment in Oregon equipment and services. These tax increases were not necessary, yet Democrats are pushing ahead despite the consequences to Oregon jobs and our economy."

Earlier this session, House and Senate Republicans presented the Back to Basics budget plan that funds a full school year, protects public safety and human services, and doesn't require Oregon families and businesses to send more of their hard earned dollars to Salem. Democrats immediately rejected the plan and its identified savings, opting instead to raise taxes.

These two tax bills are currently stalled in the Senate Chamber. The Democrats did not have the three-fifths majority to pass the HB 3405 last night because Senator Mark Hass did not vote in support. He would like to see the taxes to be temporary.

###