

State Representative
Cliff Bentz
House District 60

NEWS RELEASE: April 29, 2013

CONTACT: Representative Cliff Bentz
503-986-1460



Rep. Bentz Successfully Carries Miner's Bill

SALEM – On Thursday, Representative Cliff Bentz (R-Ontario) carried and the Oregon House of Representatives unanimously passed House Bill 2841A. The bill concept was provided by miners from Baker City, and was Co-Sponsored by Rep. Bentz and Rep. Gail Whitsett (R-Klamath Falls). It requires Oregon state agencies, prior to adopting, amending, or repealing any rule or issuing an order pertaining to recreation or small scale mining, to consult with affected parties and further directs agencies to consider “all reasonably available and relevant scientific studies” when making these determinations.

Rep. Bentz carried the bill on the House Floor and asked that his colleagues support this improved approach to Oregon agency decision-making. “When writing or changing rules or issuing orders that affect miners, the Oregon Department of Environmental Quality should first discuss the proposed changes with those subject to the regulation,” Rep. Bentz stated. “House Bill 2841A requires that state agencies meet with affected individuals and provide direct responses to their questions and concerns. This policy does not mandate an outcome, but requires consideration of reasonably available relevant information and active engagement with those most affected.”

“Small scale and recreational mining is important to Oregon’s economy. New regulations and orders should be created only after consultation with those directly impacted by these rules and orders. I truly appreciate the direction and insight provided by the Baker County miners. If passed by the Senate and signed by the Governor, HB 2841A will mark a decided step forward.”

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900 Court St. NE, H-475 Salem, OR 97301
rep.cliffbentz@state.or.us 503-986-1460