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NEWS RELEASE

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COURTNEY SUPPORTS STUDENTS, SAYS SCHOOLS SHOULD BE SAFE

(SALEM) – Senate President Peter Courtney offered support Wednesday for students across the Mid-Valley, Oregon and the nation as they demonstrated against gun violence in schools by walking out of their classes.

“Our schools should be safe havens that foster learning and understanding,” said Courtney (D-Salem/Gervais/Woodburn). “Students should be able to focus on their studies. Educators should be able to focus on instruction. Parents should have the peace of mind that comes with knowing their children are safe.”

Courtney noted that Oregon was the first state to take action against gun violence after the tragic shooting that left 14 students and three adults dead at a Parkland, Fla., high school last month. Passage of House Bill 4145 closed the “boyfriend loophole” and will keep guns away from domestic abusers and stalkers.

In the just completed 2018 session, the Legislature also boosted funding to improve student access to school-based mental health services, and access to care for adults in psychiatric crisis. Funds were also allotted to better train first responders in mental health crisis intervention.

“We need to continue to work to keep guns out of the hands of dangerous people. We need to make sure our schools are secure and our teachers and children are safe in their classrooms,” Courtney said.