

JEFF GOLDEN
STATE SENATOR
DISTRICT 3



OREGON STATE SENATE

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MEDIA RELEASE

**SENATOR GOLDEN SUGGESTS POSSIBILITY OF BI-PARTISAN AGREEMENT
ON DISCONNECTION FROM RECENT FEDERAL TAX CHANGES**

In recognition of the goal to minimize the time that legislators gather on the Senate Floor during Monday's Special Session, State Senator Jeff Golden (D-Rogue Valley) has decided to forego his intended floor speech and is instead releasing in writing. Golden asks fellow legislators to study a proposal to disconnect Oregon state tax code from a set of new tax breaks contained in the first federal COVID relief package earlier this year, in order to save revenue that could then be distributed to small and medium-sized Oregon businesses struggling to survive the pandemic.

"I think that this sensible proposal was excluded from the special sessions mostly because our leaders understandably don't want to ignite a partisan battle right now," Golden said. "But I'm not so sure this measure, thoroughly understood, would get us fighting. If we have to choose between helping community-based businesses who are hanging on by a thread right now, or Oregon's wealthiest executives, there's a good chance we'd end up on the same page." These are the remarks Senator Golden initially prepared to deliver from the floor during Monday's special session:

Mr. President, I rise to ask if all of us could spend a couple of hours before we return for regular session next month to study an issue that's not on today's agenda. It's probably not there because of a belief that it would trigger a big partisan fight that's the last thing we need right now; I rise because I *think that assumption might be wrong*. I'm talking about the proposal to disconnect, as many other states have in recent months, from federal tax loopholes that are part of first federal Covid aid package, and direct the saved revenue to Oregon businesses struggling to recover.

Last week on a Zoom call I was listening to a couple of Republican legislators deeply worried about the survival of small restaurants in their districts at the same time that large corporate chain restaurants, doing just fine, are ready to cash in new tax breaks. I wanted to say, but didn't, that they were *perfectly* explaining why we should disconnect; they were illustrating the key point that we know how to ease the hurt of Oregon's business community a lot better than do K Street lobbyists who got to shape the CARES Act.

The underlying facts here get a little thick, and I won't claim that all analysts come to exactly the same conclusion. If you take up this holiday homework assignment to study

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who benefits if we quietly go along with the feds, and who could benefit if we disconnect, and then decide disconnection's not for you, ok. But *please*, let's not squander the chance to provide critical help to our struggling small businesses because we're somehow too busy to look into the facts.

It boils down to this: there's a hundred-plus million dollars on the table that will mostly go either to Oregon's wealthiest, largest businesses that have sailed through the COVID crisis relatively unscathed, or could go to small and medium-size businesses who really **HAVE** been hammered by COVID, and are fighting like crazy to keep their doors open and their people employed. If that's what the facts show, wouldn't just about every member of this body choose the second? Crazy as it sounds, we might actually **AGREE** on this one. With a little due diligence over the next two or three weeks, we can find out. Solid non-partisan analysis of this issue is readily available. Thank you.