



OREGON STATE SENATE

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Senator Jeff Golden Remonstrance on Possibility of Bipartisan Support for Disconnection from New Federal Tax Breaks

SALEM – In recognition of the public health emergency to limit the time that legislators gather on the Senate Floor during today’s Special Session, State Senator Jeff Golden (D-Rogue Valley) decided to forego his intended remonstrance on the Senate Floor. Senator Golden believes

“I think that this sensible proposal was excluded from the Third Special Session of 2020 because our leaders understandably would like to avoid a partisan battle,” said Senator Golden. “I’m not so sure this measure, if thoroughly understood, would get us fighting. If we must 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.”

Below is the remonstrance Senator Golden intended to give on the Floor of the Oregon State Senate:

“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 cause a big partisan fight, which I agree is 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-19 aid package and direct the saved revenue to Oregon businesses struggling to recover.

“Last week, in an online virtual meeting, I was listening to a couple of Republican legislators deeply worried about the survival of small restaurants in their districts while they noticed that large corporate chain restaurants are doing just fine and 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 K Street lobbyists who were influential in shaping the details of 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 who benefits if we quietly go along with the federal government, and who could benefit if we disconnect. Then decide if disconnection is or is not for you. But whatever you decide please, let’s not squander the chance to provide critical help to our struggling small businesses because we’re unwilling 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-19 crisis relatively unscathed, or could go to small and medium-size businesses who really have been hammered by the pandemic, 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 the Senate 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, and I hope we all take advantage of it. Thank you.”

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