



David Gomberg—State Representative, House District 10

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Greetings House District 10,

It was my very great honor to be asked to speak at the 70th Annual Fleet of Flowers on Memorial Day in Depoe Bay. This special event recognizes the men and women who have worn our nation's uniforms, and mariners lost at sea. You can hear the entire program at [KBCH online](#).

Following the program Susan and I boarded one of the Coast Guard vessels that took wreaths to the Pacific. We were joined by our friends Rep. Gene Whisnant (R-Sunriver) and Senator Fred Girod (R-Stayton). This was a moving memorial to those who put themselves at risk to feed and defend their community. I would recommend a visit next year.

The Final Stretch: The legislative session is now in the final month and the pace has been fast and furious. Yesterday alone over 50 measures were considered on the House floor.

Another sure sign that the legislature is entering the final stretch is the May revenue forecast and how much the legislature has available to spend.

The good news is that Oregon is getting better. And that's very good news. The forecast shows that revenue has exceeded earlier projections by over \$350 million. Significantly, this does not mean that any individual Oregonian paid extra. It just means that more Oregonians are working; that's good for them, and good for state and local budgets. Revenues are up so much, in fact, that it has triggered the constitutionally-required return of "kicker" revenue to Oregonians in the form of a tax credit on next years' filings.

An important consideration, however, is to remember that during the long recession, we cut programs, reduced our school year, and put off maintenance of our highways and bridges. We've been playing catch-up since, but still have a long way to go. Some argue that we should use the kicker to speed our recovery and restore cuts to schools, public safety, and infrastructure. Others argue that we ought to put some money away in a "rainy day fund" for future downturns so we can avoid our current problems in the future. Of course, many believe that the money should be returned to taxpayers exactly as the Constitution requires.

For my own part, I evaluate state decisions much the same as I do decisions in my own small business. We have a situation where sales are higher than expected. We have no money in savings. And we have needed repairs. Do we use the extra money to save for the slow winter months, make repairs, or return a portion to our customers?

Since Oregon voters implemented this unique-in-the-nation tax reduction measure, I think they should have the opportunity to discuss how well it has worked and possibly refine it—I would like to see this go to the ballot.

Education Funding: In addition to the kicker, the forecast also provided additional revenue to the state and in accordance with earlier commitments, 40% was immediately allocated to our schools. This \$104 million brings the current commitment to about \$7.36 billion, which is more than 25% above the funding level four years ago and \$400 million more than the governor's recommended budget for this biennium.

I have always advocated funding schools at a level that provides our children with the quality education they need for today's economy. Indeed, I speak out frequently about the shortage of teaching days, low graduation rates, crowded classes, and the affect these problems have on our kids and our communities.

This second installment is good news. But local school administrators say they need more and are asking for a total of \$7.5 billion. My task in the final days of this session is to stretch budgets further and work toward that goal.

Bills with Local Effects: I am happy to report that several coastal projects are going forward. Here are the details:

HJM 20: Together with the bipartisan, bicameral Coastal Caucus, my office has been working on a resolution which would urge Congress to fund the Coast Guard's US Air facility in Newport, Oregon in perpetuity.

In October of 2014 the US Coast Guard announced its decision to close the central coast's facility, an action that resulted in significant opposition from the local community. This resolution sends a clear message that the Coast Guard facility is absolutely critical to the health and safety of coastal communities—and indeed of Oregonians as a whole.

As I said in my floor speech, "The Coast Guard saves lives; losing this Coast Guard facility will cost lives."

The resolution passed the House with unanimous support and is currently working its way through the senate. The federal funding bill is currently being considered by the US Congress. HJM 20 sends a strong message that Oregon supports the Newport rescue helicopter.

HCR 12: This week the governor met in her ceremonial office with the family of Dr. Lavern Webber to celebrate a resolution honoring his life. HCR 12 recognizes the contributions of Dr. Weber to his community, to the development of the Hatfield Marine Science Center, and to the lives of his many students and staff at Oregon State University. Forty years ago I had the opportunity to meet Dr. Webber as a student. His guidance had a profound influence in my life and I am proud to have been a chief sponsor of a resolution honoring him.



SB 320: Oregon small businesses are the lifeblood of our rural economy. Entrepreneurship creates community bonds that bring neighbors together for a common purpose. I have said time and again that across this great state people are using their creativity, their experience, and their economic courage to make a better life for themselves and their families. I believe strongly in Oregon's small business. That's why I am a proud supporter of SB 320-- a great bill which will help folks create micro-businesses feeding their neighbors and help pay the bills at the same time.

This measure will allow home bakers to sell low-risk baked goods like bread and cookies without the oversight from Department of Agriculture regulations. It will protect the safety and security of buyers by ensuring minimum standards for food handling. And it will give those with a passion for baking the chance to turn their passion into an economic opportunity.

This bill is an example of good legislation that supports food access and safety throughout the state, unleashes economic activity, and helps Oregonians move forward.

HB 3030 When neighbors choose to work together to address local issues or problems, one option is to create a “special” district. On some parts of the coast, drifting sands in residential neighborhoods are such a problem. HB 3030 would allow residents to vote to create a sand control district. It is important to note that this measure would not require formation of such districts, but instead allow them, given a local affirmative vote. The bill has passed the House and will soon be heard in the Senate.

Meet our Office: Ukiah Hawkins Ukiah has been working this session as is one of our interns. He hails from Arkansas, but moved west for his university studies and is currently completing a Political Science undergraduate degree at PSU. During his time there, he has worked with Mercy Corps and has also served as a research assistant for the City Club of Portland on issues dealing with the Affordable Care Act and healthcare benefits for people experiencing homelessness.

Ukiah has studied a broad range of public policy issues, and is greatly interested in the institutional conditions which cause socioeconomic disenfranchisement and marginalization. In his spare time he gardens and sings tenor in the Trinity Episcopal Cathedral choir.

It has been a great pleasure having Ukiah work with my staff and I this session!

I hope this newsletter finds you all well and enjoying the lovely spring weather,

*Warm Regards,
David Gomberg*



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