



David Gomberg—State Representative, House District 10

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Greetings Neighbors and Friends,

Recently, the Oregonian asked me to comment on the sudden gubernatorial transition and how the news was affecting legislative business. “I’m from the Coast,” I replied. “Storms blow through. We clean up. And then we get back to work.”

The fact is that your legislature has been busy working on budgets and bills with the potential to improve schools, businesses, and lives in our district. While I am saddened by the events that led to Governor Kitzhaber's resignation and appreciate his significant contributions to Oregon over the past 36 years, his stepping aside enables us to fully focus on pending legislation with Kate Brown as our new Governor.

To give you an idea of the happenings in Salem, here’s a quick summary of some of the issues I’m working on:

Small Business Tax Bill:

I’m continuing to press for a reduction in tax rates for Oregon’s smallest businesses. HB 2688 would provide benefits to companies that have part time or seasonal employees. That includes fishing, farming, construction, and tourism. The preliminary research suggests that this could benefit as many as 8,000 Oregon businesses. By reducing the employment-hour requirement to qualify for the tax break, this bill will promote and protect small businesses in our district and across the state, and will help to grow and strengthen our local economies.

School Lunches:

Last year, I spoke on the floor of the house about efforts in Lincoln County to help kids receiving subsidized school meals. And I spoke about the stigma of being in those programs and receiving what I called the “Scarlet Sandwich”. I am pleased to now be the co-sponsor of legislation to provide free school lunches to students who are currently eligible for reduced price lunches. Not only is this a great chance to help provide all students with a healthy lunch, it also makes economic sense. As I stated in my testimony, an emergency meal actually costs more than providing a normal lunch when you calculate time spent prepping them. With this legislation, these students, our future, will always be able to eat nutritious lunches at school without impacting their family budgets or their dignity. And it will actually save the school time and money.

Governor Kate Brown:

I hope you will join me in welcoming Kate Brown to the Governor’s office. I have a great working relationship with Governor Brown and have worked with her in the Secretary of State’s office on small business issues, minimizing red tape, budgets, and election concerns. I’m excited to see what she will be able to do as Governor. Although I wish her appointment had occurred under different circumstances, the transition appears to be running swiftly and smoothly. Join me in welcoming a caring, compassionate and effective new governor.

Transportation Package:

A well developed and maintained transportation network and infrastructure are essential to a healthy economy. Said another way, in our district we use roads to take products to market, to bring customers to visit, and to get to vital services in the valley.

However, as many of my constituents have noted, the condition of coastal roads and bridges is less than ideal, well developed or well maintained. Despite the Oregon Department of Transportation's great efforts, we are seeing deterioration which increases the cost of transportation, undermines economic growth, and increases maintenance costs for our own vehicles.

As Co-Chair of the Transportation and Economic Development Committee I will be working on improving Oregon's vital transportation network and lowering transportation costs. A comprehensive transportation package needs to be a priority this legislative session. We need to fix our roads and bridges and we need to prepare for that earthquake that will someday come. And that means we also need to seek out new ways to pay for maintaining and improving our infrastructure. Simply put, as we use less gasoline (which is good!) we collect less gasoline tax revenue. So watch for a provocative conversation about roads and road taxes before we leave Salem.

Meet My Staff: Lauren Blake

Lauren is originally from Arcata, in Northern California, where she graduated in the top 5% of her high school class. She is currently a freshman at Willamette University where she studies Civic Communications and Media with a focus in Economics and Politics. After she graduates, Lauren hopes to go to grad school before working in a Public Relations firm. At Willamette, Lauren is a member of the Delta Gamma fraternity, she sings in the all-women choir, and works in the Athletics office. While Lauren has widespread interests in public policy, she is particularly interested in issues of gender equity and environmental sustainability. I'm so happy to have her interning in my office Tuesday and Thursday afternoon!

I'll be reporting monthly as the Session evolves. And I'll be seeing many of you as I return to the Coast most evenings and am continuing to attend events around the district.



If you have interest or concerns about pending legislation, please feel free to contact my office. And if you know anyone who should be receiving these newsletter updates, please forward them a copy and invite them to sign up.

Thanks as always for being part of a great community and for helping me become a better legislator. If I can ever be of assistance, please do not hesitate to be in contact.

Warm regards,

Rep. David Gomberg