Dear Friends and Neighbors,

After months of hard work in Salem, the 2013 Legislative Session adjourned on July 8th. It has been busy, but I am proud of the important work we accomplished together; from protecting critical services and investing in education and our infrastructure, to getting Oregonians back to work.

Our primary duty as a Legislature is to balance the State budget. That has been accomplished with what I believe is the best budget Oregon has seen in 20 years; one that is more efficient and serves the needs of Oregonians better than we have in the past. Legislation is always a complex debate with special interests in Salem, and in that debate I never forget that the interest of Oregonians come first.

This session, I returned as Chair of the Consumer Protection and Government Efficiency committee. I also served on three other committees: Business and Labor, Land Use, and Rules.

I have included in this newsletter information that I hope will give you an idea of some of the accomplishments of the 77th Legislative Session. Additionally, I have included brief descriptions of some of the bills I introduced and their outcomes.

Representing House District 8 in Oregon’s Legislature is an honor, and your support and input is valuable. Please do not hesitate to contact my office at (503) 968-1408 or rep.paulholvey@state.or.us if I can be of any assistance.

Respectfully,

Paul Holvey

**2013 Session Highlights:**

Below you will find an overview of some of the important things we accomplished this legislative session:

Investment in Education

Putting Oregonians Back to Work

Consumer Protection

Environment and GMOs

Public Safety

Health Care Improvements

Citizens United

**Investment in Education:**

One of my top priorities was to make the strongest education investment we could this session. It is time to reverse the consistent disinvestment over the past 20 years in our public schools, community colleges, and universities. I firmly believe education helps lift families from poverty and ensures that students today are ready for the economic realities of the future. I am pleased the Legislature has passed the largest K-12 budget ever proposed for Oregon’s public schools, bringing more stability to school districts statewide.

Through a combination of public pension reforms, greater revenue earnings, and shifting resources, we were able to budget $6.55 billion and generate $200 million in savings, for a total allocation of $6.75 billion to K-12 education system; an increase of $ 1 billion from the last budget.

In most districts we will finally turn the corner away from shorter school years and teacher layoffs with this budget. While there are still more revenues needed to provide a quality education, including vocational ed, physical ed, and the arts, we are headed in the right direction in funding education.

In addition to this historic reinvestment in our K-12 classrooms, I’ve supported targeted policies that aim to make education better for everyone, from pre-K through our university and community college systems. The passage of tuition equity is a great achievement for Oregon. We have made fundamental changes to the organization of our higher education system, which are aimed at making our institutions more efficient and providing more access while reducing student tuition costs. We still have a lot of work to do on these issues, but we are again headed in the right direction.

I also continued my efforts in expanding career technical education in Oregon this session. I worked with many legislators to pass HB 2636, advancing science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM); HB 2912 making dollars available to CTE Student organizations such as Skills USA and Future Farmers of America; HB 2689 enabling youth development organizations such as the Northwest Youth Corps to work on public resource projects for job training and experience as part of an academic program; and SB 498 depositing $8 million into the CTE grant program.

**Putting Oregonians Back to Work:**

Job creation has always been one of my main focuses in the legislature. I was excited to sponsor HB 2443, which expands the usage of growlers and kegs in the wine, cider and malt beverage industries. This will be beneficial to the restaurant industry as well as consumers. I was happy to continue my work with Senator Prozanski removing land use and regulatory barriers for this growing industry in SB 841 and SB 795. We again teamed up and successfully pushed for a $1.2 million investment in the Agricultural Fermentation Center at OSU to help the industry grow and expand nationally.

We increased access to capital for small businesses through HB 2323. This bill creates the Oregon Investment Act, which will consolidate economic development incentives, set clearer priorities for investments and find new ways to partner with the private sector to support business growth in Oregon, particularly solutions that help small businesses access the necessary capital to grow and thrive. I was happy to support over $1 billion investments in infrastructure bonding for projects throughout the state. This is perhaps the most effective way government can create jobs and enhance the state’s economic future. We also supported Oregon farmers by improving access to capital and connecting local farmers with schools and families who want to buy Oregon-grown food (HB 2649 and HB 2700).

**Consumer Protection:**

Oregon is still recovering from the economic downturn of 2008, and many homeowners need additional protection from foreclosure and predatory lending practices. Several pieces of legislation I sponsored this session aim to ensure that Oregon consumers are not taken advantage of and help promote fairness in business practices.

I chief sponsored and ushered many bills through my committee this session that will help protect consumers: HB 2059 will help protect seniors and family assets by enacting consumer protections and regulations on estate and consignment sales. HB 2060 protects donors from bogus charities who fail to spend at least 30 percent of their donations on their charitable mission and excludes charities from the state income tax deduction if they do not use donations effectively. HB 2536 will help protect the best interests of vulnerable Oregonians who are being targeted to sell their structured settlement annuities.

Having a fair competitive marketplace for public contracts is critical for business and government agencies. I worked with Senator Lee Beyer and a large workgroup of stakeholders to pass SB 254 which helps ensure government contracts are fair and open to create jobs in Oregon. Additionally we passed HB 3400 which supports Oregon workers and businesses by promoting use of local goods and services.

As Chair of the Consumer Protection Committee in the House since 2007, I have been at the forefront of legislation dealing with issues in lending and foreclosure. This session I continued that work with SB 558, HB 2929 and HB 3389, which help consumers and businesses with the foreclosure process and alternatives to foreclosure. In addition, I passed HB 2528, which requires lenders to pay interest on borrower’s moneys that are held in reserve accounts. The House Consumer Protection Committee also passed HB 2662, which helps communities address foreclosed properties that are neglected and causing blight in neighborhoods.

The Consumer Protection Committee and the House did pass two bills to hold insurance companies accountable to consumers. HB 3160 removed the insurance industry exemption from the state anti-fraud statute. Insurance is the only line of business currently exempted from the Unfair Trade Practices Act (UTPA), which allows consumers a private right of action to recover losses for insurance industry abuses. The other bill that passed the same committee and the House was HB 2821, which increased the benefits insurance companies are required to pay on auto insurance claims. Oregon consumers pay for these benefits and should be able to receive them when appropriate, like consumers in most other states. Unfortunately the Oregon Senate was not able to pass these bills because of the insurance industries’ influence; however, we were able to pass SB 414, which will allow the insurance division to order restitution for consumers when they are harmed by insurance companies’ unlawful claims practices.

**Environment and GMOs:**

As Oregonians, we care about our health and the health of our environment. I have heard these concerns from many in my community. That is why I introduced legislation aimed at protecting the health of our environment and the safety of the food we grow and eat. Oregon’s future requires protecting our quality of life and the world we share.

Again teaming up Senator Floyd Prozanski, we passed a significant piece of legislation. SB 602 prohibits the use of internal combustion engines on Waldo Lake. This bill will protect the purity of this lake and enhance this wilderness area for future generations to come. It is after all the third purest lake in the world; need I say more!

There was a lot of legislation and conversation this session regarding genetically modified organisms (GMOs) and their impacts on our food, environment and health. I introduced bills to address the uncertainty and risk of GMOs in Oregon.  While some of these bills were blocked by industry interests, they are worth mentioning because this conversation needs to continue.

I was a co-sponsor of [HB 2427](http://dlcc.wiredforchange.com/dia/track.jsp?v=2&c=mm0G2i60VvTsWwxC7zzW50lI8Dh108AU) to protect the specialty seed industry in the Willamette Valley from the introduction and possible contamination of GMO canola.  The Willamette Valley is an agricultural powerhouse for our state, and produces a large share of fresh vegetables and specialty seeds for the world.  This bill would protect our Willamette Valley farmers and allow Oregon to keep producing a wide variety of agricultural products.  I am pleased to say HB 2427 ended up passing the legislature.

I chief sponsored HB 2530 and it was unfortunately blocked by industry influence. This bill would have banned farming of genetically engineered fish or Atlantic salmon in Oregon’s rivers or ocean waters. There is significant concern and risk posed by the introduction of these fish and the impacts that they could have on Oregon’s waterways and native aquaculture environments. I was joined by the Oregon Salmon Commission in an effort to protect Oregon’s wild Pacific salmon and the industries that rely on them. The same interests also blocked HB 2532, a bill I sponsored to require labeling of food products containing genetically modified organisms. I believe Oregonians have a right to know whether or not the food they eat has been genetically modified.

There are many uncertainties surrounding food containing genetically modified organisms, including its long-term health impacts. The risks of GMO contamination with other crops threaten neighboring farms. I am working and will continue to work to make Oregon foods, farms and communities safer.

**Public Safety:**

We passed sentencing reforms that will allow for increased investments in community public safety. This will be accomplished by controlling the growth of Oregon’s prison population and prioritizing emergency services and resources for crime victims (HB 3194 and HB 3317). This key legislation will save $326 million by eliminating the need to for roughly 870 new prison beds over ten years. The savings will be reinvested in public safety and treatment programs that we know will reduce crime and increase safety in our communities.

**Health Care Improvements**

One thing that we should all be proud of is Oregon’s continued progress in addressing health care issues. We have continued to cut health care costs while providing more access to health care for Oregonians. As a result of this session, 220,000 Oregonians currently without coverage will have access to health care, and insurance companies will be required to cover autism treatment for children ages zero to eight (HB 2123, HB 3485 and SB 365).

**Citizen’s United – House Joint Memorial 6:**

I have heard concerns from many of my constituents about the Citizen’s United Supreme Court ruling, as well as concerns about corporate personhood and limiting campaign spending. I agree that statutory entities should not have the same constitutional rights as individuals and that money raised and spent for political purposes should be subject to reasonable regulation.

While this is an issue that needs to be resolved by our federal government, there are steps that we can take here in the state of Oregon to make sure our federal representatives hear our voice loud and clear. That is why I joined Representative Clem to sponsor HJM 6, which is a bill that would formally urge Congress to propose a constitutional amendment to limit the rights given to corporations by the Supreme Court decision. I am pleased HJM 6 passed both the House and the Senate chambers.

**Other Legislation:**

This report is just a small example of the many issues the Legislature considered in 2013. To get an idea of all the kinds of bills that the State Legislature handles, you may want to peruse this index of all the bills introduced during the 2013 session.  To look up a specific bill by number, go to the Legislative Information System and click on "Bills" in the top bar near the right edge.

Links: http://www.leg.state.or.us/13reg/pubs/index.pdf

Links: <https://olis.leg.state.or.us/liz/2013R1>

**Community Information**

**Construction:**

The 2013 summer construction season will be one of ODOT’s biggest and most significant, with a large number of major transportation improvement projects funded under the Jobs and Transportation Act and other sources getting underway. These projects will strengthen our transportation infrastructure, improve Oregon’s economy, enhance the livability of the state’s communities and reduce congestion.

Included in this is the next phase of improvements to the I-5/Beltline interchange. ODOT will continue to modernize the interchange, correcting deficiencies to enable the interchange to safely and efficiently accommodate travel demands into the future.

Link: http://www.oregon.gov/ODOT/GOVREL/Pages/Major-projects.aspx

Link: http://www.oregon.gov/ODOT/GOVREL/Pages/Beltline-Interchange.aspx

**Oregon Summer Reading Opportunity: Free Online Books for Summer Reading**

Students and families across the state will have unlimited access to thousands of digital books in *myON*, giving families an opportunity to share literacy experiences together. The Oregon summer reading partnership with *myON* will be available at NO COST until September 15, 2013.  For more on gaining access to *myON* BOOKS at http://myOn.com