



# STATEMENT FROM HOUSE MAJORITY LEADER VAL HOYLE

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## **Historic Session for Oregon Families Comes to a Close**

*78th Legislature makes strides toward a more prosperous future for all Oregonians*

*House Majority Leader Val Hoyle made this statement today following the close of the 2015 legislative session:*

“The 2015 Legislative Session produced historic results that will improve the lives of families across the state.

This session has shown that Oregon is a model for the rest of the country when it comes to passing laws that help families get ahead, not just get by. We showed that when you lead with your values and focus on shared priorities, you can deliver results that make a real difference in people’s lives.

House Democrats entered this session with a bold promise to expand opportunities for all Oregonians, ensure fairness in the work place, and boost our local economies. As the final gavel falls, we can look back on a session filled with victories for everyday Oregonians, and forward to a more prosperous future for everyone.

Creating an economy where everyone can thrive can’t be done overnight. But in the 2015 session, we made it a priority to level the playing field for Oregonians who are working hard and playing by the rules, but are still on the losing side of a rigged game.

As a result of this session, most workers in Oregon will now have access to paid sick leave, because no one should have to choose between taking care of their health and keeping their job. Hundreds of thousands of low-wage workers will now have this basic workplace protection. All workers in Oregon will also now have access to a simple, easy to use retirement savings plan so that we don’t have more generations of workers retiring into poverty.

We passed the earliest K-12 education budget in a quarter century, boosting funding to classrooms by nearly \$1 billion over the last budget. The K-12 budget pays for all-day kindergarten for every kid for the first time in Oregon’s history, boosts support for high-needs students and English Language Learners, and makes sure that all low-income kids have a chance to eat lunch at school. These critical investments will help give students the foundation they need to succeed in later years.

The Oregon legislature also passed \$175 million in bonding for seismic upgrades in schools, and another \$125 million to fix outdated, dilapidated, and hazardous school facilities. We've also made investments in key transportation safety projects, affordable housing construction, and much-needed water storage and conservation projects that will benefit rural Oregon. These projects will create jobs in our local communities and help keep our kids safe from harm.

Decisions we made in this legislative session will also boost job-creation efforts in industries as diverse as food processing, alternative fuels production, natural resource management, construction, and data storage. Every corner of the state will benefit from these investments.

In this session, House Democrats worked hard to protect vulnerable women and children from harm. We voted to pass a bill that expands background checks to all private gun sales in order to keep guns out of the hands of violent criminals. We also passed a bill that keeps domestic abusers from accessing firearms, and another bill to protect the privacy of vulnerable medical patients, like victims of domestic abuse. We stood up to bigotry and intolerance. We fought for cleaner air for our kids. We made sure that large corporations are doing more to pay their share of taxes, and we expanded supports for low-income families.

While many other state legislatures around the country are working to limit the rights of people to vote, we took the lead in passing a historic law that will put a ballot into the hands of every eligible voter.

The 2015 legislative session created key victories to improve the lives of women and working families. We still have a lot of work to do to ensure that every family is able to share in the economic recovery, but the 2015 session is a major turning point on the path to a prosperous future for all.”

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