



# NEWS

Oregon Legislature - House Democratic Caucus

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

February 4, 2011

Contact: Geoff Sugerman (503) 986-1907

Michael Cox (503) 986-1904

## House Democrats Release Plan to Revitalize Oregon

*Plan centers on job creation, education and a balanced budget*

SALEM – Oregon House Democrats released their plan to [Revitalize Oregon](#) on Friday, setting strong priorities in three key areas as the 2011 Legislative session begins:

- Putting Oregonians back to work
- Protecting Education funding
- “Paying as we go” for any new programs, tax credits or tax breaks

“With four straight months of Oregon private sector job growth, we are seeing some stabilization in our state and national economies. The proposals we are putting forward for job creation, education investments and spending constraints will help us continue to revitalize Oregon’s economy,” said House Democratic Leader Dave Hunt (D-Clackamas). “Now is not the time to re-fight the battles of previous sessions. House Democrats are moving forward.”

House Ways and Means Democratic Co-Chair Peter Buckley (D-Ashland) agreed: “Recovering from this global recession is a daunting but doable task in which every single Oregonian has a stake. We join with the Governor in supporting successful job creation programs like Oregon InC. We wholeheartedly support the Governor’s improved investments in early childhood education programs and we must find more efficient ways to deliver those services. We must also take care to protect critical services that are helping seniors, our children and our struggling families weather this recession.”

One key area where House Democrats intend to continue negotiating with the Governor is education funding.

“We believe we should ensure that our schools can maintain a full school year for 11-12 and 12-13, and we are concerned that the Governor’s proposal for education funding will not accomplish that goal,” said Rep. Betty Komp (D-Woodburn), Co-Chair of the Ways and Means Education Subcommittee. “We look forward to working with the Governor to reach that level of funding.”

Included in each of three sections of their [Revitalizing Oregon](#) document, House Democrats outlined a series of initiatives they support. Those agreed upon priorities include:

### **Helping Create More Oregon Jobs:**

- Repair and retrofit aging schools with energy efficient components
- Increase trade and expand markets for Oregon products
- Implement strategic investments in roads, rail lines, marine facilities and airports so that Oregon products can get to markets.

### **Investing in education, health care and workforce development:**

- Stop the downward spiral of investments for K-12 schools
- Protect gains made in covering 80,000 uninsured Oregon children
- Continue support of Oregon's innovation in nanotechnology, electric vehicles, drug and medical research, along with wave energy and other renewable energies

### **Helping business grow and expand in Oregon:**

- Establish a one-stop shop for business to register and obtain permits
- Streamline regulations to make siting and permitting a business in Oregon less costly
- Expand access to capital through low interest loans for business to encourage hiring, reinvestment and market growth

“This plan represents areas of agreement among all 30 House Democrats. It’s not inclusive of all the good ideas out there and all the policy initiatives that will be debated this session. We will continue to work closely with our Republican colleagues on moving sensible ideas forward. And we are hitting the ground running this week with hearings in committees co-chaired by members of both parties. We are committed to making this a bipartisan session,” said House Democratic Whip Tobias Read (D-Beaverton).

One clear area of disagreement is the slew of new tax cuts and credits that form the backbone of the House Republican agenda. As those tax breaks are considered, House Democrats will ask sponsors to identify ways for those credits to be paid for without adversely impacting education and other critical services.

“Our message is simple: Pay as you go. Last session we passed legislation sunsetting most tax credits in Oregon. Spending money on tax breaks or credits means taking money from schools, from public safety, from senior programs and other critical areas,” said Assistant Democratic Leader Phil Barnhart (D-Central Lane & Lynn Counties).

State Rep. Jules Bailey (D-Portland), also an Assistant Democratic Leader agreed: “These are difficult times that require us to work thoughtfully through our problems and find solutions that can be supported by both parties. We intend to be very open with our ideas, seeking input from the Governor and our Senate colleagues as we prepare the next phase of the 11-13 budget.”

The first critical action following the Feb. 15 forecast will be a final bill to rebalance the 09-11 budget. That effort includes \$35.5 million for schools to ensure no additional cuts to school days the remainder of this current school year.

###