



NEWS

Oregon Legislature - House Democratic Caucus

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House Democrats Push Construction Jobs Bill

Transportation and Economic Development Act is Blocked by House Republicans on a Party-Line Vote

SALEM- With the 2012 Legislative Session entering its waning days, Oregonians had waited long enough for a vote on one of the centerpieces of their jobs and economic development plan. The Transportation and Economic Development Act, a proposal to get construction workers back on job sites building much needed transportation infrastructure and community college programs, had been stifled by House Republican Leadership. Despite a unanimous vote out of the Transportation and Economic Development Committee, the bill had remained stalled in Ways and Means. Democratic Leaders had hoped their effort would attract bipartisan support by making smart use of available bonding capacity.

Today Democratic members of the House Transportation and Economic Development Committee brought forward the package of transportation infrastructure and other construction projects that would create jobs for hundreds of construction workers right way while completing several overdue projects statewide.

“This bill is the epitome of a win-win,” said Rep. Dave Hunt (D-Clackamas County), who serves as Co-chair of the House Transportation and Economic Development Committee. “We put people back to work, and at the same time complete projects that will support the growth of our economy well into the future. “

“An improved ability to move freight, better capacity to train the workforce of tomorrow, and expanded water and sewer systems to support expanding businesses- each of these things support continued economic growth in Oregon, and we create middle class jobs at the same time,” said Hunt.

House Democrats sought to force the vote because with time running out on the February session, the components of the Transportation and Economic Development Act were one of the most important jobs proposals still remaining in committee.

“Jobs are priority one,” said Rep. Debbie Boone (D-Cannon Beach). “This proposal would have created jobs in my district, while supporting our community colleges and supporting much needed infrastructure. I was looking forward to seeing construction workers on the ground this year, in my district, and all across the state to rebuild our transit systems and complete some of long-needed work at community colleges.”

The effort to pass the bill died on a partisan, 30-30 vote, with every single House Republican member voting to block the jobs bill.

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