



# NEWS

Oregon Legislature - House Democratic Caucus

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## More Discharge Petitions Filed by House Democrats

SALEM – House Democrats filed discharge petitions Thursday on three bills they believe have more than 31 votes if they could reach the floor for an up-or-down vote of the Oregon House of Representatives. The bills – tuition equity, wage equity in enterprise zones and naming a National Guard Armory after Ted Kulongoski – are examples of bills that are being blocked by Republican co-chairs, but would have majority support on the floor.

“Time is running out and these are final efforts to pass bills that will help students and workers,” said House Democratic Leader Dave Hunt. “We believe there are more than 31 votes on the floor to pass these and other bills into law. Reluctant Republican chairs of committees are refusing to schedule work sessions, even when a majority of committee members are willing to pass the bills.”

“Filing a discharge petition is a final chance to allow members to sign on if they believe in the bill. It is part of the House Rules enacted at a start of the session because we knew there would be times when co-chairs of committees in the evenly-divided House wouldn’t agree on which bills to bring to the floor,” said State Rep. Val Hoyle (D-West Eugene/Junction City), who filed one of the discharge petitions. “We needed a way for members to act to bring bills with broad support to the floor.”

The discharge petitions filed Thursday include:

**SB 742, Tuition Equity** – filed by State Rep. Michael Dembrow (D-Portland): The bill would provide for in-state tuition for undocumented students who had attended at least three years and graduated from an Oregon high school. The bill is stuck in the House Rules Committee.

“This issue is too important to become a victim of process and committee gridlock,” said Dembrow. “This bill deserves a floor debate and an up-or-down vote, and I am confident that it has the votes to pass this chamber.”

**SB 601, Ted Kulongoski Armory** – filed by State Rep. Val Hoyle (D-West Eugene/Junction City): Honoring Governor Kulongoski, a military veteran who attended every funeral of an

Oregon soldier killed in action during his terms in office, is well-deserved. The bill is currently stuck in the House Veterans Committee.

“I am proud to represent Governor Kulongoski’s old district. To block honoring a former Governor who cared so greatly about our troops is simply wrong. Governor Kulongoski served our country as a veteran. And he served veterans as Oregon’s Governor by working extremely hard to make sure their lives were a little better when they returned from combat, and that those who gave the ultimate sacrifice in service to America were honored,” said Hoyle. “This is a good bill which we all should have the opportunity to vote into law.”

**HB 2524, Prevailing Wage Rates in Enterprise Zones** – filed by Rep. Brad Witt (D-Clatskanie): Witt filed the discharge petition to ensure that wages paid to construction workers in taxpayer-subsidized enterprise zones meet prevailing wage standards. This wage equity issue is important to pass now that the Legislature has approved the extension of enterprise zones that benefit communities and the businesses that relocate inside them.

“When we spend public dollars on tax breaks for businesses to locate in these enterprise zones we need to make sure the projects are held to the highest construction standards, and that includes ensuring that the workers building the projects are paid a fair wage for their work that makes sure they can keep a roof over their family’s head,” said Witt.

All three petitions were filed Thursday and are open for members to sign until Tuesday at 5 p.m.

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