



## Senator Tim Knopp Representative Jason Conger

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### **Legislators Knopp & Conger Introducing Bill On PERS Keep Promise To Take Legislators Out Of PERS**

**Salem, OR** – Senator Tim Knopp along with Representative Jason Conger are set to provide fiscal relief to communities struggling with spiraling Public Employees Retirement System (PERS) expenses. Oregon agencies have to cut their service because of staggering increases in retirement expenses. The bill will remove legislators from being members of PERS.

“For many communities, the price tag of PERS has forced them to make significant cuts in education, health, and public safety.” states Sen. Knopp. “Because of our budget crisis, we have a unique opportunity in Oregon to obtain real meaningful PERS reforms. Already this session, the Governor and Legislators have proposed changes in PERS. With this bill we are leading by example by fixing state legislators conflict of interest.”

Originally legislators weren’t allowed to join PERS. However during the 1975 legislative session there was a bill to reverse that rule. Many who study PERS, point to this specific waypoint where the retirement system became compromised.

“I have heard from many citizens who are concerned that the Legislature is biased when it considers PERS reforms because many legislators are also PERS members” Representative Conger reported. “Whether that is true or not, the public’s confidence and trust in our elected representatives is critical to a strong republic. By keeping legislators out of PERS, this bill will simply take a significant step to remove even the perception of conflict.”

Sen. Knopp was previously in the Legislature from 1999 to 2005 for three terms, including one as Oregon House Majority Leader, where he led the PERS Reforms of 2003 that saved taxpayers billions. He was appointed to the Education and Workforce Development and Health Care and Human Services committees for the 2013 Legislative Session. Knopp was elected to his first term in the Oregon State Senate in November 2012. Senate District 27 encompasses the Central Oregon Communities of Bend, Redmond, Sunriver, and Tumalo.

Rep. Conger currently serves on the Health Care, Revenue, and Tax Credits Committees. He was first elected to the Legislature, November 2, 2010. He has taken a leadership role in Oregon’s landmark education and healthcare reforms. Conger represents House District 54, which encompasses most of Bend.

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