



**REPRESENTATIVE MIKE NEARMAN
OREGON HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
HOUSE DISTRICT 23**

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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**Representative Mike Nearman Calls For Immediate Changes Within Department
Of Human Services**

Asks For Resignation Of Senior Agency Official, Full Account Of Public Records Practices

Salem, OR – Representative Mike Nearman (R-Independence) today called on Interim Department of Human Services Director Clyde Saiki to replace Public Affairs Director Gene Evans immediately. Rep. Nearman issued the call after learning that Director Evans oversaw the [stonewalling of a routine public records request](#) by an Oregon citizen. In his letter to Director Saiki, Rep. Nearman also asked that the agency be prepared to fully explain to the Legislature the circumstances surrounding this failure of transparency and what steps the agency will be taking to ensure similar situations do not arise in the future.

“I am saddened and angered by media reports that an Oregon citizen, Anne Marie Gurney, made simple requests for Department of Human Services records that were clearly public and that she was subjected to delays by the Director of Public Affairs, Gene Evans, which resulted in the records not being delivered. Furthermore, it appears that the delay was intentional, so as to ‘wait out the clock’ on pending legislation,” Rep. Nearman wrote in the letter dated December 7. “I find it outrageous that taxpayer funds are used to pay the salary of a Director of Public Affairs, whose job is to inform the public, and that person engages in tactics to keep public data from a member of the public. I therefore call for the termination of Director Evans, immediately.”

Records show that Director Evans and his staff mishandled, and ultimately denied, a routine request for information, even despite previously acknowledging the legitimacy of the records request. Director Evans, citing an exemption signed into law just one day earlier, denied the request nearly six months after first receiving it.

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