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OregonBuys can prevent any new taxes, needs our support

SALEM, Ore.—Rep. Bill Post, R-Keizer, is questioning some claims that implementing a statewide eProcurement system is impossible to do ahead of the next biennium. Had the system been previously implemented in the last biennium, it could have potentially saved billions of taxpayer dollars. Post says the secretary of state and governor’s goal of implementing OregonBuys needs the Legislature’s full support.

“We have got to do everything we possibly can to support our secretary of state and our governor as a legislature because it is possible to avoid virtually every tax hike being introduced, simply by improving the way government runs,” said Post. “This is a good goal for everyone to come together on for the benefit of all Oregonians and I am encouraging us all to work across the aisle to make this happen.”

Secretary of State Dennis Richardson said that his agency will be the first to begin using OregonBuys and that the governor wants to expand the system throughout her administration. Post charges that the governor should implement the cost-savings measure to prevent the need for unnecessary tax hikes this legislative session. The secretary of state’s audit research shows an eProcurement system could save between \$400 million and \$1.6 billion. The 2019-21 so-called budget “gap” is \$623 million. The project could potentially maintain current service levels within expected record-high revenues of \$22.63 billion and prevent the need for new taxes, per the secretary of state’s office.

During the 2015-17 biennium, DAS Procurement Services administered approximately \$8 billion in procurements of goods and services, per the secretary of state’s office. Expanding upon research by the National Institute of Government Purchasing, auditors found Oregon missed opportunities to save 5 percent to 20 percent of the state’s procurement budget due to failed leadership not implementing modern procurement systems and practices. Georgia reported saving 11 percent through modern procurement, per the audit.

Oregon’s current systems lack the information necessary for procurement specialists to effectively evaluate spending to identify opportunities for cost savings, according to the audit. Of the \$8 billion spent in procurements in 2015-17, the state only has purchase-level data for roughly \$1 billion. Auditors found this data was subpar. Statewide implementation of an eProcurement system would provide the additional data needed to perform a full spending analysis that could identify hundreds of millions in additional potential savings, per the secretary of state.

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