



SENATE MAJORITY OFFICE

Oregon State Legislature
State Capitol
Salem, OR

NEWS RELEASE

February 17, 2009

CONTACT: Molly Woon (503) 986-1074
molly.woon@state.or.us

Legislation to advocate for just debt collection practices passed by Senate Consumer Protection Committee

SALEM – Legislation that adds unlawful debt collection practices to the list of offenses that the Attorney General is able to investigate and enforce under the Unlawful Trade Practices Act was passed out of the Senate Consumer Protection and Public Affairs Committee this afternoon. SB 328 will give the Attorney General the authority to pursue legal action against debt collectors who use unlawful practices. Examples of unlawful debt collections practices include threatening arrest, using abusive or profane language, or attempting to collect interest or fees in excess of the actual debt.

“We heard horror stories in the committee last week about how Oregonians are being harassed and threatened by debt collectors,” said Senator Suzanne Bonamici (D-NE Washington Co. & NW Multnomah Co.), chair of the Committee. “SB 328 will add teeth to our current law by allowing the Attorney General to go after debt collectors who cross the line.”

The Department of Justice will be able to conduct this enforcement work with its available resources, at no additional cost to the state. The provisions in SB 328 are similar to that in Washington, California, and several other states.

“These are really tough times for families across Oregon,” said Senator Ginny Burdick, (D-Portland), a member of the committee. “If people are unfortunate enough to find themselves in a situation where they have uncollected debt, they still have the right to have their dignity respected.”

SB 328 will now move to the floor for a vote.

###