



**SEN. RICHARD DEVLIN**  
SENATE MAJORITY LEADER

**SEN. TED FERRIOLI**  
SENATE REPUBLICAN LEADER

## NEWS RELEASE

February 4, 2010

### CONTACTS:

Molly Woon (503) 986-1074, Senate Majority Office  
Michael Gay, (503) 986-1905, Senate Republican Office

### **Democrats and Republicans vote to override veto on PERS bill**

**Salem, OR** – The Oregon Senate voted this morning to override a veto of Senate Bill 897 from the 2009 session. Democratic and Republican Leaders agreed that the bill is crucial to protecting public employees from unfair retirement calculation errors. The bill passed the Senate 28 – 0 in the 2009 legislative session.

“A retiree shouldn’t be responsible for state agency math errors,” said Senate Republican leader Ted Ferrioli (R-John Day). “Under a policy advanced by the current administration and defended by Governor Ted Kulongoski’s veto, if bureaucrats screw up, retirees lose. That is wrong, and this bill sets things right.”

The bill is intended to protect fairness and encourage accountability in Oregon’s Public Employee Retirement System (PERS). The bill allows more PERS retirees to purchase health insurance benefits, allows all eligible service to be credited towards retirement, and allows a retiree to occupy the Board position designated for a PERS member.

“Both Democrats and Republicans feel strongly that public employees deserve accountability and reliability when planning for their retirement,” said Senate Majority Leader Richard Devlin (D-Tualatin). “It’s a basic issue of fairness. A person who is retiring should know what their retirement will look like ahead of time and shouldn’t be surprised after the fact.”

Most importantly, the bill demands that data used to calculate retirement benefits be verified by state officials and locked in. In the past, the discovery of misapplied formulas has changed benefit calculations after the fact, leaving retirees with lower retirement income than their plan selection promised.

In some cases, retirees have been ordered to pay back the difference months after the error, upending retirement plans and forcing some workers out of retirement.

###