



## OREGON SENATE REPUBLICANS

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### **Senator Tim Knopp Introduces Bill To Fund K-12 Education at \$8 Billion** *Challenges Colleagues to Pass K-12 Budget by April*

Salem, OR - Today, Senator Tim Knopp (R-Bend) announced his introduction of SB 642, which would appropriate \$8 billion to the State School Fund for K-12 education. In 2013, Republicans and Democrats came together to pass the "Grand Bargain" and increase K-12 education funding by \$200 million. SB 642 would dedicate 90% of the \$1.5 billion in additional funds to K-12 classrooms without raising taxes.

"Politicians love to say that our kids are our top priority," said Senator Tim Knopp (R-Bend). "If the legislature is serious about giving our kids and teachers the support they deserve, they can prove it by coming together to pass a bipartisan \$8 billion K-12 budget by April 12th."

In their 2015 Agenda, Senate Democrats said they agree with Republican priorities to "put kids first" and "create family wage jobs." Instead, Democrats have used the first weeks of the session to focus on controversial, partisan bills that hurt working families and distract from education and job creation.

"The best way to put kids first is to follow the example of the bipartisan 2011 session and pass an \$8 billion K-12 budget by April," said Senator Knopp. "Local school districts need certainty as they put together their budgets for the school year that begins this fall."

Oregon has dropped to the bottom for graduation rates nationwide while the percentage of general funds dedicated to K-12 education continues to fall. Senate Republicans expressed willingness to work with Democrats to put kids first and increase access to quality education across the state.

"Oregon has wasted too much money on expensive failures like Cover Oregon," said Senator Chuck Thomsen (R-Hood River). "We need to start spending tax dollars responsibly so we can fully fund K-12 education, putting much-needed dollars back into our classrooms."

The current budget framework provided by the Ways and Means Co-Chairs sets the level of K-12 education funding at \$7.2 billion, \$30 million short of current service levels.

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