



## Oregon Senate Republican Office

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# NEWS RELEASE

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### **Short session not as promised to voters**

*Republicans agenda focused on areas of bipartisan agreement*

Salem, OR - Oregon's 35 day session ended with a whimper on Friday afternoon, failing to have the promised focus and restraint needed in a short session. Democrats, who control both branches of the legislature, the Governor's office, and all statewide offices, used the five weeks of session to push a largely partisan and polarizing agenda.

"Democrats, especially in the House, missed an opportunity to continue in the same path of bipartisan, consensus based policy making that made 2013 such a success for Oregon," said Senate Republican Leader Ted Ferrioli (R-John Day). "Voters approved annual sessions because they thought it would be targeted, non-controversial and lead by people who value consensus. Instead of focusing on areas where we could agree and find common ground, House Democrats chose to run their own polarizing agenda."

Short sessions were billed to voters as a way to carefully adjust the budget, deal with emergencies and make consensus changes to policy. Unfortunately for lawmakers and the public, Democrats did not publicly reveal their 75 pages of budget bills until late Thursday night, just minutes before the Ways and Means Committee hearing and a day before session adjourned. Democrats spent much of the session attempting to garner support for divisive legislation such as gun regulations, major re-writes to Oregon's class action lawsuit statutes, marijuana legalization, and providing political cover for the Cover Oregon debacle.

"The fear was a session filled with partisan posturing and rushed decisions on complicated policies," said Ferrioli. "Those fears were largely realized."

While Democrats focused on their political agenda, Republicans were working to build bipartisan agreement and pass legislation that will serve Oregon seniors, small businesses and students. Republicans enacted a "Silver Alert" program to help find vulnerable seniors when they go missing. They also championed tougher penalties for "patent trolls" that target small businesses and created a way for students to earn college credit for high school classes.

"Our hope is that these proposals will keep Oregon families safe and empower them for success," said Ferrioli. "We believe these are the type of bills the legislature should be working on in short sessions, because they make Oregon a better place to live and focus on solutions that can be supported by members of all parties."

Additional Republican accomplishments include:

Protecting attempts to roll-back the small business tax cut adopted in the Grand Bargain

Defending the Oregon initiative system from political tampering

Supporting \$200 million to fund a state of the art cancer research center at OHSU

Local control over marijuana dispensaries

Balancing the budget

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