

# Senate Republican Office

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## **Senate Republicans: Don't lose sight of what is responsible and right** *PERS reform is the most important issue of the session*

**Salem, OR** – Senate Republicans cautioned their colleagues Monday morning to not use this week's revenue forecast as an excuse to irresponsibly ignore the need for real PERS reform in schools and local services. Senate Republicans re-stated their resolve to not consider any revenue raising measures until a PERS solution is passed that is satisfactory to local schools.

“A change in an inflated revenue forecast does not alter the fundamental injustices of a broken PERS system,” said Brian Boquist (R-Dallas). “The universally recognized diagnosis is that there are significant, structural problems in PERS leaching resources out of our classrooms, fire, police and local governments. That doesn't change with a faulty shift in a forecast. Fixing PERS is still the responsible and right thing to do for local communities.”

Because Oregon schools, parents and local governments know how crucial real PERS form is, Republicans have reached out to Democrats from the beginning of session to craft bi-partisan, compromise proposals to reform PERS. Republicans have also sought to work with Democrats on proposals to raise new revenue, give small businesses tax relief, and reform mental health care.

Rumors predict Thursday's revenue forecast could reveal an increase as high as \$150 million. Democrats appear ready to walk away from bi-partisan discussions if Thursday's revenue forecast provides more revenue.

Senate Republicans urged Democrats to not destroy the bi-partisan foundations that have been built in the Senate this session.

“We have worked with Democrats this session to forge a bi-partisan agreement on PERS, a bi-partisan agreement on revenue, a bi-partisan agreement on mental health care investment, a bi-partisan agreement on the budget,” said Senator Larry George (R-Sherwood). “Yet it seems like Democrats are preparing to use a surprise increase in the revenue forecast as an excuse to abandon the responsible, bi-partisan road of real PERS reform. Walking away from real PERS reform would be completely irresponsible for Oregon.”

Senate Republicans have been clear from the early days of session that all revenue bills are off the table until a bi-partisan compromise that addresses the underlying imbalances of PERS is reached.

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