Senate Republican Office

Oregon State Capitol
900 Court Street NE, S-323
Salem, Oregon 97301

July 3, 2013
CONTACT: Michael Gay
(503) 986-1950
(503) 781-8559

Republicans attempt to protect victims of sex abuse
Bill would have extended statute of limitations for children abused by government employees

Salem, OR – Senate Republicans made a motion Wednesday to force a vote on Senate Bill 829, a bill that would have allowed victims of sex abuse at the hands of state employees to pursue justice and closure in the courts. The motion was defeated with a party line vote, 16 to 14.

"State agencies and government employees must be held accountable," said Senator Tim Knopp (R-Bend). "More important, victims of sex abuse deserve closure and every opportunity the courts can provide to seek justice against those who have wronged them. I am deeply disappointed that the majority party will not let this bill move."

The current statute of limitations for sex abuse claims against government agencies is 2 years. This proposal would have allowed victims up to the age of 40 to seek justice and closure by suing their offenders in court.

"This bill doesn't just give victims the avenues they deserve to seek justice, it also gives them the time and space they need to process what has happened to them," said Senator Bruce Starr (R-Hillsboro) who introduced Senate Bill 829. "My hope is that this would ultimately remove, report and prevent child abusers."

"The Department of Justice estimates that this law would bring to light 20 child abuse cases every year," said Knopp. "It is deeply disturbing that this type of evil is occurring in state agencies, and yet Democrats refuse to give its victims recourse and take the steps necessary to bring such atrocities to light."

Senate Bill 829 was introduced in March and referred to Judiciary, where it has languished without so much as a hearing all session. Republicans believe that several issues important to Oregonians have gone unaddressed this session, and are using procedural motions to draw attention to these shortcomings in the last few days of session.

###