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NEWS RELEASE: April 26, 2011

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### ***Oregon House Adopts Important Transparency Legislation***

(Salem) Two important bills to increase transparency for the state budget were adopted unanimously by the Oregon House of Representatives today. They include [House Bill 2788](#) which would add information about the State Treasurer's Office and public meetings notices to the Oregon Transparency website [www.oregon.gov/transparency](http://www.oregon.gov/transparency) and [House Bill 2825](#), a measure to include information about tax breaks for economic development projects on the website.

"These changes will not only help elected officials make better decisions about state policies but also boost citizen confidence in state government," said [State Representative Kim Thatcher](#) (R-Keizer, Newberg, St. Paul). Thatcher and State Representative Jefferson Smith (D-Portland) joined forces to draft HB 2788 as a follow up to the work they did along with other lawmakers in creating the transparency website during the 2009 legislative session. For HB 2825 Thatcher teamed up with State Representative Phil Barnhart (D-Central Lane and Linn Counties), Co-Chairman of the House Revenue Committee.

"These bills represent real movement forward in providing the public the information it needs to hold state programs accountable for results and making government more accessible to the public," said Jon Bartholomew, Policy Advocate with [OSPIRG](#). "Increased government transparency will lead to better use of tax dollars. Expanding the state transparency website to include economic development tax subsidies and the Treasurer's office will add sunlight to currently opaque areas of the budget. Providing a one-stop shop for the public to know about public meetings facilitate citizens to be more involved in their government."

HB 2788 requires the State Treasurer's Office to post budget information on the transparency website and create a special place for citizens to find out about public meetings for all state agencies. "I have heard from a number of Oregonians who often have trouble finding out about an upcoming meeting for a proposed fee increase or other change, this will help make that information more accessible," explained Thatcher.

HB 2825 calls for posting reports about tax subsidies for economic development programs on the transparency website. "A significant portion of the state budget is spent on these programs. Since our state government is basically picking winners and losers, taxpayers should be able to see where their money is going and whether the benefits that were promised actually became reality."

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