

# 2011 Legislative Review

Dear Friends,



It continues to be an honor to serve the people of East Multnomah County. While we face unique challenges because of the ongoing recession, I feel good about the work we did to rebuild our economy, expand access to health care, and protect Oregon's most vulnerable citizens during the 2011 Legislative Session.

My top priorities in Salem have been improving our health care system, job creation, protecting children and families, and supporting our veterans. I am proud to report back about the progress made in these areas. Some of my accomplishments are listed below.

As always, I am happy to answer your questions about my legislative work or address any concerns you have.

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## Rebuilding Our Economy

**Senate Bill 494** continues our successful work in 2010 to give small businesses better access to the capital they need in this tight credit market. By removing red tape in the application process, the Access to Business Capital Act gives small businesses easier access to loans available through the state's Economic Development Agency, Business Oregon. This will create jobs by helping small businesses across the state to grow and expand.

**House Bill 3000** supports local businesses and industries by allowing state agencies to purchase goods and services produced in Oregon as long as the cost is not greater than 10 percent more than what they'd usually pay. This will help develop local supply chains and give Oregon businesses a much-deserved home advantage.

**Senate Bill 766** assures that proposed industrial projects with the greatest job potential are able to get fast and definitive decisions on required state and local land use approvals. The bill also protects the most important existing industrial areas by setting guidelines for establishing regionally-significant industrial lands. This will help Oregon attract development and create jobs for Oregonians.

**Senate Bill 219** creates the Oregon Business Retention and Expansion Program, modeled after successful programs in other states that have helped attract high-wage, high-skill jobs. This program will provide forgivable loans based on the anticipated income of hired workers. This has proven to be a powerful incentive to support business expansion and growth.

**House Bill 3188** extends Oregon's enterprise zone program, which exempts businesses in designated areas from certain property and income taxes. By continuing this program, businesses in enterprise zones, like the six areas designated in Gresham, will be able to focus on growth and expansion.

## Working for East Multnomah County

**Senate Bill 437**, introduced for the City of Gresham, allows cities to keep the details of early negotiations private as they work to recruit businesses to their area. This information becomes public later in the process. This bill will ensure that our cities have the best chance to bring jobs and business to their area.

**Senate Bill 36** was introduced on behalf the City of Fairview to address problems they have had with bars that attract criminal behavior. The Oregon Liquor Control Commission can now consider an applicant's prior legal history when renewing a liquor license, including prior convictions for drugs, violent crime, or organized crime.

**The Portland Metro Gang Enforcement Team** received renewed funding from the Legislature. The Team helps keep East County safe by investigating gang-related crimes, documenting gang membership, providing a greater police presence in gang-affected areas, working with at-risk youths to keep them out of gangs, and more.

## Expanding Access to Health Care

**House Bill 3650** restructures health care delivery for Oregon's low income patients to better coordinate quality, access, and cost of all types of health care, from dental care to mental health. This legislation will save taxpayer dollars while providing more comprehensive and preventative care for Oregonians.

**Senate Bill 99** creates a health insurance exchange that will give small businesses and individuals better health care options. The Oregon Health Insurance Exchange will work like a central marketplace for health insurance, creating a level playing field where insurers compete for customers and consumers have better information about their choices. The Health Insurance Exchange will empower Oregonians and businesses to find and keep the health care that best meets their needs. I helped lead the effort for this legislation, and thanks to the hard work we did with stakeholders, Oregon is one of the few states to establish an exchange with clear bipartisan support.

**Senate Bill 738** will expand access to dental care for Oregonians whose income, health condition, or location make it hard to see a dentist. The bill creates pilot programs and expands the role of dental hygienists in new ways of providing dental care.

**Senate Bill 514** will ensure that children with high-risk medical conditions can get access to health insurance year-round instead of waiting for a short enrollment period. This bill allows sick kids to stay on the same insurance plan as their families and keep their own doctor.

**Senate Bill 224** allows more flexibility between physician assistants and physicians in order to improve access to care.

**Senate Bill 433** will help low-income women get access to life-saving treatment if they are diagnosed with breast or cervical cancer by a provider outside of the Oregon Breast and Cervical Cancer Program. Until the passage of SB 433, a loophole prevented women diagnosed outside an OBCCP provider to obtain the treatment needed for their cancer.

### **Protecting Children and Families**

**Senate Bill 964** will implement a new approach to taking care of children who qualify for child welfare services. Several pilot projects around Oregon tested these new standards, which provide services and support to help keep families together when appropriate and safe, avoid or limit a child's placement in foster care, and ensure safety and stability when a child is returned home.

**House Bill 2714** significantly increases the fine for paying for sex with an underage prostitute, and separates the penalties for offering prostitution from the crime of soliciting it. This bill ensures that soliciting prostitution can be prosecuted to the fullest extent of the law and helps protect minors who are forced into prostitution.

**Senate Bill 803** addresses an unintended omission in Oregon's statute on child pornography that implied that viewing child pornography on the Internet is not a crime if the viewer doesn't purposely download images, print them out, or pay for them. This bill ensures that exploitation of our children can be punished to the fullest extent of the law.

**House Bill 2463** updates Oregon statute on mandatory reporting of child pornography to reflect our changing technologies by requiring a computer technician who believes he or she has observed child pornography to report it to the appropriate authorities.

### **Supporting Seniors and Veterans**

**House Bill 3037** clarifies that eligible seniors in the Oregon Project Independence Program can receive in-home and community-based home care, health promotion services, information on immediate and long range options counseling and transportation services through this program.

**Senate Bill 241** requires state agencies to ask Oregonians if they are a veteran and provide information about claiming federal benefits, helping more veterans take advantage of these programs.

**Senate Bill 338** creates a Task Force on Tuition Waivers at Community Colleges to facilitate issuing tuition waivers to veterans, the widows of veterans, and their families.

### **Ensuring Quality Education**

**Senate Bill 248** sets up a funding system allowing schools to provide full day kindergarten, which has been shown to help students succeed later in school.

**Senate Bill 909** establishes the Oregon Education Investment Board to better coordinate and protect investment in all levels of education, from pre-kindergarten through the university system.

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