

On Thursday of this week, representatives from community colleges, universities, business and the legislature came together to demand that the legislature fix the funding for post-secondary education first before addressing any other budget needs for the next biennium. In a press conference organized by the Oregon Student Association, administrators, board members, faculty, and classified staff from colleges and OUS were joined by leaders of industry and government to address the damage being done to Oregon's economy by the disinvestment in postsecondary education over the last few biennia.

Speakers included OSA Executive Director Melissa Unger, Representative Larry Galizio, Senator Frank Morse, Representative Gene Whisnant, Senator Richard Devlin, Portland General Electric Director of Environmental Affairs Wayne Lei, Chemeketa Community College President Gretchen Scheutte, Director of Board of Higher Education Jim Francesconi, University of Oregon staff person Star Holmberg of Service Employees International Union (SEIU), Portland State University student Courtney Morse & Mt. Hood Community College student Javier Torres, Western Oregon University faculty member and local American Federation of Teachers (AFT) President Mark Perlman, Lane Community College faculty member Jim Salt and Director of Board of Higher Education Dalton Miller Jones. A copy of the media release is attached.

The deadline for moving bills out of substantive committees passed on Monday leaving behind many of the proposals that community colleges had worked to kill. Other bills were re-referred to Ways and Means for a full fiscal workup that will effectively eliminate many of them as well. As we said last week, we aren't supporting anything that requires money until our support fund, capital bonding and financial aid are provided. The one exception to that position is that the OCCA legislative did vote last week to support continuation of the child care allowance that ensures many students have the support needed to continue their education.

Talks about additional revenues in the form of new taxes or fees have been pretty much suspended until after the next revenue forecast is released May 15. That doesn't mean those talks won't be renewed it just that no one is willing to put their record on the line for tax measures until they see the size of the hole needed to be filled.

Please continue your contacts with all legislators. Hard copy letters work better at this point than emails because they form a visual pile in bill folders rather than a digital dot on the screen. You can find all the addresses and phone numbers for legislators at <http://www.leg.state.or.us/>. Click on the buttons at the top of the webpage for House and Senate to find alphabetical listings of all the members.

Hearings coming up next week include:

A. HCR 7 (In Memoriam: Doreen Margolin), Senate Health/Public Affairs, Monday, May 7, 8:30 am, HR B

<http://www.leg.state.or.us/07reg/measpdf/hcr1.dir/hcr0007.intro.pdf>

B. SB 23A (Expanded Options), House Education subject to action by Innovation Subcommittee, Wednesday, May 9, 1 pm, HR D  
<http://www.leg.state.or.us/07reg/measpdf/sb0001.dir/sb0023.a.pdf>

C. HB 2891 (Labor Exclusive Representative), Senate Commerce, Wednesday, May 9, 3 pm, HR B  
<http://www.leg.state.or.us/07reg/measpdf/hb2800.dir/hb2891.intro.pdf>

D. SB 334A (Shared Responsibility Model), House Education, Friday, May 11, 1 pm, HR F  
<http://www.leg.state.or.us/07reg/measpdf/sb0300.dir/sb0334.a.pdf>