



# Public and Government Affairs Update



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Issue No. 48

FEDERAL AFFAIRS

## Congressional round-up

Congress this week ended its two-week spring district work period with members returning to Washington, D.C.

Before recessing, Congress passed sweeping changes to health care and student aid policies. Education provisions in the budget reconciliation bill would save an estimated \$61 billion over 10 years by ending government subsidies for private student loans and moving all new loans into the direct loan program. The measure would provide \$36 billion of the 10-year savings to the Pell Grant program to allow the maximum award to increase each year by inflation starting in 2013, and to reduce this year's funding shortfall by \$13.5 billion, or about two-thirds. Another \$2.6 billion would be allocated to historically black, hispanic-serving, and tribal colleges and universities, and \$2 billion would go to community college and career-training grants. The bill also allocated \$10.3 billion for deficit reduction and \$9.1 billion to help cover health care costs in the package. More information about changes to student aid programs can be found in Congressional Research Service reports (<http://www.clhe.org/documents/crssafrareport.pdf>).

## Oregon's congressional delegation

Members of Oregon's congressional delegation and their staff members continue to work on behalf of the University of Oregon and other institutions of higher education.



Congressman David Wu (D-Portland) was on campus to meet with researchers during the spring district work period.

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## Oregon Primary is May 18 Voter registration deadline is April 27

The deadline for new voters to register for the May 18, 2010 Primary election is Tuesday, April 27th. Voter registration forms must be clearly postmarked or hand-delivered to county elections offices no later than April 27th. For the first time in Oregon, you can also register online at: <https://secure.sos.state.or.us/eim/vr/register.do?lang=eng>. Ballots will be mailed April 30<sup>th</sup>.

STATE RELATIONS

## Measure 69: Background on ballot measure related to higher education bonds

*Note: The following information on Measure 69 has been approved by the Secretary of State's Election Division and is a factual background, not an advocacy piece.*

A ballot measure to be voted on by Oregonians in May 2010, Measure 69, would allow universities access to low-cost financing to purchase existing facilities. If passed, it would allow the Oregon

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*For more information about this newsletter, please contact Eric Stillwell in Government and Community Relations at (541) 346-5381 or email to [ees@uoregon.edu](mailto:ees@uoregon.edu). If you are interested in inviting government officials to a UO event, please contact us first. We can help! Give us a call or send an email to [gcr@uoregon.edu](mailto:gcr@uoregon.edu).*

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## Oregon Congressional delegation

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Congressman Earl Blumenauer (D-Portland) also met with university researchers during the recess.

An aide to Congressman Peter DeFazio (D-Springfield) was on campus to hear updates on transportation research projects.

Members have also signed onto “Dear Colleagues” letters supporting research funding at agencies like the National Science Foundation, Department of Energy Office of Science, National Institutes of Health, and other agencies. At this point in the federal budget cycle, “Dear Colleagues” letters are an important way of underscoring supporting for federal funding priorities.

## Reminder of federal and state lobbying disclosure rules

The University of Oregon is registered under the federal Lobbying Disclosure Act as an organization that employs in-house lobbyists. The UO is required by law to file: (a) quarterly “lobbying activities” reports; and (b) semi-annual “reports of certain contributions” or gifts. The links below provide detailed information about those reports (see <http://lobbyingdisclosure.house.gov/index.html>).

The University of Oregon is required to disclose its lobbying activities with the US House and Senate through quarterly filings and report certain expenditures made to or on behalf of federal officials.

Communication on behalf of the University of Oregon with federal officials should be coordinated with the office of Government and Community Relations.

State rules also require disclosure of time spent by certain individuals lobbying state officials. State ethics rules limit expenditures, gift, and hospitality that can be provided to state and local officials.

Any questions about state or federal lobby rules should be directed to the office of Government and Community Relations at 541-346-5020.

## Measure 69

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University System (OUS) to finance existing buildings, which can be less costly than building new facilities, and to finance any facilities that would benefit higher education. OUS does not envision any significant changes in the number or types of facilities that it finances should Measure 69 be approved by voters.

Oregon’s colleges and universities occasionally require more space for classrooms, laboratories, research programs, and faculty offices. Ballot Measure 69 would amend the Oregon Constitution to allow low cost general obligation bonds from Article XI-F(1) and Article XI-G to be used for these expansions into existing buildings, not just new facilities.

Articles XI-F(1) and XI-G [bonds] of the Oregon Constitution were adopted in 1950 and 1964, respectively. Since then, the roles and nature of higher education institutions have evolved beyond traditional instruction into areas of research, public service and economic development. Ballot Measure 69 would eliminate outdated provisions and allow Oregon to issue general obligation bonds for the types of facilities used by today's community colleges and public universities.

Ballot Measure 69 would allow community colleges and public universities to finance projects for higher education institutions or activities. Current constitutional language may limit the projects that could be financed with bonds issued under Articles XI-F(1) and XI-G of the Oregon Constitution. Existing language does not specifically authorize the state to use these lower cost bonds to purchase existing buildings that are less expensive than new construction. Existing language further raises questions about the types of projects that could be financed with general obligation bonds issued under Articles XI-F(1) and XI-G.

Ballot Measure 69 would continue the requirement that the Oregon University System have enough revenues to pay for bonds issued under Article XI-F (1). Current language in Article XI-F(1) of the Oregon Constitution requires projects financed with bonds authorized by this Article to be entirely self-supporting through revenues, gifts, grants or building fees. Ballot Measure 69 would change existing language to allow moneys used to support such projects to originate from any source other

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COMMUNITY RELATIONS

**Explore Oregon takes policymakers on tour of the John E. Jaqua Academic Center for Student Athletes**

Local policymakers came to campus March 19 for an overview of the student athlete experience and a tour of the new Jaqua Center.

Participants learned about NCAA requirements and UO's commitment to the education of student athletes. They heard directly from a student athlete and also listened to a presentation on *Competition not Conflict*, a UO program designed to reduce destructive conflict in sports and to promote the positive values of competition.



*Lane Transit District's Andy Vobora stands next to his name on a wall panel in the Jaqua Center lobby honoring past UO Academic All-Pac-10 student athletes.*

STATE RELATIONS

**State Board of Higher Education approves legislative concepts**

The Oregon State Board of Higher Education at its March board meeting approved eight legislative concepts to forward to the Governor's Office and the Department of Administrative Services (DAS) for their review. All agency legislative concepts are reviewed and approved or denied by the Governor's Office and DAS. DAS decisions about agency legislative concepts are made in May with approved concepts subsequently drafted into legislative bills.

Highlights of the Oregon University System (OUS) approved legislative concepts include: possible changes to OUS institutional governance including flexibility related to a variety of university functions, obtaining biennial funding for enrollment growth (not currently funded—in contrast to K-12 which is funded for enrollment growth), and a change in statute that would provide the State Board of Higher Education the ability to authorize one or more of its institutions to retain certified police officers on campus and enhance the capabilities of an institutional department of public safety to that of its own criminal justice agency (police department). The UO currently has a Department of Public Safety on campus.

COMMUNITY RELATIONS

**First ever off-campus housing fair helps students become responsible neighbors**

On March 31 the University of Oregon and neighborhood leaders, City of Eugene and rental property managers hosted an off-campus housing fair in the Erb Memorial Union ballroom.

The goals for this first-ever event were to help students find housing options and become more knowledgeable, responsible and engaged neighbors and tenants. More than a dozen property managers shared information about rental opportunities, particularly in areas surrounding the university.

Neighborhood, city and non-profit partners provided resources and workshops to more than 1,500 students transitioning into off-campus community living. The event was coordinated by the Office of Student Life and the CommUniversity Resource Assistant Program, with support from the Associated Students of the University of Oregon (ASUO), Office of Government and Community Relations and City of Eugene Neighborhood Services.

COMMUNITY RELATIONS

**Community partners address off campus parties and noise at neighborhood livability summit**

More than 40 representatives from campus neighborhoods, the university, the City of Eugene, the rental property owners and managers, and law enforcement gathered on March 17 to discuss strategies for addressing partying and noise in neighborhoods near the University of Oregon. The meeting was organized by the South University Neighborhood Association's Livability Committee with support from UO Government and Community Relations. The participation by the UO at this neighbor-led event is part of an ongoing effort by the Office of Government and Community Relations, the Department of Public Safety, the Office of Student Life, and the InfoGraphics Lab to address and track such incidents and address a range of related campus neighborhood livability issues.



## State Treasurer dies of cancer *Entrepreneur and political veteran leaves a legacy of public service to Oregon*

Oregon State Treasurer Ben Westlund died March 7 after a long battle with lung cancer. He was 60. Westlund was sworn in as treasurer a little more than a year ago after serving 12 years in the State Legislature, first as a Republican, then as an independent and, finally, as a Democrat.



Westlund was elected to the Oregon House of Representatives in 1996. In 2003, he was appointed to the Senate and successfully won the seat in 2004. He quickly earned a reputation as a problem solver and as an advocate for Oregon families.

He was a co-chairman of the budget-drafting Joint Ways and Means Committee and championed legislation that created the State's Rainy Day Fund, Public Safety Memorial Fund and the Oregon Cultural Trust. He was the chief legislative advocate for creating the Cascades Campus of Oregon State University in Central Oregon.

He fought for consumer protection and was the co-author of Oregon's health system reforms in 2007, and was elected as Oregon's 27th State Treasurer in 2008.

As treasurer, Westlund helped stabilize the Oregon College Savings Plan after one of its managers, OppenheimerFunds, Inc., posted big losses with a portfolio that was supposed to be conservative. Westlund and the Attorney General's Office successfully sued OppenheimerFunds, winning a \$20 million legal settlement to restore some of the losses to thousands of investors in the state college savings fund.

The Oregon House chamber was filled with the state's political elite for Westlund's memorial on March 13. Speakers included Governor Ted Kulongoski, former state Supreme Court Chief Justice Wally Carson, six sitting legislators and the head of the Department of Corrections.

### STATE RELATIONS

## Governor Ted Kulongoski names Ted Wheeler as new Oregon treasurer

On March 9, Ted Kulongoski appointed Multnomah County Chairman Ted Wheeler as the new state treasurer, filling the vacancy left by the death of Ben Westlund.



Wheeler, whose appointment lasts until early January 2011, said he will also run in this year's election to serve out the remaining two years of Westlund's term.

Wheeler will also face political opposition in the treasurer's job. State Sen. Rick Metsger (D-Welches) and State Sen. Chris Telfer (R-Bend) have both filed for the office.

Before becoming county chair in 2006, Wheeler had worked in financial positions for the Bank of America and Copper Mountain Trust. He has a bachelors in economics from Stanford University, a masters of business administration from Columbia University and a master's in public policy from the John F. Kennedy School of Government at Harvard University.

Wheeler said he had not lobbied for the job but has been interested in the treasurer's post. He said the job was consistent with his background, skills and aspirations.

### Measure 69

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than tax revenues appropriated from the General Fund. The measure would also eliminate language relating to financing mixed-use projects with proceeds from bonds issued under both Articles XI-F(1) and XI-G of the Oregon Constitution.

Current language in the Oregon Constitution requires that Article XI-G bonds be matched by an identical amount of other funds. Ballot Measure 69 would continue that requirement, but eliminate requirements that the matched funds be appropriated from the State's General Fund.

The measure would allow the matching funds to come from any source other than the proceeds from other general obligation bonds issued by the state. Ballot Measure 69 would not change the process by which bonds are authorized for capital projects.