



Public and Government Affairs Update



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State Relations

Campus policing passes with bipartisan support

Senate Bill 405, enabling campus public safety departments to transition to sworn, fully trained police agencies, passed the Oregon Senate on April 18. Carried on the floor by Sen. Floyd Prozanski (D-South Lane and North Douglas Counties), the bill passed with support from Democrats and Republicans, on a 19-11 vote. Sen. Prozanski spoke to the need to update Oregon law to bring Oregon university campuses in line with similar campuses across the country, while pointing to the improved efficiencies and service on

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Federal Relations

Pell Grants on the line

Six months into FY 2011, Congress continued funding for the federal government using a continuing resolution through the end of the fiscal year. That action cleared the way for budget negotiations for FY 2012 to begin in earnest as Congress considers the Obama Administration's FY 2012 budget request and Republican alternatives.

The FY 2012 appropriations process should theoretically yield a complete federal budget before FY 2012 begins on October 1, 2011, although Congress has rarely finished a budget on time over the last decade. Congress has completed the early steps of the process with the House leadership introducing a budget resolution.

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Community Relations

Officer Kilcullen memorial service brings the community to MKA

The Friday memorial service for Eugene Police Department Officer Chris Kilcullen, a UO alum killed in the line of duty during a traffic stop, brought thousands of community members to Matthew Knight Arena for a poignant ceremony.

A motorcade procession of hundreds of law enforcement vehicles began

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For more information about this newsletter, please contact Jared Mason-Gere at (541) 346-5381 or jaredm@uoregon.edu. If you are interested in inviting government officials to a UO event, please contact us first at 346-5020 or gcr@uoregon.edu. We can help!

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State Relations

Oregon budget begins to take shape

On March 29, 2011 the co-chairs of the Oregon Legislature's Joint Committee on Ways and Means released the outlines of a budget from fiscal year 2011 (FY2011) – fiscal year 2013 (FY2013). As Oregon's constitution requires a balanced budget, the budget proposal is based on the March 2011 Quarterly Revenue Forecast of \$14.7 billion. The \$14.7 billion represents a \$3.8 million shortfall below current service levels, and the final budget will include cuts across agencies, including to higher education.

The Committee's proposal sketches an outline for the budget but does not provide detail on specific funding for agencies. It sets the goal of funding the Oregon University System at or above the levels recommended in Governor John Kitzhaber's proposed budget, which he released earlier this year.

The Governor's budget recommends deep cuts to the already under-funded OUS system. It calls for cuts to general fund spending for universities by 11 percent. This reduction translates into a 25 percent reduction under the current service level. Under the governor's proposal, adjusted for inflation, the general fund would layout \$2,247 for each student, less than half what it was spending a decade ago.

There is the potential that the final Legislative proposal will include a slightly higher funding level, but the current budget numbers make the potential for increase unlikely.

The current budget cuts to higher education continue a pattern of more than three decades of divestment in higher education. Currently, the OUS system receives only a small percent of its funding from the state. The University of Oregon receives about 7 percent from the General Fund. Continued cuts to higher education budgets have forced public universities in Oregon to raise tuition, cut offerings, and implement other cost-saving mechanisms.

The University of Oregon offered a solution to continued budget shortfalls in its New Partnership proposal. The plan would allow Oregon universities to raise public-private endowments, thus helping to insulate them from state budget shortfalls like the one the state currently faces. Governor Kitzhaber and UO President Richard Lariviere recently aligned their higher education reform agenda and agreed to work together toward financial reform of the higher education system during the next legislative session.



Federal Relations

Oregon congressional reps. support NEH funding

Oregon members of Congress Peter DeFazio (D-OR), Earl Blumenauer (D-OR), and David Wu (D-OR) joined 67 other members of Congress in signing a letter to US House of Representatives appropriators supporting funding for the National Endowment for the Humanities (NEH). The signers, all Democrats, urged the chair and ranking members of the House Appropriations subcommittee responsible for NEH funding to fund the agency at the fiscal year (FY) 2010 enacted level of \$167.5 million for FY 2012. According to the letter:

“Investment in the humanities advances critical U.S. interests by fostering a globally competitive workforce, strengthening civic engagement, preserving our cultural heritage, and protecting our national security. As our world becomes more interconnected, building a solid foundation in the humanities becomes even more vital to U.S. interests...”

The NEH is the primary source of federal support for humanities research and related activities in the U.S and is a source of funds for humanities research at the University of Oregon. The Endowment provides competitive grant funding for research and scholarship in history, literature, foreign languages, and other fields that provide individuals with critical ethical, cultural, and historical perspective.

Last year, a similar letter of support for NEH was signed by over 80 members of Congress. The smaller number signing onto this year’s letter illustrates the dramatic change in the composition of the US House of Representatives since the mid-term elections.

Community Relations

MPC Makes EmX recommendation

On Thursday, April 14, the Metropolitan Policy Committee of the Lane Council of Governments (LCOG) voted in favor of proceeding on Lane Transit District’s (LTD) proposed expansion of its rapid bus (EmX) service to west Eugene. LCOG is a consortium of local government agencies, and because of federal funding requirements, the EmX expansion requires the endorsement of the Metropolitan Policy Committee to proceed.

The Committee’s 9-1 vote endorsed a formal evaluation of an EmX route that would connect downtown and West 11th Avenue via Sixth and Seventh avenues and came after several weeks of public hearings to gain input from the public. The Committee had originally scheduled a vote on April 5 but decided to postpone the vote due to a change in the route of the proposed service from a 10th and 11th street route to a 6th and 7th street route that had passed both the Eugene City Council and LTD’s Board.

A motion by Lane County Commissioner Sid Lieken will require LTD to seek the Committee’s approval of the project again after the completion of an environmental assessment on the new route, creating another potential road block as the extension project moves forward.



Federal Relations

Lariviere signs letter supporting innovation and economic development

University of Oregon President Richard Lariviere joined a group of 137 university presidents and chancellors in signing a [letter](#) to Secretary of Commerce Gary Locke pledging to make specific, expanded efforts to advance regional and national economic growth. The letter was spearheaded by University of Michigan President Mary Sue Coleman, who is co-chair of the Secretary's National Advisory Council on Innovation and Entrepreneurship. Along with individual institutions, Association of American Universities, the Association of Public and Land-grant Universities, and the American Association of State Colleges and Universities signed the letter.

The University of Oregon is a driving force in Oregon's economy. According to a recent study, the university's total economic impact for the 2009-10 fiscal year was \$1.97 billion. The University of Oregon produces \$33.64 in economic impact for every dollar it receives in state appropriations, and accounts for \$1 out of every \$84 in Oregon's economy. The study found that the University's greatest impact on the economy stems from its dual role as a major source of human capital and as a hub of innovation.

More information on the University's economic impact can be found [here](#).

State Relations

Legislative Redistricting Committees meet on campus

The Oregon Senate and House Judiciary Committees legislative field hearings made a stop on campus on April 16, at the Knight Law School. The Committees met jointly, as part of a series of "road hearings" across the state, to discuss the re-drawing of Oregon legislative and congressional district boundaries. State law requires the legislature to attempt to redraw legislative boundaries every ten years, after the completion of the US Census. If the legislature cannot reach an agreement upon new districts, the duty falls to the Secretary of State.



President Richard Lariviere began the hearing with a welcome to the legislators and participants. A large crowd was on hand to observe the proceedings, and weigh in with thoughts about the character of future districts. Most discussion hinged upon whether districts should be both rural and urban in nature, or whether districts should attempt to capture only areas with geographic and demographic similarities. A number of UO students and faculty shared thoughts on the process, including Political Science Professor Priscilla Southwell, who urged the legislature to consider using a non-partisan panel of retired judges to draw the boundaries, in place of the current system.



State Relations

Day at the Capitol provides opportunity for advocacy, fun

On June 9, a variety of UO advocates will head to Salem for the traditional University of Oregon Day at the Capitol. President Richard Lariviere will lead a group of UO supporters, including award winning musical groups and the Duck, to the Capitol to talk with legislators, view key legislative proceedings, and show off important aspects of the university.



The day will focus on building momentum for UO’s legislative agenda as the 2011 Legislative Session draws to a close, and the focus turns to the 2012 session. The date is also designed to capitalize on the UO Foundation and UO Alumni Association weekends, when a number of UO advocates will be gathered on campus.

Interested in joining for the big day? Visit <http://newpartnership.uoalumni.com/attend-legislative-day> to sign up, or contact jaredm@uoregon.edu for more information.

State Relations

Another key legislative deadline passes

The 2011 session of the Oregon Legislature reached another major milestone last week, with Friday, April 21 marking the deadline for passing bills from committee in the chamber of origin. This means that any bill introduced in the Senate or House must have moved from its first policy committee of referral by April 21 for the bill to continue to receive consideration. All bills not passed out of their original committee by the date are “dead” for the session, and will not continue to receive consideration. The deadline does not apply to the Rules, Revenue, and Ways and Means Committee and sub-committees.

The legislature, at this point has begun extended periods of “floor sessions”, during which measures are debated on the House and Senate floor. More legislation has begun moving from chamber to chamber, and gaining passage for the Governor’s signature.

Safety Improvements

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campus gained with a fully trained, state sworn agency.

The bill moved to the Oregon House of Representatives, and has been scheduled for a public hearing in the House Judiciary Committee on Tuesday, May 10.



Federal Relations

Congressman DeFazio on campus, visits class

On April 21, 2011, Congressman Peter DeFazio (D-OR) visited the University of Oregon to meet with the leaders of the UO's Sustainable Cities Initiative (SCI) and speak to students on transportation issues. DeFazio represents Oregon's 4th Congressional District and is a senior member of the United States House Transportation and Infrastructure Committee.

DeFazio met with Robert Liberty, who was recently appointed as Executive Director of SCI, and founders Marc Schlossberg and Nico Larco as well as with other affiliate faculty and staff. Their discussion centered on recent research findings, federal funding for transportation related research and programs at the UO, including the Oregon Transportation Research and Education Consortium. Sustainable Cities Initiative is a cross-disciplinary organization at the University of Oregon that seeks to promote education, service, public outreach and research on the design and development of sustainable cities. It has completed full year projects in the cities of Gresham and Salem.

Following his meeting with SCI participants, DeFazio offered his thoughts on the U.S. transportation system to Schlossberg's bicycle transportation planning class.

May elections approach; registration deadline passes

Ballots hit the mail this weekend in advance of the May 17, 2011 elections. Among decisions on this ballot are a variety of bond and school funding measures, in addition to school district and community college board contests.

Completed ballots may be safely returned by mail until three days before the election or dropped at a county elections office until 8pm on May 17. In Lane County, a variety of drop boxes are placed throughout the county and may also be used until the 8pm deadline. A list of drop box locations may be viewed at: <http://www.lanecounty.org/Departments/MS/CountyClerk/Elections/Pages/dropoff.aspx>

The voter registration deadline for this election passed on April 26. Oregonians who have previously registered to vote may obtain a ballot from the [county elections office](#).



Federal Budget

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On April 5, House Budget chairman Paul Ryan (R-WI) released his long-term budget plan to cut \$5.8 trillion in federal spending over a decade. The Republican budget resolution was a reflection of that larger roadmap to reduce federal deficit spending. In general, Chair Ryan seeks to return domestic discretionary spending to FY 2008 levels and freeze those amounts for five years. For research and education programs, that would mean significant cuts, ones equal to or greater than the ones proposed in the House's earlier proposal for this year, HR 1.

Most worrisome are proposed cuts to Pell grant programs that will greatly impact lower income students. Ryan's budget proposal aims to return Pell Grants to their pre-stimulus level of about \$4,705. It would end a program that allows students to receive Pell grants for study during summer, eliminate eligibility for less-than-half-time students, and reduce the number of semesters eligible students can receive aid.

In April, President Obama countered the Ryan roadmap with his own long-term deficit reduction plan to cut the federal deficit by \$4 trillion over 12 years. He also announced that Vice President Joe Biden would begin meeting with members of Congress in May and June to find a consensus that reflected the Administration's ideas and build in a "fail-safe" mechanism to force cuts when Congress is unable to act. Importantly, Obama's proposal advocates keeping the current Pell grant program largely intact but recommends ending summer grants.

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Federal Budget

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The President and Congress are also in negotiations over raising the federal debt ceiling limit, which will need to be done in the next few months to avoid a U.S. default on government debt. New reports indicate that fiscal conservatives, including many of the House GOP freshmen who were elected last fall, have vowed to make the debt ceiling the next point of pressure on federal spending, in order to achieve more spending cuts from the federal government.

Congress returns from the April district work period this week and will take up the debt ceiling debate.

Officer Kilcullen Memorial

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at Autzen stadium and then moved through Eugene and Springfield before arriving at Matthew Knight Arena. The processional is a traditional way to honor police officers. An honor guard led the family into the arena where thousands of people gathered to celebrate the life of Officer Kilcullen.

Nearly one hundred elected officials, judges, and other civilian public sector leaders attended the memorial service including Eugene Mayor Kitty Piercy, Congressman Peter DeFazio (D-Oregon) whose spouse is a longtime city of Eugene employee, state legislators and local leaders. Chief Supreme Court Justice Paul J. De Muniz and Chief Federal District Judge Ann Aiken also participated along with more than a dozen state and municipal court judges.