Governor Kulongoski Applauds U.S. Senate for Reauthorizing the Secure Rural Schools and Community Self Determination Act

excerpt of press release issued March 28, 2007 by the Governor’s office)

The U.S. Senate took a significant step to fully reauthorize the Secure Rural Schools and Community Self Determination Act, otherwise known as county payments. Led by Oregon Senator Wyden, the Senate voted 75 to 22 to support his amendment to reauthorize the law for another five years.

The Wyden amendment reauthorizes the county payments program for another five years and also fully funds the Payment in Lieu of Taxes program. Under the compromise reached by the U.S. Senate, the reauthorization would provide the same funding in Fiscal Year 2007 to the counties as they received in Fiscal Year 2006, and then the funding will gradually decrease by ten percent per year through 2011 to allow counties time to adjust to the new funding formula.

PSU/OHSU Merger – HB 3024 SCHEDULED FOR WORK SESSION

House Bill 3024, the bill to move PSU out of the state system and to pave the way to merge with OHSU is scheduled for a work session on Monday, April 2, 1:00 p.m. House Bill 3024 had its first public hearing on Monday, March 19 in the House Committee on Education Subcommittee on Higher Education. The bill, if enacted, would mandate Portland State University (PSU) as a public corporation under the control of a newly created Portland Metropolitan Universities Board of Directors. A similar bill was introduced during the 2005 regular legislative session, but failed to pass.

The OUS has commissioned a study on the proposal and it is expected to be released late next month.

The Higher Education Subcommittee is expected to move the bill (after formal action by the full Education Committee) to the Ways and Means Committee for further consideration.
OBS BILLS OF INTEREST
UPCOMING HEARINGS

Monday, April 2, 2007 8:45am “A”
Senate Finance & Revenue Committee
SB 582: Allows public university to direct affiliated foundation to administer university venture development fund. Allows university or foundation to charge administrative assessment to manage fund. Modifies income tax credit for taxpayers that contribute moneys to university venture development funds. Applies modification to tax years beginning on or after January 1, 2007. Takes effect on 91st day following adjournment sine die.

Tuesday, April 3, 2007 1:00pm “D”
House Education Subcommittee on Education Innovation
HB 3338: Creates Education System Design Team. Specifies membership and duties of design team. Appropriates moneys from General Fund to office of Governor for design team. Susnets design team on date of convening of next regular biennial legislative session. Declares emergency, effective July 1, 2007.

Wednesday April 41:00pm “D”
House Committee on Education

Governor Kulongoski views exhibit during ETIC day at the Capitol
OU LEGISLATIVE NEWSLETTER

The Government Relations office of the Chancellor’s Office will be sending you this electronic newsletter about important events of the past week in Salem and things to come in the days ahead. The newsletter will be published every Friday at 4:00 p.m. throughout session. If you wish to suggest items for inclusion or comments on coverage of issues affecting OUS interests at the Legislature, please feel free to e-mail or phone the Salem Government Relations office. (mary_robinson@ous.edu, 503-373-7490).

BILLWATCH AVAILABLE FOR TRACKING

A comprehensive OUS bill tracking system called BillWatch, has been developed to record information about bills affecting the OUS, and to track their progress through the legislative process. BillWatch is designed to be used by members of the Oregon State Board of Higher Education, Chancellor’s Office staff, campus leadership and OUS advocates. BillWatch is a secure system and users must obtain a user name and password from the Office of Government Relations to use this service.

Subscribing to BillWatch allows users to subscribe and designate particular bills of interest or to provide a broader search of all legislation. A second benefit of subscribing is notification: upon subscribing to a particular bill, users will receive automatic email notification when action is taken on the bill, e.g., hearings scheduled, amendments engrossed, etc. To request access, go to http://billwatch.ous.edu/. From there, choose Request an Account. Your request should be processed within 24 hours. An electronic users guide is available by clicking on HELP at the BillWatch main login menu.

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