

News from the State Capitol

Cuts to schools and services impact all Oregon communities

PTA joins in a shared responsibility to fund schools and protect vulnerable Oregonians

The May revenue forecast has identified the amount of tax dollars available for schools and services. ***Over 90% of the Oregon state budget goes toward paying for education, public safety and human services.***

Due to the financial crisis Oregonians are facing, incomes are down and so are income taxes. Right now, legislators are starting the conversation about how to move the state through this fiscal crisis. They're considering a number of proposals that would require corporations and the wealthiest to carry more of the burden than they currently are, but the discussions have only just begun.

As it stands, the Ways and Means Committee Co-Chairs' proposal makes \$2 billion in cuts to vital services, while only raising \$800 million from corporations and the wealthy. Many of the deep cuts proposed by the co-chairs would devastate human services that people across the state depend on—most notably funding for foster care, childcare subsidies that allow low-income parents to keep their jobs and in-home care for seniors and people with disabilities. All of Oregon's schools will struggle to protect programs, a full school year and teacher and staff jobs with over a half a billion dollars less in K-12 funding.

Advocates for education, human services, and public safety are united in telling lawmakers that it is unfair and irresponsible to make children, seniors, and low-income families carry more of a burden than those who are still thriving in this economy.

It will be impossible to protect important services from some painful cuts, but the legislature has an opportunity to lessen the impact of those cuts by asking for more from those who can afford it.

Contact your legislator, tell them schools and services for our most vulnerable are critical in this economic crisis: <http://www.leg.state.or.us/writelegsltr/>

Please ask Legislators to do the following:

- Make wise use of federal stimulus dollars and federal matching opportunities
- Prudently use state savings or “rainy day” dollars to protect Oregonians
- Prioritize services to children and vulnerable families and recognize that cuts will have deep human impacts, don't put Oregon in a worse place for recovery
- Raise reasonable new tax revenue from wealthy Oregonians and corporations who are still successful in the current crisis

Oregon PTA is part of a coalition of groups who are working to protect schools and services for children and other vulnerable Oregonians. We believe there is a shared responsibility to help fund schools and services during these difficult times. We also are committed to not lay the burden on middle class families who have already been hurt by the economic crisis. We hope that a combined effort will protect jobs and prevent cutting services to a level where they won't meet the needs of our state.

You can learn more about our coalition at www.keeporegonworking.org