



BALANCED VOICE

News and Issues

Volume 11, Number 1

Summer 2011



BY RYAN DECKERT



Ryan Deckert,
OBA President

In the opening Act of Shakespeare's Henry V, the young prince (and future king) disappoints his constituents by lacking focus and discipline and ultimately not living up to the high expectations he engendered in his kingdom. Act IV closes the drama with a triumphant King Henry uniting his kingdom after learning from previous mistakes and bringing former rivals into his realm.

Oregon embarked upon its annual political drama with the convening of the Oregon legislature in January – sans the bloodshed, candlelit plotting of knights and jesters, and colorful headdress. However, we did have our share of plotting in dimly lit rooms and hushed conversations behind marble columns.

OBA entered 2011 with one central theme: *big challenges require big solutions*. Facing double digit unemployment, healthcare cost inflation, and lagging progress in education reform, we asked our elected leaders to guide our state in a renaissance of inspired leadership. We agreed with Governor Kitzhaber; somewhere in this nation, a state was bound to show that it can address these intractable policy challenges head on and summon

the political will to solve them. That state is Oregon.

You will read in the following pages a detailed account of the remarkable progress made on many of these issues and the work that lies ahead. You'll also read about challenges that were left unaddressed, including passage of a stability/rainy day fund package and progress in slowing the growth of our unsustainable corrections budget.

Now back to the stage. Act IV of our drama concludes on a wintry afternoon in January at Mahonia Hall. The governor has returned and invited his council (legislative leadership) to dine with him at his official residence. Former rivals are in attendance, along with long-standing allies. At the meeting, they discuss the affairs of our state and agree in advance which issues will be decided in the coming months. The governor then summons other leaders across Oregon to ensure they can support his vision and help assure legislative passage of critical legislation.

So...Henry V, you may have conquered kingdoms, married the daughter of a rival family, and won the most impressive battlefield victory in human history – we here in Oregon will remain content that our state is on the right track and anxious to tackle tomorrow's challenges today. ●

Engaging Oregon businesses – large and small, urban and rural – to find collaborative solutions that make our state a great place to live and work.

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Chair's Message



When I was first elected Chairman of the Oregon Business Association back in September 2010, Oregon was in bad shape. It was campaign season, and every time I turned on the television or the radio, I was met with partisan political ads and unveiled frustration about the state of the state.

Post session, things feel different. True, our economy is still struggling and Oregonians everywhere are hurting, but now it seems like we're in this together rather than simply placing blame on others. The 2011 Legislative Session was remarkable

in that, despite facing split chambers and budget cuts where few emerged unscathed, OBA – along with its partners and brave elected officials – ushered through transformative changes in healthcare, education, and the state budgeting process.

OBA entered the session with a proactive agenda. While other groups were focused on simply maintaining the status quo or limiting cuts, OBA was determined to gain ground on critical issues facing the state. Some may have even called our 2011 Legislative Agenda naïve in a time of crisis. OBA, however, saw *opportunity* in the crisis and worked hard to fulfill our mission – to advance public policy that makes Oregon a better place to live, work, and do business.

Every year the past chairs of OBA gather for dinner to take a look at how the organization is doing, and I am excited to deliver my 2011 report. As I look through our legislative agenda and priorities, OBA's successes have exceeded my expectations. But we're not finished yet – we'll have the opportunity to continue advancing important parts of our legislative agenda in the 2012 Legislative Session. And while we still have a lot of work ahead of us, I could not be more proud of the work of the OBA and its role in these accomplishments.

Peter Kratz
Chair, Board of Directors
Oregon Business Association
Executive Vice President, Harry & David

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PAT SMITH
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DON WASHBURN
Private Investor

KEN WIGHTMAN
Chief Executive Officer
David Evans Enterprises, Inc.

JUNKI YOSHIDA
President, Yoshida Foods International, LP

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2011 Annual Statesman Dinner

Oregon Business Association's Statesman Dinner, held each fall, is Oregon's largest gathering of business, political, and civic leaders across Oregon.

Every year at its annual Statesman Dinner, OBA presents a Statesman of the Year Award recognizing extraordinary achievements for public service, consensus building, and forging collaborative solutions to critical issues facing Oregon.

This year OBA is honoring two individuals as its Statesmen of the Year – Co-Speakers Arnie Roblan and Bruce Hanna – who had the difficult job of guiding an equally divided Oregon House of Representatives this Legislative Session. Throughout Session, the Co-Speakers worked together to ensure that the House ran smoothly, despite the real possibility of legislative gridlock in a split chamber.

The Co-Speakers governed the House with a steady hand and facilitated a productive 2011 Legislative Session which included, among other things, transformational progress in core budget, education, and health care challenges.

This Legislative Session, Co-Speakers Roblan and Hanna demonstrated that it is possible to rise above partisan politics and do what's best for Oregon. For that, they deserve the title of Statesmen.

2011 OBA Statesman Dinner

Wednesday, October 12, 2011

Oregon Convention Center
Oregon Ballroom

6:00 p.m. Reception

7:00 p.m. Dinner and Program

Presented by:



nike school innovation fund

2011 KEYNOTE:
U.S. Secretary
of Education
Arne Duncan



2011 STATESMEN OF THE YEAR:
Rep. Bruce Hanna & Rep. Arnie Roblan
Co-Speakers of the
Oregon House of Representatives

Providing the keynote address at this year's event is U.S. Secretary of Education Arne Duncan. OBA advocated tirelessly for statewide education reform in Salem during the 2011 Legislative Session, and we are excited to have Secretary Duncan speak to us about his efforts on the national level.

Prior to his appointment as U.S. Secretary of Education, Secretary Duncan was the chief executive officer of the Chicago Public Schools. In his seven and a half years as CEO, he was able to unite education reformers, teachers, principals, and business stakeholders behind an aggressive reform agenda.

One of the Secretary's best known initiatives has been Race to the Top, which is a competitive grant program that encourages and rewards States that implement significant education reforms.

The 2011 Statesman Dinner will be a unique opportunity for the citizens of Oregon to hear from a true reformer working to address critical education issues facing our country.

Call 503-641-0990 or visit
www.oba-online.org
to reserve your table today.

New Members Make OBA's Voice Stronger

We'd like to introduce the most recent additions to OBA's membership roster:

Allergan
Ball Janik
Blount International
Braelyn International
Bridgeworks Capital
Casa Bruno
Christensen Electric
Easy Street Online Services

Facebook
Foreterra
GreenGuard
Kryptiq Corporation
Lettin and Company
Liz Hamilton
Nan Heim
Obsidian Finance

Research/Into/Action
ReVolt
Schnitzer Investments
Union Pacific Railroad
Washington Square
Webtrends
Woodruff-Sawyer

Perspectives on the 2011 Legislative Session

BY ANGI DILKES



Angi Dilkes, OBA
Vice President of
Legislative Affairs

The 2011 Legislative Session will go down in the record books for the seemingly unlikely success enjoyed by legislators of both parties. In the beginning of the session, we all waited to learn how the 50/50 (or is 30/30 more appropriate?) rules would work from a practical perspective.

Agreements worked out around hearings, work sessions, and creative ways to extract bills from committee seemed designed to ensure not much would happen. Many advocates in the building also caught the “protect the status quo” fever and lobbied hard to stop most bills from moving. In terms of the funding debates, most groups considered a smaller cut than anticipated or preservation of a program to be a successful outcome.

As outlined throughout this publication, OBA’s agenda, developed by our policy committees and our Board of Directors, represented a very different approach. We set out to shoot the moon and shake the status quo. Together with my talented colleagues, devoted OBA members, dedicated partners in the lobby, and like-minded policymakers, we worked hard and have quite a lot to show for our efforts.



Having watched OBA from the outside for the last decade, I’ve spent the nine months since I joined the staff learning from the inside what it means to bring the perspective of the “Balanced Voice” organization to the halls of the Capitol. At times it was a lonely enterprise; more often than not folks were relieved to learn they weren’t alone in their advocacy efforts when we showed up to help. As demonstrated by the two individuals selected as our Statesmen of the Year for 2011, what I like to call OBA-like behavior from elected leaders across the political spectrum helped make the session more civil and productive than we dared hope in January.

When I review our agenda, I am proud to see check marks next to many of the items on our pre-session list. However, several of the checks also come with asterisks because some bills we worked to pass were the first steps of many to come over the next several years. Work remains on many of our priorities and we’re already rolling up our sleeves to get started. ●

OBA 2011 Legislative Report

OBA STAFF

Our 2011 Regular Session agenda was a proactive work plan to address the increasing costs of health care, human services and corrections, which have been crowding out investments in education over the last two decades, contributing to a decline in personal incomes in our state. In addition, OBA advocated for a coordinated approach to our education system with a focus on improving governance and teacher quality, even during a time of less than ideal financial investment. Finally, by supporting investments in economic development to create high wage jobs, we aimed to increase personal incomes so that Oregon can fund critical services in our state.

With these ambitious goals, we are proud to report that substantial progress was achieved; our accomplishments follow.

Resetting the Cost Structure

Increasing Quality and Access while Reducing the Costs of Health Care

Throughout the last few years, Oregon policymakers devoted substantial time, energy, and focus on expanding access to health care, increasing affordability of health care, and improving health care outcomes for all Oregonians. The reasons for this focus are many, but the pressing need for transformation of the system this legislative session stemmed from the extraordinary budget pressure caused by the stunted economy.

Though essential to growing healthy families and healthy communities, health care has become a major drain on both public and private budgets. Costs for treatment and insurance continue to rise, payments to providers are often inadequate, and the system as a whole is snarled with inefficiency.

A combination of efforts, both local and national, made 2011 a perfect moment in time to move forward on health care next

steps. Two significant pieces of legislation passed: creation of a Health Insurance Exchange Public Corporation (SB 99) and transformation of the Medicaid delivery system (HB 3650).



Health Policy
Committee Chair,
Ross Dwinell, Western
Benefits, Inc.

Beginning in 2014, the health care market will look dramatically different than it does today. At that time, guaranteed issue provisions will eliminate pre-existing condition provisions, each individual will need to be covered by health insurance, individuals and small businesses will gain access to new health insurance exchanges, and employers will be allowed to make choices about benefits for employees based on a defined contribution model instead of the current defined benefit model. Passage of the Health Insurance Exchange legislation by the 2011 legislature will ensure Oregon maintains autonomy to implement these new provisions in a local, workable manner.

More immediately, Oregon's Medicaid program, covering nearly 360,000 Oregonians as of May of this year, will move to a regional system of coordination, called Coordinated Care Organizations (CCOs). The State will solicit bids from health care management entities to cover different regional areas of the state and then the CCO will coordinate each patient's mental, physical, and dental health. Each CCO will be provided with a global budget and then be held accountable for the health outcomes of the people it serves, rather than being paid a fee-for-service. Though the initial plan only includes Oregonians covered by Medicaid, the longer term plan is to build a structure within which the other state health care purchasers, including the Public Employees Benefit Board (PEBB) and the Oregon Educators Benefit Board (OEBB), will also be able to participate.

As with any change of this magnitude, this effort is not without controversy. In particular, the significant cost savings anticipated within the state budget will be the initial juncture where this transformation will be judged. Depending on your perspective, this effort represents a significant step toward making the system more affordable or it represents a significantly smaller amount of money coming into your hospital, clinic, or practice. We applaud Governor Kitzhaber for his leadership on these issues and his intention for the system; OBA will work closely with his administration and the legislature as both projects move forward to ensure the outcomes match the goals.

Providing Stability for Oregon's Volatile Tax System

Until we make changes to the underlying public finance system, all of our efforts to reform budgets cannot truly succeed. With a law in place that essentially pulls the rug out from under the state when projections made years before are inaccurate, even our collective best efforts to invest smartly will be for naught. Credit goes to Senator Ginny Burdick (D) and Senator Frank Morse (R) for investing significant time and energy into development of a plan to try to address requirements set forward by stakeholders across the political spectrum.



Angi Dilkes, OBA Vice President of Legislative Affairs, Elizabeth Howe, OBA Senior Policy Analyst, Governor John Kitzhaber, Ryan Deckert, OBA President

OBA's Board of Directors voted to support the product of the Senators' work, a legislative package to divert part of the state's unique kicker returns to an emergency reserve fund, require mandatory savings, and reduce the rate of the extremely volatile capital gains tax. Unfortunately, the politics of the issues became too great and the effort was not fruitful. As a key component to Oregon's long-term fiscal health, reform of our public finance system remains a priority going forward.

Less Crime at a Lower Cost

Oregon taxpayers should be getting a better return on their investment in public safety. Safe communities are essential to the quality of life for Oregon families and businesses, but today, some of Oregon's law enforcement dollars are being spent inefficiently or in counterproductive ways because our sentencing laws are built to punish rather than rehabilitate – a very expensive choice. While we were able to fix the unintended consequences of Ballot Measure 73 for drunk drivers this session, it is a small drop in the bucket. Oregon must do more to bend the cost curve on prison spending over the next decade or the public safety budget will devour any money available for investment in education and the economy.

Governor Kitzhaber recently appointed the Commission for Comprehensive Sentencing Reform by Executive Order with direction for the group to review and make recommendations for necessary reforms to ease the long-term burden of this area of the budget. OBA worked with reform advocates during session

and will continue to advocate for smarter crime prevention policies going forward.

Making Labor Costs Sustainable

A new method of valuing public employee pay and benefits as compared to the private sector, called total compensation, guided conversations between the Governor, the legislature, and Oregon's valued public employee unions over the last seven months. Though at times the rhetoric about the role of employees in terms of balancing the budget became inflammatory, all sides worked toward a goal of fairness.

At the time of writing, it appears the Governor has reached a tentative agreement with both AFSCME and SEIU that includes some increases in compensation, extension of the unpaid furlough days used last biennium, continuation of the six percent PERS "pick-up," and, for the first time, employee contribution to the cost of health insurance benefits. While OBA remains in strong support of additional measures to smooth the projected future increases, we recognize the value of the progress made and look forward to continuing the conversation.

A Well-Educated Workforce

A Coordinated System



Education Committee Chair, Morgan Anderson, Intel

The current education system in Oregon operates in silos. Family support services for early learners, pre-kindergarten programs, K-12 education, community colleges, and the university system all function independently of one another and often compete for funding and support in the Legislature, to the detriment of students. It was clear that a new approach was needed, and Governor Kitzhaber brought an innovative proposal before the 2011 Legislature that OBA and our education partners immediately recognized as a transformational opportunity.

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2011 Legislative Report

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Created by SB 909, the Oregon Education Investment Board (OEIB) will align Oregon's system of governance into one board that will be responsible for the educational outcomes of all Oregon students – from early childhood, through K-12 and into post-secondary education and training. The OEIB is charged with developing proposals for the 2012 Legislature that would create a budget system that focuses on the learner and their learning outcomes, calling out best practices and supporting continuous improvement.



Sen. Mark Hass, Rep. Tobias Read, Rep. Michael Dembrow, and Rep. Mark Johnson watch as Governor Kitzhaber signs SB 242.

K-12 Education: Improved Governance and Teacher Quality

Last year OBA worked with a task force of school superintendents, Stand for Children and the Chalkboard Project to identify specific proposals to increase student achievement and improve the K-12 system, even in times of scarce resources. At the top of the list were improving governance so that the system runs more efficiently and providing opportunities for teachers to grow and become more effective in the classroom. We are glad to report we achieved some major successes in these areas.

SB 552 allows the Governor to appoint a highly qualified and experienced Deputy Superintendent to run the Department of Education. Potential highly qualified professionals are not often willing to run a political campaign, and making the position appointed will result in a nationally competitive pool of candidates.

SB 250 encourages regional education service districts and their school districts to make the most cost effective and efficient

decisions, and to take advantage of economies of scale while still encouraging marketplace competition.

One of the most effective programs for improving student outcomes that we have seen in recent years is the Chalkboard CLASS Project. Results in Tillamook and Sherwood have shown dramatically improved student achievement and teacher satisfaction. SB 252 will supplement federal and foundation grants that fund this innovative, collaborative work in school districts to allow the program to continue to grow.

Under SB 290, the State Board of Education and the Teacher Standards and Practices Commission will develop and adopt statewide performance standards for teachers and administrators. Oregon's students will benefit from the implementation of teaching standards that establish a foundation for a rigorous evaluation system in every Oregon school district.

Higher Education

In light of the state's steady disinvestment in post-secondary education over the last two decades, it is time to discontinue the Oregon University System's status as a state agency, and allow them to run more like a business. The product of enormous time and energy from legislators and stakeholders, SB 242 creates a public university system in Oregon, giving the Universities the flexibility and coordination they need to meet statewide education goals as efficiently as possible.

Top Committee Accomplishments

Business & Finance

Attracting and Retaining Oregon Businesses



Chair, Randy Miller, Produce Row Management Co.

Oregon business programs and tax credits leverage considerable private funds to attract, retain, and grow Oregon businesses. With per capita income below the national average, Oregon's leaders made the right

choice to invest in economic development programs, rather than closing them down when businesses need them the most.

Oregon Innovation Council funding (SB 5528) will support and commercialize university research, and help existing industries become competitive through innovation.

Business Oregon strategic reserve funds and retention programs (SB 5528, SB 219) attract new business to Oregon, and provide incentives for Oregon businesses to hire and expand. Film Production Incentives have created a robust film and production community in Oregon, and the continuation of these credits (HB 3672) will ensure the continued growth of this industry. The extension of a smaller Research & Development tax credit (HB 3672) will encourage businesses to pursue innovation in their field, and Enterprise Zone credits (HB 3672) attract business to depressed and rural areas of Oregon.

These are sound investments that will help Oregon continue to climb out the recession. OBA applauds the legislature's commitment to growing Oregon businesses even in tough economic times.

Environment & Economic Development

Renewable Energy, Conservation and Jobs



Co-Chair, Roger Alfred, Perkins Coie and Co-Chair, Bill Edmonds, NW Natural

Sustainable business is an important component of Oregon's economic development efforts, and this year the Legislature and stakeholders showed creativity in structuring programs to support renewable energy development and conservation with a special focus on creating jobs in both urban and rural areas.

The Business Energy Tax Credit received a significant overhaul this session, with the program being officially split into separate programs: 1) Renewable Energy Development; 2) Conservation; 3) Transportation; and

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Centered Leadership Forum

OBA brought together legislative leaders from both sides of the aisle for a mid-session Centered Leadership Forum (CLF). The CLF, which is modeled after the Aspen Institute, is a regular OBA-sponsored meeting that provides a forum for legislators to get together and discuss big issues of the day.

The topic at this latest CLF forum was the state of the economy, and speakers included John Tapogna, President of EcoNorthwest and former U.S. Senator Bob Packwood.

OBA thanks its guest speakers and each of the elected officials in attendance for a fantastic event: Senators Chris Edwards and Chuck Thomsen, Representatives Jules Bailey, Cliff Bentz, Tim Freeman, Chris Garrett, Mark

Johnson, Shawn Lindsay, and Tobias Read, and Commissioner Deborah Kafoury.

OBA would also like to extend thanks to its meeting hosts and OBA Board members Justin Delaney and Don Washburn for a productive event. ●



U.S. Senator Bob Packwood, Representative Jules Bailey, Senator Chuck Thomsen, Commissioner Deborah Kafoury, OBA Board Member Don Washburn, and Elaine Franklin



Presentation given by John Tapogna, President of EcoNorthwest



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4) Manufacturing (HB 3672/HB 2523). This successful economic development tool was pared back due to lack of resources, but will continue and has been restructured to provide more transparent administration. OBA will work with our partners and with policymakers to make the case for more robust investment in this important sector of our economy in the future. Additionally, the biomass transportation credit was extended and modified to encourage the growth of the biomass industry (HB 3672).

The new "Cool Schools" program (HB 2960) will begin energy efficiency projects in public schools using existing resources in more creative ways to create zero- and low-interest loans for energy efficiency retrofits. These projects will put Oregonians back to work, help the state lower greenhouse gas emissions and reduce overhead.

Additionally, we were able to bring one of Oregon's first environmental milestones into the 21st century with the modernization of the Bottle Bill (HB 3145). Additional bottles are included in the deposit, and a new model for redemption centers will be piloted. There is also a potential increase in the deposit to 10 cents if recycling rates fall below 80 percent after 2016.

Transportation Multimodal Investments



Chair, Dan Block,
D.W. Block Associates

time projects. Though the dollar amount of

Oregon's signature multi-modal investment program, ConnectOregon, is an initiative that provides funds to improve Oregon's non-highway transportation system including aviation, transit, rail, and maritime projects. Though the dollar amount of

the investment in HB 5036 for the fourth iteration of the program is smaller than in previous years, the \$40 million allocated will be put to good use across the state.

Good Government Citizens' Initiative Review



Chair, Will Rasmussen,
Miller Nash, LLP

An important component of initiative reform is providing voters with a clear, useful, nonpartisan source for information and evaluation of statewide ballot measures. With the passage of HB 2634, the pilot project known as the Citizens' Initiative Review became an official state commission, to be funded with private dollars, and will continue to provide Oregon voters with well-researched perspectives on ballot measures in the Voters' Pamphlet. ●

Join an OBA Committee

Oregon Business Association members have the opportunity to participate in the direction of the organization by joining one or more committees. Committees report to the Executive Committee and Board of Directors with recommendations on OBA positions on public policy issues in Oregon. For more information on how to get involved in OBA's policy committees, please contact Kelly O'Brien at (503) 641-0990 or kelly@oba-online.org.

OBA Events Recap

All Members Meeting (July 12th)

OBA held its annual All Members Meeting on Tuesday, July 12th, where OBA staff recapped a remarkable 2011 Legislative Session, reporting on what was accomplished, what wasn't, and what comes next for many of the critical issues facing our state.



Congressman Kurt Schrader (June 9th)

This luncheon provided a great opportunity for Congressman Kurt Schrader to receive feedback from business leaders on multiple issues facing Congress, including government regulation, economic recovery, trade issues, and the national debt.



Legislative Update with Washington County Delegation (April 11th)

OBA organized a meeting with the Washington County delegation and business leaders that was focused on legislative updates with regard to OBA's priorities this session – public finance, education (both K-12 and post-secondary), healthcare, and transportation.



Mike Zamore, Senator Jeff Merkley's Chief of Staff (March 25th)

This luncheon with Senator Jeff Merkley's Chief of Staff Mike Zamore, provided a good opportunity for Sen. Merkley's office to receive coherent and focused feedback on trade issues from Oregon business leaders.



Oregon Treasurer Ted Wheeler (February 15th)

OBA business leaders got together for a frank conversation with Treasurer Ted Wheeler about the state of the economy and Governor Kitzhaber's economic development efforts.



Congressman Peter DeFazio (January 28th)

Among the topics covered at this meeting were tax reform, the stimulus package, congestion issues and the accompanying need for improved transportation infrastructure, and the Columbia River Crossing Project.

