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Alleges sex, race discrimination

\$4-million lawsuit slams University

By MELODY WARD
and MARY FORAN
Of the Emerald

A multi-million dollar class-action employment practices suit has been filed against the University by its own affirmative action director.

General and punitive damages amounting to \$4 million are sought by Myra Willard, who filed the suit recently in U.S. District Court in Portland.

Among the charges faced by University administrators and the state board of higher education are failure to comply with affirmative action guidelines and an alleged conspiracy by higher education officials to deny women and minority groups equal employment opportunities.

Willard also alleges that University officials "conspired" to unlawfully coerce her into not seeking administrative tenure and later denied it in retaliation because she refused to withdraw her request for tenure.

University officials said they were shocked and surprised at Willard's charges. They declined to comment on specific matters alleged in the complaint since litigation is in process.

Named as defendants in the suit are University Pres. William Boyd, Chancellor Roy Lieuallen, University vice-presidents Ray Hawk and Paul Olum, the University, and the state board of higher education.

Willard is suing as the representative of all women and minorities that have been classified and discriminated against in ways which deprive them of equal employment opportunities and otherwise adversely affect their status as employees due to their sex, race, color or national origin.

The suit is being filed as a class action because "the common interests of the individual members of the class is outweighed by the desirability of concentrating the controversy in a single forum," the 16-page



Myra Willard

Photo by Greg Gawlowski

complaint explains.

According to the complaint, Willard has been employed at the University since January 1973 with the rank of Professor in the Department of Management. At the same time, she has been Affirmative Action director and the University's Title IX Officer.

But according to the University

catalogue, Willard's specific academic ranking is that of senior instructor. In her capacity as a faculty member in the management department, she has developed and teaches courses in Affirmative Action and Women in Business.

Willard was considered for indefinite administrative tenure, according to Ronald

Rousseve, who served on the administrative personnel committee appointed to review her performance.

"The national trend is not to appoint persons to administrative position with the expectation that they will be granted tenure," Rousseve says. The committee did recommend unanimously that Willard be given a fixed term appointment.

"She has not been given a notice of termination at the University," Rousseve adds.

The state board decided to limit indefinite tenure appointments to strictly scholarly positions, including those in libraries and counseling centers, in 1975.

In addition to payment for damages, Willard will also ask the court to grant permanent injunctions forcing the state system to offer her tenure, preventing the University and its officials from interfering with her job performance and forcing the University and the Oregon State System of Higher Education to stop all the alleged discriminatory practices.

"They (the administration) did not give me tenure because of my race and sex, and because I oppose discriminatory practices," Willard told the Emerald.

Should she win the suit, Willard said the money would be distributed among those women and minorities who have been discriminated against.

"This would include those who work in the state system now and in the past, and those who might have, had it not been for discriminatory policies and practices of the state board and of the University of Oregon," she said.

Willard declined further comment, as the suit is presently undergoing litigation. Her case is being handled by San Francisco attorney Curtis Oler. The defendants will be represented by an assistant attorney general, and the complaint has been referred by them to attorney general James Redden, counsel to the state system.

Stick to the facts, Boe says

Legislature to stay out of tax fight

By KEVIN HARDEN
Of the Emerald

Oregon's copy-cat tax revolt is in full swing and the Legislature is going to stay clear of any emotional battle over its effects.

The best way the body can help contain the taxpayer's uprising is to stick to the facts and leave the fiery rhetoric to the soap box, says Jason Boe, President of the Oregon State Senate.

Boe, who has not ruled out the idea of a property tax limitation measure passing on the November ballot, says that to combat the revolt by state taxpayers, the Legislature should stay away from a verbal battle and give people around the state the facts concerning the revolt's effects.

"Basically, what we've got to do



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now is to learn from California's mistakes."

The California Legislature, while campaigning against Proposition 13, joined forces with several labor, civic and political organizations and told the state's voters that there would be chaos if the proposition was approved.

That proposition, which cut California's property taxes by nearly 40 percent, or to one percent over the property's 1975 assessed value, was overwhelmingly approved by California voters last month. Looking back, the state's legislators realized they had compounded the problem by fighting the proposal, Boe said.

In California it looked like it was the little man against a big government that wanted to grow bigger by the dollar. But in Oregon it

will be a battle of facts and nothing else, he adds.

"Our highest priority in this is to first get accurate information to the public about this tax limitation proposal."

To that end, a special meeting between the public and legislators is being arranged for late August. That meeting will hopefully answer questions anyone may have about the effects of the tax limitation, Boe says.

"This won't be a political meeting," he predicts. "We'll have every legal, fiscal and legislative expert on the tax limitation effects at that meeting."

"We want every person in the state to have all the facts about this measure." At the meeting, Boe hopes to have computer printouts detailing the effects of a

property tax limitation on nearly every county and tax district in Oregon.

"If they get this information then they'll be able to make up their own minds about this issue."

Meanwhile, as state legislators gather in Salem for committee meetings not linked to the tax limitation debate, the Capitol corridors are buzzing with talk of the revolt, says Dave Frohnmayer, (R-Eugene) state representative from the University district.

So far, the Legislature has been undecided about what to do if the tax limitation becomes law in November, Frohnmayer says. There are still a great deal of questions to be answered before any action can be taken.

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