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Kerans wants to make more jobs for Oregonians out of kicker tax

By Chris Norred
Of the Emerald

A program to make more jobs for unemployed Oregonians should be created with the state's 2 percent surplus kicker tax money, said Sen. Grattan Kerans, D-Eugene, Thursday.

The 2 percent surplus kicker is an income tax credit that normally is given to taxpayers if actual revenue is more than 2 percent higher than it was forecast at the time the budget was adopted.

Kerans said the kicker would provide a tax credit of about \$50 for the average Oregonian next year.

Kerans said legislators must make a choice between getting \$50 for their constituents who have jobs, or using that money to make new jobs for their constituents who do not.

The program proposed by Kerans is called the Wage In-

centive Program and would be expected to create 20,000 new jobs for Oregon workers in the next biennium, he said. About 12,000 of those jobs would be permanent.

The jobs program would cost \$105.6 million over the next two years. That money would come from the \$136 million surplus kicker.

But Gov. Neil Goldschmidt has said he thinks the surplus kicker money should be returned to the taxpayers.

At a press conference Thursday, representatives from a broad coalition of groups spoke in support of the Wage Incentive Program.

The program would be modeled after a successful job creation program developed in Minnesota.

Unemployed workers would qualify for the program after they exhausted all their unemployment insurance and worker compensation benefits. Employers would receive money and resources necessary to create new jobs when they agreed not to reduce their regular work force and to keep the new employee for a minimum of 26 weeks.

The business would receive up to \$4 an hour in wages and up to \$1 an hour in fringe benefits to subsidize the new employee's wages. The business would have to repay 70 percent of the money received under the program if the new employee's job did not continue after the 26-week period.

If the new employee stays on the job for one year beyond the 26-week period, the business would not have to repay the money.



Grattan Kerans

The program would benefit Oregon's small businesses as well as the unemployed, said Rep. Shirley Gold, D-Portland. "My district — a typical city district — is almost totally small business entrepreneurs. In conversations with them I find that...like families who can't afford what they need, the small businesses do without needed employees."

Another proposal to help Oregon's unemployed was presented by Rep. Darlene Hooley, D-West Linn, Thursday. Hooley proposed a program designed by the Voluntary Welfare Work Programs Task Force, which calls for a revamping of the current state job training program.

The proposal calls for \$12.6 million to be added to the current jobs program in this biennium.

The revamping would allow unemployed workers to spend up to two years in the job training program.

Park

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is in fact going to be a public process," Dix said.

About 20 people have consistently opposed the project, Obie said. "Really, I think they're saying they don't agree with the process," he said.

"What we've agreed upon is that the Riverfront project will proceed forward," said Rep. Carl Hosticka. "But we'll also be working with others to make sure it's done right," he said.

Dix also denied that Lane County and Portland were teaming up to get the biggest share of the lottery dollars.

"If we're to support this project, we've got an obligation to support the other regional projects in the state," Dix said. Goldschmidt has proposed a \$7.5 million down payment to fund the Portland Convention Center.

"The suggestion that Eugene is getting more than its fair share I don't really understand," he said.

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Nominations are being accepted for 1987 awards to UO faculty members for distinguished teaching. This year there will be two Ersted awards and three Burlington-Northern awards made at the Spring Commencement exercise. Each of the Ersted awards will be accompanied by a gift of \$1,000 and each of the Burlington-Northern awards will be accompanied by a gift of \$2,000. Nominations may be submitted by students, faculty, staff, and alumni. You may use the form below or send a letter of nomination to:

Joseph Hynes, Vice-Provost, 103 Johnson Hall
Please send no later than **February 27, 1987**

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Faculty members who are at relatively early stages in their teaching careers.

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