

# Edmunson fighting against Measure 5 in Salem

By Troy Anderson  
Emerald Contributor

Like Robin Hood, state Rep. Jim Edmunson says "We should be taking from the rich and giving to the poor."

At least that is the position the former journalist takes on issues such as Ballot Measure 5, workers compensation, health coverage, campaign finance and his own renter relief bill, which would force landlords to pass on property tax savings under Measure 5 in rent charged to tenants.

The Democratic representative, whose District 39 represents about 40,000 people in the North Eugene area, is often the lone dissenter on bills that he believes are not in the public good.

Edmunson became best known for his dissenting vote against last May's special session workers compensation reform bill, which reduced the amount of money injured workers received in health care and disability benefits.

"Last session I was fighting for injured workers, which is a very unpopular position to take," Edmunson said. "I was one of six votes out of 60 on the House floor against the bill."

"People said I'd pay a terrible price for that politically, but in the end, I won both the Democrat and Republican nominations for re-election," he said. "I have no problem being the only 'no' vote if it's for a good reason. I'm not afraid of being outspoken."

Edmunson, 40, grew up in the Eugene-Springfield area and graduated from Oregon State University in liberal studies in 1974. He received his law degree from the University in 1983.

Edmunson said he voted against Measure 5 and that Oregonians should get another chance to vote on it.

Edmunson, who is also a Eugene workers compensation attorney, said that while he does

not like the idea of a sales tax, he does like the idea of a gross receipts and luxury tax.

"I think Robin Hood was right to a large degree," Edmunson said. "I mean we should be taking from the rich and giving to the poor. And that kind of tax policy is not fulfilled in the sales tax. My proposal to repeal Measure 5 would also have required the Legislature to adopt a replacement revenue."

Another bill related to Measure 5 is the renter's relief bill that would require landlords to "reflect tax savings of Measure 5 in rent charged (to) tenants."

"Measure 5 has given landlords and property owners a windfall that renters don't enjoy," Edmunson said. "I think it's the height of hypocrisy when we cut property taxes and then the rents increase. To me, that's gross enrichment at the expense of people who by and large are not very affluent."

"You don't see a lot of renters beating the Ballot Measure 5 bandwagon," he said, "although, I think a lot of renters voted for Measure 5 because they assumed landlords would pass the savings along."

Unfortunately, Edmunson said, most bills that he proposes like this are killed by the Republican-controlled House. But now that his anti-Measure 5 bill has been introduced, he hopes to bring it to the people through an initiative.

"My contribution this session in the Legislature has been to be another voice and to remind others in the assembly that we all have an obligation to fight for each other's right to express our opinions," he said.

Other Edmunson bills would repeal certain exemptions to the public records laws, defend Native Americans' use of peyote in religious ceremonies, and limit the amount of money political action committees can contribute to election campaigns.

Of course Edmunson isn't

alone at the state capital. Former ASUO President Andy Clark is working as his legislative aide.

As for Measure 5 and higher education, Edmunson said it is important to keep the institution intact — and that means keeping it a full-service institution without eliminating various schools and departments.

"We have to be consumer advocates when it comes to students to make sure students are getting what they pay for," he said. "You might say that we need some lemon laws for higher education to make sure that when you buy an educa-

tion it works.

"We need to make sure, as a state, that there are job opportunities for students and that we recognize students are going to need help making the transition into professional life in terms of housing and day care," he said.

Edmunson said he can appreciate a student's transition into professional life. After graduating from OSU, he worked as the city and sports editor of the *East Oregonian* for three years. Then he spent nearly five years as a reporter at the *Daily Astorian*.



Jim Edmunson

## Get A Good Job!

When you get ready to apply for that great job, your resume will get put at the top of the pile if it looks something like this . . .

Name: Your Name

Please List Experience Below:

I served on the Board of Directors of the U of O Bookstore, Inc. from May 1991 to May 1993. The Bookstore is a non-profit corporation established in 1920 to serve the needs of the students, faculty, and classified staff of the University of Oregon. The Bookstore does over \$11,000,000 in annual sales and employs over 120 individuals.

The Board is composed of eleven members, eight of whom are students, two faculty and one a classified staff member. The Board is the policy-making body of the Bookstore. The Board meets during the school year on a monthly basis.

During my time on the Board I was quite involved in helping make important decisions. In addition to monitoring the daily operation of the store, I had the opportunity to serve on subcommittees such as budget and finance, election and annual meeting, building and facilities, and manager evaluation.

Not only did I learn how a medium-sized corporation runs, I had an opportunity to help make it one of the best college bookstores in the United States. I learned a great deal in my classes at the university but I gained first-hand experience while serving as a Board member of the University of Oregon Bookstore, Inc.

### Why Don't You Run for the Board?

These positions are now available:

- One Freshman position for two-year term
- Two Sophomore positions for two-year term
- One Graduate Student Position for two-year term
- One Graduate Student Position for one-year term
- One Teaching Faculty position for two-year term



Nominations for the available Board positions will be taken at the UO Bookstore

#### ANNUAL MEETING

on Tuesday, April 16, at 3:30 p.m. in the Walnut Room of the EMU (across from the U.S. Post Office). For more information contact the Bookstore General Manager, Jim Williams in person or at 346-4331.

**Engine Service**  
1000 S. Bertelsen Rd. #8 Eugene OR 97402  
One Block North of W. 11th Nolan Ind. Plaza

Specializing in Volkswagen Service For 32 years  
342-3952

**Student and Faculty Discounts**

**JIGGLES**  
**AMATEUR NITE!**  
Every Tuesday at 9:00 pm

**\$300 in Cash Prizes\***  
\*Do not have to go topless to win • Judges chosen from audience • We pay 6 places • Must register by 8pm • Rules and restrictions apply

**JIGGLES TAVERN**  
2156 W. 11th  
344-6897