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## Smith

**Continued from Page 1A** the same, and I think that is a reflection of both of us."

Currently, Wyden and Smith are working together on legislation that would provide incentives for state schools to keep tuition increases at or below the inflation rate.

rate. "On the bill that Ron Wyden and I are working on, we are talking with Dave Frohnmayer to make sure that whatever we do to incentivize universities to hold down tuition costs does not in fact damage Oregon universities in the mix of federal appropriations," said Smith, who graduated with a history degree from Brigham Young University in 1976 and a law degree from Southwestern three years later.

The legislation is still in draft form, Smith said, and he expects to continue working with Wyden after the September elections. Wyden is currently running against John Lim (R-Gresham). "That's an assumption I make."

Smith said of Wyden's re-election. And like the two senators, students need to choose their battles and choose words over weapons, Smith said.

"I hope students recognize that life is politics. Politics is about making your way with other people," he said. "It's about compromising. It's about cooperation and occasional confrontation."

Smith paints a positive picture of higher education in Oregon and says he works with a variety of state leaders.

"I work with student leaders from all the universities in Oregon," he said. "I work with Dave Frohnmayer in a regular and respectful nature. I work with department heads. My staff reaches out to them to make sure that Oregon is getting its plate at the federal table.

"We've done really well. And I'm committed to — for as long as I'm there — to making sure that Oregon has a friend in Washington, D.C."

A college degree equals power, Smith said, and education is something he's been promoting since his first campaign.

"In this day and age, the income gap is continuing to widen between those who have an education and those who don't," he said. According to Gov. John Kitzhaber, the average college student in Oregon graduates with an "unacceptable" \$20,000 debt. Smith said graduating with debt is worth the investment.

"There are few things in our lives where debt may be appropriate, and I emphasize 'a few," Smith said. "I can assure you that the difference between a person with a college education and without a college education is probably more than \$20,000 a year." Is that too much debt?

"Well, I wish it was less," he said, "but I know that life without a college education costs a lot more because you earn a lot less."

Within state politics, Republican challenger Bill Sizemore is attempting to take the governorship from Kitzhaber.

"I'm a Republican," Smith said, "and as a consequence, I support the nominees of my party. My focus in this campaign is to try and elect Republican legislators. I know that for some young people the Republican Party may not be their first choice."

Smith said he does not support all of Sizemore's ideas on education.

"Some of them are all right," he said. "Bill's never been in elective office, and yet sometimes it's helpful to have someone from the outside like Bill Sizemore call us to account."

But Smith said that just because he's supporting Sizemore, it doesn't mean he is incapable of working with Kitzhaber. The two worked together at one point when Kitzhaber was starting as governor and Smith was a state legislator.

"He and I disagreed on a number of things," Smith said, "but we accomplished a remarkable amount together by emphasizing areas where we could agree, compromising appropriately."

Smith admits, though, that he is a competitive person. And that, he says, combined with his satisfaction with the job, may influence him to seek re-election in four years.

But Smith also hinted that Washington, D.C., stifles the ability to follow his own creed.

"My motto in life is to work hard and to play hard," he said. But is that something Smith can

do in D.C.? "No," he chuckles, "I just work

hard."



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