

'Labor legislators' keep workers' interest in mind

A cadre of retired unionists is seeking re-election to the Oregon House of Representatives — with the intent of keeping an eye out for workers' interests.

Lawyers and small business owners dominate the Republican-controlled House. The "labor legislators" — all of whom are blue-collar Democrats — help counter-balance that.

In the current state House, Democrats have 27 seats while Republicans have 33. The Democrats would need to gain four seats to take over.

Most of the "labor legislators" have a relatively easy path to re-election. Only Larry Galizio has an opponent running an active campaign.



2277, is seeking re-election in **House District 35**.

The first-term state representative from Tigard recorded a 94 percent COPE voting record with the AFL-CIO.

Galizio, an instructor in communications and journalism at PCC's Sylvania Campus, served on the House Revenue and General Government Committees during the 2005 session.

He is a strong proponent of educational issues and school funding. He opposed a school funding plan pushed by House Republicans because it did not provide for reasonable class sizes. Instead, he worked (albeit unsuccessfully) to fund schools in accordance with the state's Quality Education Model.

Galizio's seat is being targeted by the GOP. He is opposed by Shirley Parsons, a retired Portland police officer.

Rep. Diane Rosenbaum, 56, is the

senior labor legislator. She is seeking a fifth term in **House District 42**, representing Southeast Portland.



Her only opponent in the November general election is Jeff Cropp from the Pacific Green Party.

Rosenbaum is a retired central office technician for Qwest and a 30-year member of Communications Workers of America Local 7901.

During the 2005 legislative session

Rosenbaum was the House Democratic Whip. This year she is the Assistant House Democratic Leader and is helping out in other campaigns.

"Democrats have had to fight awfully hard just to stay where we are," said Rosenbaum, referring to attacks by the Republican leadership on reducing indexed minimum wage increases and cutting funding for the Oregon Bureau of Labor and Industries.

"Not a lot of good has been happening (at the Legislature) for working people," she continued.

With a Democratic majority, she said labor would be in a stronger position to make inroads to strengthen collective bargaining rights for workers, for tax fairness and for school funding.

Rosenbaum has served as president of the Coalition of Labor Union Women, on the Executive Board of the Oregon AFL-CIO and the Northwest Oregon Labor Council, and is a founding member of the Workers' Rights Board of Portland Jobs with Justice.

She also is president of the National Labor Caucus of State Legislators, a bi-partisan network of union member and union-friendly state lawmakers who promote working family issues in state legislatures throughout the country.

Rosenbaum has a 100 percent lifetime AFL-CIO COPE voting record in the Legislature.



Although no stranger to state politics, **Rep. Brad Witt, 54**, is considered the rookie of the labor legislators. He was appointed to **House District 31** in January

2005 after former Rep. Betsy Johnson resigned to accept an appointment to the State Senate.

Witt, of Clatskanie, served 14 years as secretary-treasurer of the Oregon AFL-CIO and is currently working for

United Food and Commercial Workers Local 555.

During his first session, Witt was assigned to the General Government Committee and the Information Management and Technology Committee.

"It's been a wonderful challenge to represent a vast rural district and be a voice for working people. I'm committed to returning to Salem to represent our community's values," Witt said.

A graduate of the University of Massachusetts, Witt earned a master's degree from the University of Oregon, specializing in management, economics and sociology.

He is a veteran of many state boards and commissions and has lobbied on such key issues as economic and workforce development, natural resources and workers' compensation.

Witt had a 100 percent COPE voting record in his first session.

He faces two challengers this November, Republican Mike Kocher and candidate Bob Ekstrom, chair of the Constitution Party.



Rep. Paul Holvey, 52, is a community relations representative for the Pacific Northwest Regional Council of Carpenters. He is seeking a second term in **House District 8**.

A native of Eugene, Holvey was originally appointed to the seat by the Lane County Board of Commissioners in January 2004. He won his first election in November 2004.

He serves as vice chair of the Elections and Rules Committee and on the Business, Labor and Consumer Affairs Committee.

A former secretary-treasurer of Eugene Carpenters Local 1273, Holvey was trained in the Carpenters apprenticeship program. As a lawmaker he emphasizes the importance of having and maintaining a skilled workforce.

"When you flush the toilet, the lights shouldn't come on," he said.

Holvey serves on the Oregon-SW Washington Carpenters Joint Apprenticeship and Training Committee, the Economic and Workforce Development Committee of the Lane County Labor Council, the Siuslaw National Forest Resource Advisory Committee, and as a board member of the Lane Business Education Compact.

He attended Lane Community College, Central Washington University, and the University of Oregon. He also received a U-Lead certificate from the Labor Education and Research Center of the University of Oregon.

He recorded a 100 percent COPE voting record in 2005.

Holvey is opposed by Republican Andrew Hill.



Rep. Mike Schaufler, 46, a former member of the Laborers Union, is seeking a third term in **House District 48**.

He left the union to become a contractor in 1996, but he remains a staunch supporter of building trades union issues.

Schaufler is vice chair of the the Business Labor and Consumer Affairs Committee and he sits on the Budget Committee and Water Committee.

He has held posts on the Happy Valley City Council; the Happy Valley Transportation Advisory Committee; the Clackamas County Concurrency Project; the League of Oregon Cities General Government Committee and the Happy Valley Budget Committee and Planning Commission.

He recorded a 76 percent COPE voting record in the 2005 session.

Schaufler is being challenged by Bill Stallings of the Constitution Party.

For a complete list of bills the Oregon AFL-CIO tracked to determine its 2005 COPE voting record, go to www.orafclcio.org, then click on "Our Democracy."



"Things seem to be fine at this point. I've seen my opponent at only one community function," said **Rep. Jeff Barker, 63**, a retired lieutenant of the Portland Police Bureau and a former president of the Portland Police Association and editor of the union newspaper, *The Rap Sheet*.

Barker, of Aloha, is running for a third term in **House District 28**. His opponent is Republican Eldon Derville-Teer.

Barker serves as vice chair of the State and Federal Affairs Committee and is a member of the Judiciary Committee and Joint Legislative Counsel. He was appointed chair of the Judiciary subcommittee on Criminal Law by the Republican House leadership.

A former Marine, Barker said in an earlier interview with the NW Labor Press that his experiences as a contract negotiator, union leader, street cop, lieutenant, pension trustee, college graduate and average citizen are reasons why voters should re-elect him to the House.

During the last legislative session, Barker rated a 93 percent on the Oregon AFL-CIO's Committee on Political Education (COPE) scorecard.

...Labor organizations differ on some legislative candidates

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gon AFSCME Council's Executive Board, elected at biennial conventions, which makes the final decision. Generally, any incumbent state legislator who scores an 80 percent or higher voting record on AFSCME issues the previous legislative session earns an automatic endorsement and is not required to go through the interview process.

An exception to that occurred this year with State Rep. Kim Thatcher (R-Keizer), who had an 8-2 AFSCME voting record in the 2005 session. Thatcher agreed to be listed as one of the co-

sponsors of a statewide ballot measure that would restrict union dues collections. Because of that, the PAC decided to interview both Thatcher and her House District 25 opponent, Chuck Lee, and eventually endorsed Lee over Thatcher. The Oregon AFL-CIO and OSBCTC are also backing Lee, while the ONA, alone among unions, is endorsing Thatcher.

The OSBCTC political effort is advised by Pac/West Communications, a lobby and communications firm headed by former Republican legislator Paul Phillips. With help from Pac/West, the Building Trades Council has developed friendly relationships with some Republican leg-

islators, who back the building trades unions on issues like licensing, apprenticeship, defense of the prevailing wage, and public investment in infrastructure.

One prominent race where unions split was on Oregon House Speaker Karen Minnis (R-Fairview). The Oregon AFL-CIO rated her 36 percent for her votes last year — the lowest of any legislator — and this year voted to endorse her opponent, Rob Brading. But AFSCME and OSBCTC endorsed Minnis.

"We got heat for the Minnis endorsement," acknowledges Don Loving, Oregon AFSCME communications director. "But she walked our

picket line in 1999 at the Columbia River Correctional Institution, when our people were on strike."

Also, Minnis had a 5-2 record on bills AFSCME prioritized in the 2005 legislative session.

As for SEIU, the former AFL-CIO affiliate stayed out of some races where the Oregon AFL-CIO made endorsements, and endorsed some candidates in races the Oregon AFL-CIO stayed out of. In one race, they're on opposite sides: For House District 37 in West Linn, SEIU is backing Democrat Bev Backa while the Oregon AFL-CIO backs incumbent Republican Scott Bruun.