

Business/labor group says energy projects will boost economy

SALEM — A coalition of business and labor leaders blitzed the State Capitol March 5-6 in an appeal to Gov. Ted Kulongoski and lawmakers to end state regulatory opposition to new energy infrastructure for Oregon, such as the proposed natural gas terminals and pipelines now under review.

At a press conference March 5, speakers suggested that the state needs to change the conversation about energy policy so that current needs are considered as much as the desired long-term

goal of clean, green energy.

“We are here today to signal the growing concern of business and labor that our energy ‘present’ is at risk,” said Edward Finklea, executive director of Energy Action Northwest, a coalition of business and labor unions and sponsor of the event. “Too much focus on our energy ‘tomorrow’ has marginalized the prudent attention necessary to assure that our current and near-term energy future is adequate and assured.”

Finklea reviewed published projec-

tions showing a dramatic growth in the need for natural gas and for electricity over the next 20 years that energy experts agree will be required to perfect alternative sources of clean energy. He also cited projections of decreased natural gas supply from Canada as well as insufficient pipeline infrastructure — “something that must be remedied to ensure that Oregon can compete with eastern states for other sources of natural gas,” he said.

“Our energy infrastructure is inadequate to the task of meeting near-term demand,” Finklea said. “Too many participants in the energy debate seem to have leapt to an incorrect — and dangerous — conclusion that we can afford to block, delay and otherwise interdict the development of this needed infra-

structure as we wait for the promise of clean and green energy to become a reality. To do so will put the economic health of our state at risk.”

Attending the press conference with Finklea were Oregon State Rep. Mike Schaufler (D-Happy Valley); John Mohlis, executive secretary-treasurer of the Columbia Pacific Building and Construction Trades Council; Joe Esmonde, renewable energy political liaison for IBEW Local 48; John Endicott, business manager of Plumbers and Fitters Local 290; and Elana Guiney of the Oregon AFL-CIO.

On March 6, several unions set up booths and handed out fliers in the gallery of the State Capitol illustrating the economic boost the infrastructure projects — including the Bradwood Land-

ing liquefied natural gas terminal along the Columbia River near Astoria and the Palomar Pipeline to connect the terminal to the Northwest interstate gas pipeline system in Washington — would have. Together, union officials said, these privately-financed projects would create close to 1,000 jobs and inject over \$1.5 billion into the economy.

Kulongoski and state energy officials have challenged the federal decision approving the Bradwood Landing project.

On Sunday, March 8, Energy Action Northwest purchased a full-page “Help Wanted” advertisement in the Oregonian newspaper carrier the same “jobs” message and urging the governor and lawmakers to support the natural gas infrastructure projects.

Local Motion

February 2009

Union certifications and decertifications in Oregon and Southwest Washington, as reported by the National Labor Relations Board and the Oregon Employment Relations Board

Recognition elections

Name of employer	Date	Name of union	Location	Results:		Icon
				Union Yes	Union No	
Sodexo America	2/9	SEIU/UNITE HERE vs OSEA	Medford	23/10	36	
Lile Moving & Storage	2/10	Teamsters Local 162	Tualatin	2	3	
Bread Song Bakery	2/12	Bakers Local 114	Lake Oswego	10	18	
Providence St. Vincent	2/13	Oregon Nurses Association	Portland	94	19	
First Student	2/25	Teamsters Local 206	Junction City	19	5	

Recognition by card check

Name of employer	Date	Name of union	Location	Number of employees
Crooked River Ranch Fire Department	2/19	Fire Fighters Local 3650	Terrebonne	4

Requests for recognition election

Name of employer	Name of union	Location	Number of employees
Rogue Valley Medical Center (technical employees)	Oregon AFSCME Council 75	Medford	180
Oak Harbor Freight Lines (DECERTIFICATION)	Teamsters Local 962	Medford	14
Tuality Healthcare (pre-admission RNs)	Oregon Nurses Association	Hillsboro	6
Mercy Flights (DECERTIFICATION) (fixed wing pilots)	Teamsters Local 962	Medford	3
City of Yamhill Police Department	Yamhill Carlton Employees Association	Yamhill	2
City of Carlton Police Department	Yamhill Carlton Employees Association	Carlton	2

New Interstate 5 bridge will have 12 lanes

A bi-state council overseeing the Columbia River Crossing project voted unanimously March 6 in support of the 12-lane bridge option to replace the Interstate 5 Bridge over the Columbia River between Portland and Vancouver.

Organized labor endorsed the 12-lane option several years ago and has been lobbying for it since.

The proposed replacement bridge would provide six lanes in each direction, a light rail line, and lanes for bicycles and pedestrians. Anticipated cost is between \$3.1 billion to \$4.2 billion — which also includes work on six nearby

interchanges.

The Project Sponsors Council is comprised of Portland Mayor Sam Adams, Vancouver Mayor Royce Polard, Metro Council President David Bragdon, TriMet General Manager Fred Hansen, C-TRAN chairman Tim Leavitt, Oregon Department of Transportation Director Matthew Garrett, Washington State Department of Transportation Secretary Paula Hammond, SW Washington Regional Transportation Vice Chair Steve Stuart, Oregon Transportation Commission past chairman Henry Hewitt, ODOT CRC Proj-

ect Director Richard Brandman, and Hal Dengerink, chancellor of Washington State University, Vancouver branch.

Now that the lane issue is out of the way, a separate advisory — Mobility Council — has been created to provide recommendations to the state transportation departments and transit agencies on issues such as toll rate structures, travel and auxiliary lane uses, transit management, and overall transportation demand management.

The CRC Project Council will hold a public discussion on tolling options at its meeting set tentatively for June 5.



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