

...Oregon BCTC lauds Schaufler, Metsger, Kopel-Bailey

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monies from the \$960 million Jobs and Transportation Act passed by the 2009 Legislature to fix the state's crumbling infrastructure should start being released Oct. 1. Revenues of \$300 million a year will be raised through increases in vehicle registration and title fees, and a 6-cents-a-gallon gas tax that will start in 2011.

Revenues from the Jobs and Transportation Act are expected to create 4,000 to 5,000 jobs on an annual basis over the next 10 years, Garrett said.

State Sen. Rick Metsger (D-Mt. Hood), chair of the Business and Transportation Committee and an architect of the bill, warned union leaders that a group of conservatives has begun circulating a ballot initiative to overturn it.

Metsger doesn't believe the group has enough financial support to be successful, saying, "We worked really hard to get consensus on this bill and business doesn't want to put money to overturn something that is a job creator."

Still, he asked union leaders to be aware of the recall effort and to be ready to take action should it make the ballot.

Garrett said that when passing the transportation package lawmakers specified 37 projects they wanted funded. Those projects are spread throughout the state.

However, the massive Columbia River Crossing (CRC) bridge project isn't among them. Garrett doesn't foresee construction on a bridge until 2012 — and that's only if everything falls into place as anticipated.

"It's a very complex, very noisy process that will take a very long time," he said.

Garrett said agencies involved in the CRC are working to secure \$750 to

\$800 million specific to the transit side, and \$400 million on the highway side. "And we're going to toll the bridge," he acknowledged. "Without tolls, you don't have a bridge. The math does not work."

Two large private projects that the building trades council supports again got push-back from Congressman David Wu. The projects are the proposed Warm Springs tribal casino in the Columbia Gorge, and the proposed liquefied natural gas terminal at Bradwood Landing on the Columbia River near Astoria. Construction trades unions already have a project labor agreement in place for the casino work, and would likely obtain a work agreement for the LNG terminal.

"If I thought it (LNG) was an economic savior and had no safety concerns, I'd be for it," Wu explained. "If I thought it was a really dangerous public health or public safety concern, I'd be against it. I don't see it as either one of those. There's legitimate positions on either side of the issue."

Wu said he is basing his opposition on a September 2008 measure in which Clatsop County residents voted by a 68 percent margin to prohibit gas pipelines from running through county land zoned for parks, recreation and open space.

"If you can change the folks' minds of Clatsop County, I would be happy to help build that facility," Wu said. "This

is an issue of community choice. I'm not locked in either way."

Later, with an edge in his voice, Wu told delegates that he will oppose the Gorge casino "to my dying day, because I think it is the wrong thing for Oregon. It is the wrong thing for the

crown jewel of our natural heritage."

The six-term congressman said there are plenty of construction projects that he does support and has supported.

"We can build at OHSU (Oregon Health and Science University), we can build at Pioneer

Courthouse Square, we can get the Columbia Crossing done," he said. "I stood up for community college projects all around the state when it was not popular to pass bond measures. I will continue to do that because I think it is the right thing to do."

"I told you, I'm happy to represent majority opinion on LNG. Please go out there and change folks' minds. And if you can't, then put it in your own backyard."

In other convention business, OS-BCTC named State Rep. Mike Schaufler, (D-Happy Valley), its "Legislator of the Year" and gave Sen. Metsger its "Oregon's Chief Job Builder Award." State Rep. Jules Kopel-Bailey, (D-Portland), received the Focused Energy Award.

Delegates passed three resolutions. One continues a \$2 per member per month assessment to fund Oregonians to Maintain Community Standards to promote union construction workers and lobby for and against legislation and ballot measures that protect or harm union workers.

Another resolutions prohibits a union local or joint council from affili-

'I will oppose the Gorge casino to my dying day, because I think it is the wrong thing for Oregon.'

U.S. REP. DAVID WU

Management raises at Multnomah County irks AFSCME Local 88

So much for shared sacrifice. In March, Multnomah County workers represented by AFSCME Local 88 agreed to freeze their own wages in order to prevent cuts in services and layoffs to their coworkers. Other unions followed suit. As part of the deal, county leaders agreed that management would get no raises either. But on July 1, two of Multnomah County chair Ted Wheeler's own staff got raises: chief of staff Tom Rinehart got an \$8,000-a-year raise, to \$93,000, and chief of operations Janna McClellan got a \$10,000-a-year raise, to \$120,000.


When word got out, union members — and other managers — were pretty unhappy.

Local 88 published an open letter to Wheeler, calling on him to retract the salary increases and apologize to workers.

"Local 88 members supported the freeze based on the understanding that this was a shared sacrifice," wrote Lo-

cal 88 President Becky Steward and Vice President Michael Hanna. "Your recent decision to approve raises for two of your staff members ... is a break in faith with Local 88 and all employees who took a wage freeze."

Steward told the Labor Press she doesn't regret making the deal — 80 to 90 jobs have been saved because of the wage freeze. Her only regret is that Wheeler didn't stick to it, and she's hoping he'll make it right.



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