

# Oregon AFL-CIO issues early political endorsements in State House, Senate

The Oregon AFL-CIO on Dec. 7 issued early endorsements in several legislative races that will take place in 2010.

In the Oregon Senate, COPE (Committee on Political Education) endorsed Democrats Peter Courtney, Richard Devlin, Suzanne Bonamici, Floyd Prozanski, Rod Monroe, Chip Shields, Brent Barton and Lee Beyer. Shields and Barton served in the House of Representatives last session, where they both earned "Silver Medal" status from the AFL-CIO. Barton, of Clackamas, is running for the District 26 seat being vacated by Rick Metzger, and Shields was appointed earlier this year to fill the unexpired term of Margaret Carter in North Portland's District 22. Beyer is running in District 6 in the Eu-

gene/Springfield area. He represented that area for 10 years, before being appointed in 2001 to the Public Utility Commission.

Early endorsements in the House went to Tina Kotek, Mike Schaufler, Brad Witt, Michael Dembrow, Dave Hunt, Paul Holvey, Tobias Read, Phil Barnhart, Jules Bailey, Peter Buckley, Chris Garrett, Terry Beyer, Judy Stiegler, Betty Komp, and Val Hoyle. Hoyle was appointed to Lane County's House District 14 seat earlier this year after Rep. Chris Edwards was appointed to fill the unexpired term of Sen. Vicki Walker, who left to take a state job.

AFL-CIO President Tom Chamberlain said more endorsements will be forthcoming, but in order for politicians

to be considered for an endorsement they must complete a questionnaire. Several incumbents with strong labor voting records in the past had yet to turn in their questionnaires prior to the Dec. 7 COPE meeting.

One, State Rep. Mitch Greenlick of Portland, informed Chamberlain that he would not be filling one out. A founding member of American Federation of Teachers Local 3571 at Portland State University, Greenlick, in an e-mail to Chamberlain, said his past voting record should be enough for an endorsement. Greenlick was one of 17 representatives to receive "Silver Medal" status from the Oregon AFL-CIO last session. The top tier is a Gold Medal.

"If my voting record for four terms does not provide you with sufficient information about my attitude towards working men and women and my loyalty to the cause, than I will have to suffer without your endorsement," Greenlick wrote.

A week later, Greenlick faxed Chamberlain a copy of an endorsement letter from Service Employees Local 503 noting that because of his past voting record, he wasn't required to fill out a questionnaire or be interviewed.

"I am only asking that you do the same," Greenlick wrote Chamberlain.

That sparked a somewhat lengthy debate among the COPE Board relating to the questionnaire stipulation.

In the end, a motion passed reiterating COPE's policy requiring a completed questionnaire in order to be considered for a political endorsement.

COPE will reconvene in March to consider additional endorsements, including the race for governor.

## Cook elected president of Letter Carriers Branch 82

Jim Cook has been elected president of the National Association of Letter Carriers Branch 82. He defeated Jim Baxter by a vote of 460-442 in balloting counted Dec. 7.

Current President L.C. Hansen did not seek re-election to the full-time post and is retiring.

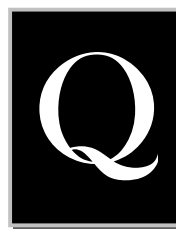
Cook served as Branch 82 president from 1988 to 1993, and from 1996 to 2001. In 1994 he ran unsuccessfully for safety director of the national union, and in 1999 he was a candidate for president of the Northwest Oregon Labor Council.

Cook stepped down as president of

Branch 82 to give himself greater freedom to be an activist for labor rights and other causes. He returned to his old carrier route, while remaining active as chair of the labor council's Labor History Committee, the Pacific Northwest Labor History Association, and in General Strike, a band that sings labor songs at picnics, picket lines and rallies. He retired from the U.S. Postal Service in 2007.

Joining Cook as top officers of NALC Branch 82 are Kevin Card, secretary-treasurer, and Jerry Fitzsimons, vice president.

Two-year terms begin Jan. 1, 2010.



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