

GENERAL ELECTION

Endorsements of the NORTHWEST OREGON LABOR COUNCIL

U.S. Senate:

RON WYDEN

Oregon Governor:

JOHN KITZHABER

Oregon Treasurer:

TED WHEELER

U.S. House of Representatives

First District: **DAVID WU**

Third District: **EARL BLUMENAUER**

Fifth District: **KURT SCHRADER**

Clackamas County

County Commissioner, Position 3: **ANN LININGER**

City of Gresham

City Council, Position 6: **KEN STINE**

Metro

Council President: **TOM HUGHES**

Multnomah County

County Commissioner, Dist. 2: **LORETTA SMITH**

Ballot Measure 26-114 : (*Creates a future alternative funding option for Multnomah County Library. There is no tax increase or financial impact*) **Support**

Ballot Measure 26-118 (*Five-Year Levy: Oregon Historical Society, library, museum educational programs.*) **Support**

City of Oregon City

City Commissioner, Position 1: **KATHY ROTH**

City of Portland

Ballot Measure 26-108 (*Voter-Owned Elections*) **Support**

Washington County

County Commissioner, District 2: **GREG MALINOWSKI**

County Commissioner, District 4: **GREG MECKLEM**

Oregon State Senate

Dist. 17 - **SUZANNE BONAMICI** Dist. 19 - **RICHARD DEVLIN**

Dist. 20 - **MARTHA SCHRADER** Dist. 22 - **CHIP SHIELDS**

Dist. 24 - **ROD MONROE** Dist. 26 - **BRENT BARTON**

OREGON HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Dist. 27 - **TOBIAS READ** Dist. 28 - **JEFF BARKER** Dist. 29 - **KATIE RILEY**

Dist. 30 - **DOUG AINGE** Dist. 31 - **BRAD WITT** Dist. 35 - **MARGARET DOHERTY** Dist. 36 -

MARY NOLAN Dist. 37 - **WILL RASMUSSEN** Dist. 38 - **CHRIS GARRETT** Dist. 40 - **DAVE**

HUNT Dist. 41 - **CAROLYN TOMEI** Dist. 42 - **JULES BAILEY**

Dist. 43 - **LEW FREDERICK** Dist. 44 - **TINA KOTEK** Dist. 45 - **MICHAEL DEMBROW** Dist.

46 - **BEN CANNON** Dist. 47 - **JEFFERSON SMITH** Dist. 48 - **MIKE SCHAUFLE** Dist. 49 -

NICK KAHL Dist. 50 - **GREG MATTHEWS** Dist. 51 - **CHERYL MYERS**

(Authorized and paid for by the Northwest Oregon Labor Council
1125 SE Madison St., Portland, OR 97214)

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Volume 111

Number 20

October 15, 2010

NORTHWEST

LABOR
PRESS

Portland

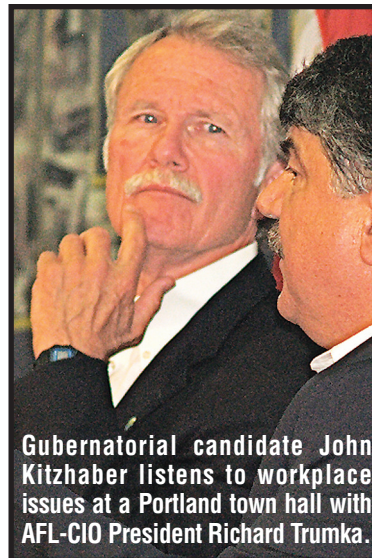
Labor pulling hard for Kitzhaber

How close is the Oregon governor's race this year? Close enough that the outcome could hinge on union member turnout.

The race is between Democrat John Kitzhaber, a former emergency room doctor and two-term Oregon governor, and Republican Chris Dudley, an investment advisor and former professional basketball player with the Portland Trailblazers.

Organized labor in Oregon is pulling hard for Kitzhaber, while Dudley lacks any union endorsements, even though he was once a union negotiator with the National Basketball Players Association. That's partly because on a range of issues, from jobs to health care reform to tax policy, Kitzhaber's platform is much closer to what the union movement has been advocating in Salem. It's also because Kitzhaber has sought union support, and Dudley has not.

Whereas Kitzhaber outlined his views in a half-hour-long interview with the Labor Press, the Dudley campaign failed to respond to an interview request.



Gubernatorial candidate John Kitzhaber listens to workplace issues at a Portland town hall with AFL-CIO President Richard Trumka.

ECONOMIC RECOVERY

Dudley's "Jobs First" recovery plan is centered on reducing the personal income tax rate on capital gains, and increasing tax deductions for businesses that make new capital investments. By contrast, Kitzhaber's main back-to-

work proposal would use state-issued energy conservation bonds to fund large-scale construction and energy upgrades to public schools.

"For the building trades, there's no question," said John Mohlis, executive director of Oregon State Building and Construction Trades Council (OS-BCTC). "[Kitzhaber] has a specific plan to weatherize, which would put our out-of-work members back to work," Mohlis said. Mohlis said building trades unions have had no contact with Dudley, but Kitzhaber, as a former governor, is a known quantity with whom they've had a good working relationship with in the past.

Kitzhaber twice during a televised debate declared the urgency of getting people in the trades back to work; unemployment in construction is as high as 30 percent.

Both candidates say they support building a new I-5 bridge over the Columbia River. Kitzhaber said one of the first calls he'll make, if elected, is to

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ATU balks at Tri-Met plan to impose contract

In the months-long contract wrangle between TriMet and Amalgamated Transit Union Local 757, a new wrinkle appeared Sept. 28. While Local 757 officers were away attending the convention of their international union, TriMet General Manager Neil McFarlane sent a letter to union members announcing that the transit agency will unilaterally freeze wages as of December and require employees to start paying part of their health insurance premiums as of Jan. 1 — without the agreement of, and over the objections of the union.

That's illegal, retorted Local 757 President Jon Hunt in a letter to members from the road.

"We believe they are misinterpreting the contract and binding arbitration law," Hunt told the Labor Press.

Oregon's public employee collective bargaining law does allow employers to

"impose" their final offer when bargaining breaks down, but a new law covering transit agencies requires that contracts be decided by an arbitrator if the two sides can't agree. The two sides declared impasse in July and were on the way to arbitration.

"We believe they have to keep things status quo until the mediator makes a decision," Hunt said.

Under the previous contract, which expired Nov. 30, 2009, members got annual cost-of-living increases of 3 to 5 percent based on the Consumer Price Index, and TriMet paid 100 percent of health insurance costs. Local 757 members can choose either a traditional indemnity plan with Regence Blue Cross Blue Shield, or membership in Kaiser Permanente, an HMO. Both are going up in cost Jan. 1. Regence will rise from \$2,235 to \$2,461 a month for family coverage, and from \$794 to \$873 a

month for employee-only coverage. Kaiser will go from \$1,559 to \$1,605 a month for family coverage, and from \$519 to \$535 a month for employee-only coverage. Thus, under McFarlane's directive, TriMet would require union members to pay out of pocket \$16 to \$226 a month to keep the same coverage. As an alternative, TriMet is proposing no-premium-increase coverage that contains deductibles and benefit reductions.

TriMet's health insurance costs are exceptionally high, Hunt said, but that has partly to do with the real chronic health issues that bus operators face. Like truck-driving, it's a sedentary job that comes with occupational hazards like constant vibration, which causes musculo-skeletal problems. And bus drivers have many more stress-related illnesses than other kinds of drivers be-

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