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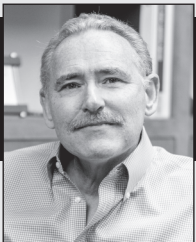
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Who's on our side?

By Tom Chamberlain Oregon AFL-CIO President



Governor Kate Brown: Guiding Oregon Forward

Oregon's economy is one of the fastest growing in the country. Our 3.9 percent unemployment rate is the lowest in Oregon history, and real wage growth is the highest since the 1980s. We have one of the highest minimum wages in the country. Ninety-four percent of Oregonians have access to health care. Construction is booming. In 2017 we passed the largest transportation investment package and K through 12 education budget in history. We are building more affordable and low-income housing to get families off the streets.

Oregon is on the move. We are a state leading the nation on many fronts. It seems to me that our elected leaders are playing a winning game and moving forward to address problems caused by a ballooning population (we are the sixth fastest growing state) coupled with an imbalanced tax system which favors corporate Oregon. Our unfair tax system is placing more and more responsibility to fund essential programs like health care and education on the backs of working people while not requiring giant corporations to pay their fair share. As my favorite coach would always say: "Never change a winning game, but always change a losing one."

Governor Kate Brown has guided our state forward for over three years. She's a big reason why Oregon is on the move, and we need her leadership for the next four years. Her opponent has torn a page out of Karl Rove's playbook: Attack your opponent's strengths, and attempt to turn them into a negative. For example, under Governor Brown's leadership, high school graduation rates jumped by almost 4 percent since 2015, with a goal of reaching 90 percent by 2024. While Governor Brown is making progress on her aggressive agenda improving Oregon's schools, her opponent has pledged no new taxes and would increase funding for education on the backs of teachers, education staff and all public employees by reducing wages and cutting pension benefits by up to 39 percent. He conveniently attacks our governor using cherry-picked statistics, without offering any truly viable solutions.

It is appalling to me when a millionaire doctor proposes cutting wages and benefits to balance the budget — and ignores the fact that Oregon has the lowest corporate tax rates in the United States - a solution in plain sight. Our governor has made significant investments to build thousands of housing units — to the tune of over \$300 million. That's coupled with a holistic approach to homelessness, drug treatment, job training and health care. Her opponent is proposing to rob \$50 million from low income Oregonians on Medicaid as a way to fund a renter assistance program.

Elections are about setting a vision and direction for our nation and our state. We have two candidates for governor with very different visions for the direction of Oregon. Governor Brown's vision is about fairness. It is about opportunity. It is about an Oregon where every citizen has access to affordable healthcare, quality education, a good job, and a roof over their heads. It is about a transportation system that meets the demands of the 21st century and allows folks to get to work and goods to get to market. Her vision is built on the understanding that to move forward requires bringing our tax system into balance and strategic investments for education and key public services. Her opponent has a very different vision for our state. His vision is an Oregon where the wealthy and powerful are protected at the cost of everybody else, where small gains for students and the homeless are paid for by robbing workers and the poor.

That's why Governor Kate Brown has my vote. I hope she has yours.

The Oregon AFL-CIO is a 138,000-member-strong federation of labor unions.