

The state fined Leiken \$2,250 for a violation of state ethics law in the case. Without the state law, campaign contributions could become simple personal bribes for elected officials.

State ethics law would prohibit an elected official from involvement in issues involving their consulting clients. A computer search of Springfield City Council minutes found instances where Leiken had recused himself for conflicts of interest involving his wife's bank business, but none for SWL consulting.

In an earlier Voter's Pamphlet, Leiken claimed he had a college degree. But when confronted about the claim at a recent commissioner candidate debate, Leiken admitted, "No, I do not."

Riggs-Henson partnered with businesses for three decades to help local workers find jobs for the Lane Workforce Partnership before retiring two years ago. She said she had up to 100 people in her caseload at a time, helping many of the displaced workers retrain. "I helped thousands go back to work."

Leiken has claimed success "creating jobs" in Springfield. "I'm proud to have attended the dozens of ribbon cuttings," Leiken said in a campaign flyer. But since Mayor Leiken was reelected unopposed in 2006, Springfield has lost 15,000 jobs and seen its unemployment rate double, according to regional employment data from the state.

Riggs-Henson said that in knocking on thousands of doors, she's seen the suffering that high unemployment has caused up close. "The pain is right now," she said. "Jobs is number one" in priorities, she said. "That financial security is so important."

Leiken has offered few details of how he would create jobs if elected.

Riggs-Henson said the state could create up to 50,000 jobs by encouraging government workers in Oregon to retire a few years earlier by offering affordable health insurance. The health insurance would be paid for by the state retirees but cheaper than individuals could obtain because the state could create a large group coverage pool, according to Riggs-Henson. "This should not cost the state or anyone else money," she said.

The high cost of individual insurance before Medicare kicks in at 65 is a major deterrent for early retirement, Riggs-Henson said of the proposal. "Even if it opened up 10,000 to 20,000 jobs statewide, wow!"

Besides jobs, another big challenge for the county is its budget. The county is facing the threat of a steep drop in revenue from federal timber payments.

Both Leiken and Riggs-Henson say they won't raise taxes to close the budget gap, and both call for increased public safety services but offer few specifics about how

they'd pay for it or what they might cut to balance the budget.

"You can't go back to the people right now for any taxes. They're just reeling," Riggs-Henson said.

As for what to cut, "you have to put it all on the table," she said, and figure out "what are the things that are absolutely essential."

Riggs-Henson said she doesn't aspire to run for Congress as Leiken did. She said she is not a career politician angling for a higher office, so she is not afraid to make tough decisions on the budget. "You have to be strong enough and not worried about political opportunities in the future," she said.

county, Riggs-Henson said she's worked closely with DeFazio and Sens. Ron Wyden and Jeff Merkley for years.

Riggs-Henson's campaign website lists endorsements from most local city, county, state Legislature and Congressional elected officials including DeFazio and former Springfield mayors Bill Morrisette and John Lively. Leiken's website does not list any endorsements.

Riggs-Henson said she would take a moderate, balanced approach to development, while Leiken supported a developer bill to push for more sprawl by splitting the Eugene-Springfield growth boundary. Leiken has complained that Lane County commissioners have questioned the Springfield growth boundary expansion plan he favors. Leiken has also supported reducing developer fees that were designed to reduce taxpayer subsidies of development.

Riggs-Henson said she appreciates Eugene's efforts to first examine if it can accommodate growth without sprawl. She said it's important to consider the increased taxpayer cost of extending police, fire, school and other services to pay for sprawl. But, she said, "I don't want to stop all growth."

She said she appreciates the jobs that gravel pits provide but, because of neighborhood and environmental concerns, "there's some places you're just not going to put a gravel pit." She said she would study pit proposals on a case by case basis, and listen to experts and read all the material before deciding. "I'm a readaholic," she said.

Leiken has touted decisions by PeaceHealth and companies like Sony to locate in Springfield.

But, Riggs-Henson said, "you can't count the jobs you're just taking from one city and moving into the other." With PeaceHealth's move from downtown Eugene to the edge of Springfield, "people in Eugene just have to travel farther."

Riggs-Henson said she helped find jobs for some of the Sony workers displaced when the compact disc maker closed after collecting millions in tax breaks. She said it's important for tax breaks to be linked to promises to hire locally and to tax break clawback provisions if the corporations

end up laying off workers. "There has to be something there that's for the people."

Riggs-Henson said, if elected, she wants to continue to reach out and listen to thousands of people on their doorsteps. "There really is an anger and distrust" in government, she said. "We have to start rebuilding that credibility one house at a time," Riggs-Henson said. "I'm doing it up close and personal because that's how you serve."

EW

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Riggs-Henson said she'd use her expertise of serving 10 years on the state PERS retirement board, four as board chair in the 1990s, to tackle the complex problem of the increasing employee retirement costs required in government contracts. "You have to understand that system to come up with a creative solution," she said.

While Leiken's Republican campaign for Congress butted heads with the Oregon Democratic Congressional delegation that's key to securing federal payments to the

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