

Candidates for Governor

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John Kitzhaber

your position?

A. The second part is Yes. And the first part is I take great exception to that and have already been speaking against it.

Q-4. What is your position regarding shifting services from state government to local government, i.e., HB 2004 (CSD reorganization) and closure of Dammasch?

A. As a general rule of thumb, my concern is primarily with the service itself and how do you structure a delivery system that gets the best services to the clients in the most efficient way and of highest quality.

The concern I have with Dammasch has to do with whether or not there are adequate facilities in the community to accommodate the people who are being moved out of the institution. I'm not opposed to deinstitutionalization; I've supported it in the past, but the caveat is you can't just dump people in the community without adequate resources and services.

Q-5. Do you believe public employees in Oregon should continue to have rights under Public Employees Collective Bargaining Act to unionize, collectively bargain with their employers, and to strike as currently provided by law?

A. Yes, I do. I would veto anything that erodes the abilities of public employees to operate under our existing collective bargaining statutes.

Q-6. Do you feel Oregon's employers have an obligation to provide an adequate retirement for their employees?

A. Yes.

Q-6A. Do you support the Public Employees Retirement System standard of adequacy which is that retirement benefits plus Social Security should equal 70-85% of an employee's pre-retirement income?

A. Yes, I do.

Q-6B. Will you oppose attempts to lower retirement benefits for new public employees through creation of a two-tiered retirement system?

A. I'm open to discussing that. I will not support anything that reduces retirement benefits for current retirees and current employees. I don't think we can do that legally, and I will resist that, and I will speak out against it. I am open to discussing the question of whether or not the PERS systems needs to be modified somewhat to deal with demographic changes and economic realities. I share this with you as a friend and not as someone who's engaged in public employee bashing.

I am very, very concerned that we are going to lose the ballot measure on the 6% pickup. It's a mean-spirited attack on public employees that doesn't save the system any money; it amounts to just simply a pay reduction. We have to have a proactive strategy and I will carry the ball on that, but you have to be signed up for it where we appear to be recognizing that we are part of the solution.

Q-7. What is your position on the Tiernan Initiative, and will you actively oppose it, support it, or be neutral?

A. I will be very active in opposing that.

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Denny Smith

We're not going to get any more revenue so we've got to learn to live with what we have to get back credibility in state government.

Q-3A. What is your position on the Fair Compensation Act? Will you actively campaign on your position?

A. Let me just say that philosophically I maybe agree with the taxpayer, I agree with what they're trying to do here. The Fair Compensation Act is legislation I guess I'll probably be in favor of because I think that it points out the problems.

Q-4. What is your position regarding shifting services from state government to local government, i.e., HB 2004 (CSD reorganization) and closure of Dammasch?

A. One of the problems that we have is a situation where the average voter, the average constituent in this state, thinks that he doesn't have user-friendly government. We're going to have to go to a decentralized government. We can do a better job, but it might require that you go down, you know, spread out more.

Q-5. Do you believe public employees in Oregon should continue to have rights under Public Employees Collective Bargaining Act to unionize, collectively bargain with their employers, and to strike as currently provided by law?

A. I don't think you ought to be able to strike. I really have a problem with that. I'll tell you, I'm an AFL-CIO card carrier. I know there is a place for unions. But I also know that if you have good communication, if you are working together, there is no reason for a strike. I understand that you should be able to organize and should be able to deal with your employer, but I don't think that's where it should be able to be done.

Q-6. Do you feel Oregon's employers have an obligation to provide an adequate retirement for their employees?

A. I absolutely do, but nobody has a defined benefit program except state employees at this time. I don't think you are going to be able to continue on that basis. We're in a competitive world in the private sector and that's exactly where the new reality is putting public employees.

Q-6A. Do you support the Public Employees Retirement System standard of adequacy which is that retirement benefits plus Social Security should equal 70-85% of an employee's pre-retirement income?

A. I don't think you can guarantee anything like that. It would be nice if we all could have that standard but the economic realities are that competition between public and private, between this country and others is going to force us into a position where we have to do what we can economically and I think that's what Measure 5 told us.

Q-6B. Will you oppose attempts to lower retirement benefits for new public employees through creation of a two-tiered retirement system?

A. If I'm the Chief Executive Officer of this state, I am in fact going to try to organize for state employees a new system, not changing it for those of you who are there now, but we are going to have to go as other industries have had to go to what is referred to as a two-tiered system. You're going to have to meet the competition even when it means going backwards which is what's happening in the private sector.

Q-7. What is your position on the Tiernan Initiative, and will you actively oppose it, support it, or be neutral?

A. I think with the Tiernan initiative you're seeing the frustration that's out and alive and well with the taxpayer. I think it will get signatures, I think it will pass and I think

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Berkman refuses OPEU/CAPE interview invitation

As was, John Kitzhaber and Denny Smith, Craig Berkman, a Republican candidate for Governor, was invited to be interviewed by OPEU's CAPE.

Berkman chose not to be interviewed by the CAPE committee. He has, however, given some indication of what he thinks about public employees. The following is a script from a radio spot that has run statewide in February:

Craig Berkman: Not too many years ago, most of us thought Oregon was pretty well managed.

Announcer: That's Craig Berkman and he's running for Governor. Raised on Portland's east side, Craig Berkman was educated in our public schools, worked his way

through college, and became a successful businessman. Craig Berkman.

Berkman: Today Oregon's government isn't working. For instance, with a projected billion dollar shortfall staring us in the face, you'd think elected leaders would be doing everything possible to cut spending. But apparently they don't get it. Just after Oregonians rejected a sales tax, the Salem crowd gave many state employees more than was needed to cover their health benefits and they will get to pocket the difference. A back door pay raise with no hearings, no votes, no public discussion.

Announcer: Things will change when Craig Berkman's Governor.

Berkman: I'll give Oregonians something they haven't had for a while — a state government that really works.

Announcer: Craig Berkman for Governor. Making Oregon work again.