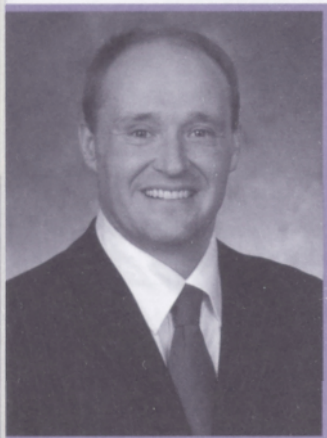


A handful of legislators who often oppose the interests of SEIU members and working Oregonians bucked leaders to vote with us on issues of importance in 2009. How would you thank them? That's not just a hypothetical question. All candidate interviews are open to rank-and-file members. You just have to show up to vote. How would you handle it when these legislators came to us seeking our support? And how would you deal with someone who normally sides with us but wavers or even abandons working families at a crucial point? Here are two interesting examples drawn straight from the 2009 legislative session.



First consider Representative Greg Smith (R-Heppner)

Smith has a pretty sorry record on our issues.

In 2007, he earned a grade of C on Workers' Rights, and straight F's on Health Care, Economic Fairness, and Quality Public Services. **But this session, Smith changed course on several key issues.** He was pretty clear that investment in public services and long-term care was going to be the only thing that would give rural Oregonians a fighting chance to save their economy. He was open to support tax increases on the wealthy. He was politically savvy enough to seek support for jobs in his district as a reward for voting for tax increases.

Anti-public services forces in the Republican Party have vowed to end his political career because he voted to raise taxes. One of the national leaders of these groups, Grover Norquist, said that Republicans who vote for tax increases are like "Rats' heads in Coca-Cola bottles. They ruin the brand name." The tax increase in question was on the richest Oregon families who take earn more than \$250,000 a year, or individuals earning half that. His vote helped fund vital services that our members provide and Oregonians rely on, not only in his eastern Oregon district, but also throughout the state.

Do we "grade on the curve" and reward Smith for voting with us at some key moments even though his record as a whole was not good? In the past, some Republicans who ran with our support were attacked for their connection to public employees. Do we decide not to support him because his overall record is not very good? If we refuse to support him, how do we develop relationships with conservative legislators who might vote with us on some key issues? If we do support him, how do we excuse his votes that cost many members their jobs?