



# Washington Hot Line

by Congressman Ron Wyden

It's not officially confirmed yet, but it appears that our economy is showing signs of crawling back to its feet. Factory orders were up again last month; the unemployment rate remained steady throughout the country, and it actually declined slightly in Oregon.

These "trends," however, provide little solace to the worker still unemployed, and we must make sure that the essential needs of the long-term unemployed are met.

In addition, we need to examine exactly how the recession has affected Oregon and how we can rebuild our economy by learning from the past. In the Congress, I have taken a three-pronged approach to addressing the needs of expanding Oregon's economy.

The first leg of this approach is to shore up Oregon's mainstay industries—timber and housing. I have introduced legislation to clarify rules that will encourage investment of private pension funds in housing. This initiative will provide more money, at lower interest rates, for housing, which will help put millworkers and builders back to work.

Yet, the primary lesson we have learned from this recession is that Oregon cannot afford to depend solely on timber and housing. These industries are slowed to a crawl when there is even a slight downturn in the economy. To heal this addiction, Oregon must look for ways to diversify its economy so we will be able to hold our own next time the economy decides to take a dive.

One prime prospect for Oregon to diversify its economy is in the area of exports. To help us achieve this

goal, I have introduced legislation that will authorize a new lock at the Bonneville Dam. A new lock is needed to eliminate current and future bottlenecks at the dam and expand our ability to tap the export markets of the Pacific Rim countries. It is estimated this new lock will generate \$500 million in new private investment, creating new jobs and opportunities throughout the state.

The third leg of my three-pronged approach to enhancement of Oregon's economy is a bill I introduced this week to clarify anti-trust laws which discourage joint research and development by American high technology firms. This legislation is needed to allow these firms to compete with their overseas counterparts so that they can expand and create new jobs.

America's long-standing leadership in the fast-growing electronics and high technology industries is today being challenged as never before by competition from abroad. To put it simply, the Japanese, the Western Europeans and others are rapidly closing in on us. If we want to realize the potential these industries hold for Oregon and for America, we must bolster their ability to compete in the international marketplace.

For too long there has been uncertainty among high technology companies over where the anti-trust line is drawn. My bill clarifies these anti-trust provisions so that high tech companies can pool their resources to conduct research and development ventures.

A good example of where our antitrust laws have caused unnecessary

and expensive problems for the private sector is when the federal government told the U.S. auto industry to reduce exhaust emissions. Each company embarked—separately—on a massive and expensive effort to find a way to reduce emissions. After many months—and many millions of dollars—a commercially feasible catalytic converter was developed.

In my mind, there was absolutely no sound reason why the automobile industry could not have pooled their resources on this research. The catalytic converter could have been developed faster and at a much lower cost. The only reason they didn't get together is because our antitrust laws said they couldn't.

We can all agree that our antitrust laws have played a key role in ensuring economic justice and a healthy level of business competition, and I would be the last person to advocate a major retreat from the cherished principle of free and open competition.

But I also believe that these laws, from time to time, need to be fine-tuned to reflect changes in the way our economy operates and the way the global economy operates.

What we are concerned about is economic survival in an increasingly technical and increasingly competitive world.

For Oregon to survive, it must shore up the industries it has historically depended on, as well as look for expanding opportunities for new industries that will create new jobs. That's the only way we can ensure job security for the long-haul, and avoid being at the mercy of any blip on the economic radar.

## Welfare change proposed

Oregon welfare policy forces many unemployed men to leave their families so their wives and children can qualify for public assistance. House Bill 2483 would remedy this situation.

The State's Adult and Family Services Division (AFS) provides public assistance for single-parent families when the parent is unemployed but not to two-parent unemployed families. Although 21 states currently provide welfare for two-parent unemployed families, using federal matching funds, Oregon eliminated its program in 1979.

Oregon had an unemployment rate of 11.5 (seasonally adjusted) in February; approximately 180,000 Oregonians are out of work; less than half are drawing unemployment compensation. These families are eligible only for "emergency assistance" from AFS, one or two months rent. Private non-profit agencies that provide emergency food, fuel and rent assistance do not have the resources to provide continuing aid to large numbers of families.

The only option to many families is temporary separation to make the wife and children eligible for Aid to

Families with Dependent Children (AFDC). The long-range effects of these separations—many of which will result in permanent separations—cannot be measured at this time. However, it is contrary to the philosophy behind public assistance programs, which is to provide financial help in time of emergency to enable the family to survive.

Of the 73,450 ADC recipients in December, 65 percent were children; 16 percent were single parents caring for children under 3; five percent were employed and 11 percent were seeking employment. The average stay on ADC is 15 months and 82 percent of the ADC families have one or two children.

Extending benefits to 2-parent families would cost the State's general fund approximately \$25,639,870 for maintenance and medical benefits for approximately 3,750 families. The federal government would pay the remaining \$34,154,600.

A family of three currently receives a cash grant of \$358 for shelter, utilities, clothing, transportation and all other needs, and food stamps.

## Women/education meet topic

Women and education will be the subject of a second forum on women's issues to be held Saturday, March 19, in Portland.

The series of four forums is being sponsored by Oregon Congressman Ron Wyden, and the public is encouraged to attend.

The education forum will be held from 9 a.m. to 12 noon in the cafeteria of the Bonneville Power Administration Building, 1002 NE Holladay Street. Panel members, who will include experts in the field of education, will discuss the role of education for women, how today's educational system responds to women, women's studies programs and financial aid. Wyden will serve as panel moderator.

The remaining two forums, to be held in April and May, will address family issues and older women's issues respectively. The first forum, held in February, covered economic issues facing women.

For more information, contact Merrie Buel at 231-2300.

## Street Beat

by Lanita Duke and Richard Brown

This week Portland's Black United Front called for a statewide boycott of 7-Up and other products of the Portland Bottling Company. The Street Beat team asked Portlanders, "How do you feel about the boycott of 7-Up?"



Pat Carlson  
Housewife/Cashier

The boycott seems like a good idea if it would work. But I do not think that it does work all that well. It doesn't hurt to try. My family supports the boycott indirectly because we stopped drinking pop years ago.



Nancy Santangelo  
Housewife

I think the boycott is ironic because the people who are employed by 7-Up on national T.V. are very dark.



Ted Harder  
Retired

I'm in favor of the boycott. There should be no difference in color when you talk about hiring. Why are we importing people from different parts of the world when we have able-bodied men and women right next door?



Ron Williams  
Minister

I really haven't given the matter much thought. The reasons behind the boycott are good. 7-Up takes so much from this community—they should give something back. But I don't know if a boycott is the right tactic to use to express our dissatisfaction with the Portland Bottling Company.



Elaine Patton  
Teacher

I plan to support it. There are lots of blacks who drink 7-Up and I think they should hire at least some of them.



Leah Andrus  
Unemployed

I'm going to stop drinking 7-Up because of the reasons for the boycott. A lot more Portlanders need jobs than hiring outside the country. I need a job.

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