

Gov. Kitzhaber Hosts New NAACP Chair Myrlie Evers-Williams



Michael Grice and his mother, Arlene.



Evonne Martinez and NAACP Chair Myrlie Evers-Williams.

Photos by Chuck Washington



Faye Burch (from left), Joyce Washington and Harold Williams.



State Rep. Margaret Carter, D-Portland, and State Treasurer Jim Hill.



Portland Police Chief Charles Moose and Jaki Walker.

The Portland Observer recognizes Secretaries Day, April 27th.

Oregon Looks To Railroads

Future growth of Oregon's freight railroad system is outlined in a new Oregon Rail Freight Plan by the Oregon Transportation Department.

The plan explains the current use of the system and outlines changes that have occurred during the past five years, said Ed Immel, rail planner for the department.

"It also looks at what can be expected in rail traffic growth for the next five years," Immel said.

Major changes have taken place in the ownership of the rail network in Oregon. The big three railroads, Southern Pacific, Union Pacific and Burlington Northern - still control the majority of the mainline rail system and carry most traffic.

Over the past five years, however, the major rail companies have sold off their less profitable branch line routes, or about 40 percent of the total rail miles in Oregon. These routes have become a network of independently owned shortline railroad companies that directly serve 50 percent of Oregon's fail freight shippers, Immel said.

The plan outlines \$5 million in immediate track rehabilitation needs and addition \$17 million in needed long-term improvements.



Cobblestones, brick and light rail track are appearing along Southwest Yamhill as part of the Westside Max project. The downtown stretch from 11th to 17th with rebuilt street, sidewalk and trackbed is expected to be complete in May. Then work will then move to Southwest Morrison.

(Photo by Tim Jewett)

The Anti-Worker, No Job, Low Pay Legislature

House & Senate Leaders Show Bias Against Workers, Families

Oregonians concerned about jobs and families have noticed a disturbing bias against Oregon families and workers demonstrated by the 1995 legislature. The anti-worker, anti-family legislative agenda of the Republican leadership is comprehensive:

Attack Workers' Rights (SB 369) - Overhauls Oregon's workers' compensation system to improve profits for insurance companies by: reducing employees' rights to file claims, limiting employees' rights to fair hearings, further limiting employees' rights to choose their doctor.

Limit Legal System (SB 385, SB 482) - Limits access to courts for low income and middle income Oregonians by requiring the loser in civil

suits to pay the winner's court costs and by eliminating punitive damages. The legislation would make it extremely difficult for most Oregonians to have their day in court.

Undermine Collective Bargaining (SB 750) - Takes away the safety net that now protects the rights and benefits of public workers: excludes large numbers of public workers from unions. Items like health benefits, discipline and discharge, and sick leave would not be included in bargaining. If an impasse lasts more than a month, employers would be allowed to impose their final offer. Negotiated contracts could be changed by the legislature or by initiative.

Give Back Corporate Kicker - Returns the corporate kicker (\$152

million) to corporate tax payers, most of whom are multi-state corporations and based out state. The lion's share of Oregon businesses are small or family-owned companies that do not pay significant corporate taxes and would not benefit from the refund.

Give New Corporate Tax Break (SB 323) - This bill gives a tax cut to many Oregon businesses. Allows them to defer income taxes on money made from the sale of certain business assets. People making more than \$100,000 per year will see the biggest benefit from this bill. Working families who are not business owners will not see a drop in their taxes.

• A full-time minimum wage worker earns \$9,360 a year - the poverty level for a family of four is \$15,141.

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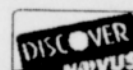
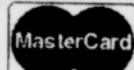
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