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Letters

To the Editor:

We have recently come into possession of emails and correspondence definitely not intended for the general public. Guess what? We are going to share them with you. There appears to be a lot of missing data but we are still looking.

As you are most likely aware, the old CHD (Columbia Health District) board, consisting of Jay Tappan, Gary Heidi, Diane Husten, Lisa Galovich and Laura Tomanka have joined with County Commissioners Tony Hyde, Earl Fisher and Henry Heimuller to bamboozle you out of millions of dollars of tax money which should have been refunded to the special district taxpayers after the passage of measure 5-209 and, if not under that measure, than under the dissolution measure.

Please make a note of this email address: nohospitaltax.

info. Everything we are about to tell you can be proven if you log on to this website. The site should contain all this information by February 1.

First, back in 2009, Jana Fussell of the Certificate of Need department in Salem cautioned the board and their attorneys that it would not be prudent to develop the Millard Road property until a Certificate of Need (CoN) was obtained from the state. They were denied permits by the county land use department for site preparation. They were also cautioned by one of their consultant firms that this development would not be advisable. They did so anyway – to the tune of over 1.5 million dollars. They were encouraged to proceed with the land development by one of their attorneys, Peter Soloff, who thus far has collected over \$350,000 in attorney fees from your taxes.

His advise to the board was that Ms. Fussell's suggestion was just a "matter of semantics".

Second, although the commissioners denied meeting behind closed doors with the CHD in order to vanquish all the money and property before the newly elected CHD took office in July 2011, reference is continually made to meetings with the commissioners and their county counsel, Sarah Hanson Tyson. Contrary to what we were told by the commissioners of their not having made up their minds about transferring public health to the county, they were working to do so way back in March 2011.

Now over \$500,000 of your tax dollars have been transferred to a private foundation which is overseen by the same group of people who took your money in the first place. They have a new leader in Dan Gar-

rison who has also been hired by the county to do accounting for them. This just does not look good no matter what kind of spin they try to put on it.

The balance of the money remaining from the nearly one million dollars, which was still in place after measure 5-209, has been transferred to the county commissioners' jurisdiction. Now they are using those funds to pay for an attorney to fight

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Policy on Letters

The INDEPENDENT will not publish letters with personal attacks on private citizens. Preference will be given to brief letters, 300 words or less.

All letters must be signed and include a verifiable address or phone number.

Salem Scene

By Representative Brad Witt
Oregon District 31



I'm sure this newsletter could be filled with stories about the weather in District 31: wind, snow and rain and plenty of it! The same was occurring in Salem as the Legislature met for three days of hearings. More than 4 inches of rain fell here in two days. Consequently, some of the inmates at the state prison were filling and placing sandbags to protect a number of state office buildings, particularly those with un-

derground parking facilities. The Capitol is safe, but some buildings border Mill Creek, which was close to overflowing its banks. Never a dull moment...

And never a dull moment in my Veterans Affairs Committee! We listened to testimony on four Legislative Concepts (LCs), which is our description for legislation in draft form. The Committee approved these Concepts and they will now become bills for consideration by the whole body in February. Here, briefly, is an overview of what they would accomplish:

LC 4 – This will become a Memorial to Congress urging them to add Chiropractic care to the Federal "All Veterans Act."

LC 194 – Directs the Oregon State Lottery Commission to establish lottery games to benefit veterans' education and economic development, and continuously appropriates money to Dept. of Veterans' Affairs for education training and job creation.

LC 195 – Requires Commissioner of Bureau of Labor and Industries to inform Director of Veterans' Affairs when a veteran has filed a civil rights complaint. (Codifies current practice)

LC 204 – Requires certain professional licensing agencies to accept applicant's military training or experience as substitute for education or experience requirement for licensure. This is a companion to HB 275, passed last session, that allows some training and experience to qualify for community college credit.

Bills Taking Effect January 1, 2012. A lot of new laws went into effect with the New Year. This is not a complete list by any means, but there may be a few things here that will interest you and/or affect you or someone you know:

HB 3207 – Requires public employers to interview each veter-

an who applies for a civil service position, and who has obtained through military education or experience, skills that substantially relate to the civil service position.

SB 275 – Requires Board of Education of Community College District to develop standards for community college credit for education/training obtained in the Armed Services.

HB 2694 – Allows the court to extend the eviction time beyond 30 days for the elderly and disabled upon proof of need.

SB 292 – Free Means Free! Prohibits imposing financial obligation on consumer who accepts free offer unless offer complies with disclosure and billing information requirements.

SB 487 – Protects consumers from becoming trapped in costly cyclical automatic contract renewals.

HB 2463 – Requires computer technicians and photo processors to report evidence of child pornography.

HB 3075 – Requires the installation of ignition interlock device as a condition of diversion agreement.

HB 3085 – Requires health care facility to report the presence of a controlled substance in the blood of a patient who was operating a vehicle involved in an accident.

SB 433 – Expands eligibility for medical assistance for low-income and uninsured women diagnosed with breast or cervical cancer.

Finally, I want you to know that my colleagues and I are focusing on the upcoming Session in February, particularly with reference to balancing the budget, spurring job creation and expanding access to capital for Oregon's small businesses.

Many middle class Oregonians are still suffering because of this recession. In addition to the hardships of unemployment, they're struggling with foreclosure and are worried about cuts to services they count on. We know that we must protect education by preventing further teacher layoffs, increased class sizes and shortened school years.

We need to provide homeowners the protection that they deserve by enacting foreclosure reforms and increased oversight of insurance companies. With this in mind, I have introduced a bill to assist those who are facing foreclosure.

I look forward to working for you and with you in this upcoming session, and welcome any and all comments and concerns at any time. Thank you for taking the time to read my newsletter.