



Dr. Alan Bates

Oregon Senate Majority Whip

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House Calls Newsletter with Senator Alan Bates

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Greetings!

Welcome back and thank you for subscribing to House Calls, my electronic newsletter. In this issue I wanted to address several upcoming bills I have been working on and that will be heard in committees soon. Also, check out the new section in the newsletter, which includes helpful links to websites related to constituent issues.

Town Hall Recap

Thank you to everyone who attended the town hall meetings in Ashland and Medford this past week. It was a pleasure to see everyone and discuss the issues with you. I have attached news articles written by the *Ashland Daily Tidings* and the *Medford Mail Tribune*.

[Bates: Budget crisis should be Salem's top priority](#)
Medford Mail Tribune



[Bates discusses dire budget shortfall](#)

Ashland Daily Tidings



Joint Ways & Means on the Road

Last Friday, cut lists for state agencies were made public on the legislative fiscal office's [website](#). These cuts detail the impact a 30% budget cut would have on each agency. Cuts of this magnitude will impact every state agency, every service that Oregonians rely on and the very nature of how the state does its business. While the current revenue forecast shows the state down \$3.1 billion, these cuts were made in proportion to a shortfall of \$4.4 billion, in anticipation of the May 15th forecast. There is a detailed plan, as we move forward, that will give us time to examine our options before releasing a final budget. We will have to make tough choices in the coming months, but we will pull through this crisis with strong leadership.

The Joint Ways & Means Committee is traveling across the state to get feedback from Oregonians about possible cuts. We will be relying on public input to better understand how cuts like these would impact Oregonians' daily lives. The

dates for the Ways & Means tour are set, but times and locations are to be determined:

Monday, April 20 - Lincoln City
Tuesday, April 21 - Portland
Thursday, April 23 - Salem
Wednesday, April 29 - Bend
Thursday, April 30 - Ashland
Friday, May 1 - Eugene

Red-Light Camera Op-Ed Excerpt from the Mail Tribune

On March 7, the Mail Tribune printed an article by Chris Conrad, "[A stoplight on traffic cameras?](#)" While the article certainly gained a lot of attention, it fell short in describing the bill that is actually before your legislative body, and why I chose to be a chief co-sponsor. I make this distinction because I would not have sponsored HB 2701 if its passage would end Medford's photo red-light program, nor is that the purpose of the bill. Further, the Medford Police Department operates a stellar program, and I would support an expansion of its efforts.

HB 2701 addresses two basic concerns to protect you, the consumer:

First, the bill would prohibit cities that use red-light and photo-radar equipment from compensating manufacturers and vendors of red-light and photo-radar equipment based on the number of citations issued or on a percentage of monies collected from payment of fines. Six U.S. cities (Dallas and Lubbock, Texas; Union City, Calif.; Nashville and Chattanooga, Tenn.; and Springfield, Mo.) have been found guilty of shortening the yellow-light cycles on intersections equipped with cameras meant to catch red-light runners. According to the National Motorists Association, when Virginia officials added 1.5 seconds to the yellow light at an intersection with red light cameras, the number of violations went down 94 percent.

Second, the bill would prohibit any city that uses red-light and photo-radar equipment from collecting more than 5 percent of its annual budget from the citations issued using it. Tim George, deputy chief of the Medford Police Department, is quoted in the article as saying "We don't come anywhere close to generating 5 percent of our budget from the red-light cameras or the two speed vans." It is my understanding that the most recent statewide average for

revenue generated from traffic citations is 3 percent; however, there is no cap in place. HB 2701 seeks to remedy this incentive: Public safety should be our goal, not generating revenue.

To read the full text of Sen. Bates' Op-Ed piece [click here](#).

To read the full text of HB2701 [click here](#).

Upcoming Bills

HB 2726 - Menu Labeling

This would require chain restaurants to make nutritional information regarding menu items available to customers. In order to make healthy choices about what they eat, people must have access to information about food that they are ordering.

SB 355 - Prescription Management Program

Senate Bill 355 creates a prescription monitoring program. This bill is aimed at increasing patient safety and care. It provides practitioners and pharmacists with much-needed information about patients who may be treated by several physicians. Both evaluation and treatment are enhanced when information about controlled substances is readily available to all practitioners. They will be more confident treating pain for those who need relief, better equipped to prevent harmful drug interactions and over-prescription, and less likely to be scammed by those seeking controlled substances for illicit purposes. The prescription database will only contain information about prescriptions that are classified as controlled substances - narcotics that are highly addictive, commonly abused and often illicitly sold. Data about all prescriptions are already stored within individual pharmacy and private insurance company computer systems; SB 355 consolidates that information so that practitioners may access it to ensure proper patient care.

Facts to consider:

- Prescription drugs are the fastest growing drug of abuse among teens.
- Between 2002 and 2003, nonmedical use of pain relievers increased from 29.6 million to 31.2 million. (*National Survey on Drug Use and Health*)
- States without Prescription Monitoring Programs are targeted by drug abusers and drug dealers

who seek prescriptions for abuse and resale.

SB 845 - Limiting gifts from pharmaceutical companies

This will prohibit pharmaceutical manufacturing companies from providing certain gifts in conjunction with the marketing of prescription drugs. One of my top priorities this session is to curb the skyrocketing costs of health care. This bill is intended to limit some of the unnecessary marketing expenses in the pharmaceutical industry so that those savings may be passed on to consumers.

SCR 10 - In memoriam: Dr. Robert Bacon (1918-2009)

I join my colleagues, Senator Betsy Johnson and Senator Margaret Carter in honoring Dr. Robert Bacon's legacy. Dr. Bacon was responsible for making our Oregon beaches open for all. In 1967 Gov. McCall signed the Oregon Beach Bill culminating the efforts of Dr. Bacon to keep access to our beautiful beaches a treasure for future generations. Dr. Bacon passed away this past January.

Helpful Links

The Federal Stimulus Plan: American Recovery and Reinvestment Act

The ARRA contains millions of dollars of grants for which individuals, companies, cities, counties and state agencies can apply for. To see their directory on what grants are available, who can apply for them, and how to submit applications visit their website.

http://wyden.senate.gov/newsroom/arra_guide.pdf

Southern Oregon University, Small Business Development Center

SOU SBDC provides business assistance services to small business owners within Jackson County.

<http://www.bizcenter.org>

Oregon Scam Alert Network

If you would like to be notified of emerging scams, fraud and other consumer threats as they arise, please join the Oregon Scam Alert Network. We will keep you updated about important consumer information to educate and protect your friends, family, coworkers and anyone else before they fall victim to scams and fraud.

<http://www.doj.state.or.us/finfraud/scamalertnetwork.shtml>

National Do Not Call Registry

The National Do Not Call Registry gives you a choice about whether to receive telemarketing calls at home. Most telemarketers should not call your number once it has been on the registry for 31 days. If they do, you can file a complaint at this Website. You can register your home or mobile phone for free.

<https://www.donotcall.gov/> or call 1-888-382-1222

OSU Extension Regional Food Growing Tips

A practical guide to gardening in Oregon featuring vegetable varieties, planting dates, insect control, soil preparation, and more.

<http://extension.oregonstate.edu/catalog/html/grow/grow/>

Listening to Our Community

It is only with your input that I can continue to advocate for the needs of our communities. Please do not hesitate to contact my office with any questions, comments, or requests for assistance. As always, my staff and I are eager to help in any way we can.

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In closing, I would like to reiterate how difficult it has been to make some of these decisions. With one hand we cut programs and services, and with the other we must generate necessary revenue. I want to assure you that I am gathering facts and listening to alternative possibilities, and

then weighing what I believe is in the best interest of Oregon and Oregonians to carry us through these unusual economic times.

In health,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Alan Bates". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Alan" and the last name "Bates" clearly distinguishable.

Dr. Alan Bates