From: salem_update-bounces@lists.oregonstate.edu on behalf of Mills, Jock
To: CAS DeanStaff; CAS Unit Leaders; Salem Update Listserv
Subject: [Salem Update] The Legislature organizes for 2009 legislativesession
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In the two weeks following the November 4th election, both the House and Senate have taken a number of steps to organize for what promises to be a difficult legislative session.

In the Senate, where Democrats hold an 18-12 majority, they have selected Sen. Peter Courtney (D-Salem) to continue to lead the chamber as Senate President, a post he has held since 2003, when the Chamber was evenly split 15-15. Sen. Rick Metsger (D-Mt. Hood) was selected to serve as Senate President *Pro Tempore*. (The President *Pro Tem* serves as the presiding officer when the Senate President is otherwise engaged.) Under Senate rules, both Courtney and Metsger must receive 16 votes each from the full Senate to be elected. That vote will occur when the Senate convenes on Monday, January 12, 2009. Sen. Richard Devlin (D-Tualatin) was elected to continue as the Senate majority leader.

Next, the Senate leadership must agree on committee chairs and divvy the members among a dozen or so legislative committees. Most attention is on who will replace Sen. Kurt Schrader (D-Canby) as Co-Chair of the Joint Ways and Means Committee which is charged with writing the state's budget. With Schrader departing to represent Oregon's 5th Congressional seat in Washington, DC, and changes taking place on the House side, the Committee will likely be under the direction of two new co-chairs.

Most Capitol insiders expect the Senate co-chair to be Margaret Carter (D-Portland). Carter has previously served on the Ways and Means Committee and is vacating her current position of President *Pro Tem*. It's the Senate's turn to chair the Ways and Means Subcommittee on Education -- which considers the higher education budget, along with the budgets for K-12 and community colleges. The name most frequently surfaced in conversations over the interim is Sen. Rod Monroe (D-Multnomah County). Monroe has served on the board of directors for the Mt. Hood Community College, Metro, and David Douglas School Board. His service in the legislature dates back to 1976 when he was first elected to the Oregon House.

Meanwhile, back in the House, Democrats have selected Majority Leader Dave Hunt (D-Milwaukie) as Speaker, succeeding Jeff Merkley who is headed to Washington, DC as Oregon's new junior Senator. Democrats also selected Rep. Arnie Roblan (D-Coos Bay) to serve as Speaker *Pro Tem*. (As in the Senate, the full House chamber must elect these positions, so the actual vote will not occur until January 12 when the legislature convenes.)

Rep. Mary Nolan (D-Portland) will serve as the House Majority Leader, vacating the post she held last session as House Co-Chair of Ways and Means. Two of the number of names that have surfaced as likely Democrats to lead the joint budget

writing two committee, include Rep. David Edwards (D-Hillsboro) and Nancy Nathanson (D-Eugene). Both Edwards and Nathanson served last session on the Ways and Means Committee as freshmen.

Some pundits have observed that with an increase from 31 to 36 members, the House Democratic caucus may be more difficult to manage. While the margin gives the Democrats the ability on a party line vote to approve revenue measures and tap into the two reserve funds under the legislature's control, a significant number of the nine Democrats who have entered the House over the last two election cycles represent middle-of-the road constituents who may not be receptive to tax increases.

House Republicans have re-elected Rep. Bruce Hanna (R-Grants Pass) to serve as their caucus leader.

Tomorrow, I hope to provide concise information regarding the state's revenue forecast which is scheduled to be presented to a joint session of the House and Senate Revenue Committees tomorrow morning.

Jock

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