



**RON MAURER
OREGON HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
HOUSE DISTRICT 3**

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
June 13, 2008

CONTACT: Allison Mac Mullin
(541) 474-5456

**REP. MAURER ANNOUNCES PLAN TO EXPAND ACCESS TO
HEALTH, DENTAL CARE**

Health Access Oregon Calls for 'Fair Share' Contribution from State Employees

SALEM-- Rep. Ron Maurer (R-Grants Pass) today announced **Health Access Oregon**, his plan to expand health and dental care access to uninsured Oregonians and those without adequate primary care and preventative services. Health Access Oregon will be introduced during the 2009 regular session.

“Oregon needs to focus its limited healthcare resources where they are going to do the most good for the most people, and this means widening portals of entry to primary care and preventive services,” Rep. Maurer said. “A major component of health reform is changing our health delivery system. School based health clinics and community health centers are a great place to start.”

Resources to fund Health Access Oregon will come from a new “fair share” requirement that will be applied to many of the 46,000 public employees who receive health and dental benefits from the Public Employees Benefits Board (PEBB).

State employees, who have not contributed to the cost of their health and dental insurance, would be required to contribute from 13 percent to 15 percent of their insurance premium cost by 2012. “This is about insurance parity. As a state employee, I must face the reality that the taxpayer cannot continue to pay for everything. I must begin to shoulder some of the burden of my insurance premiums,” Rep. Maurer said.

Most public employees across the United States contribute to their health insurance premiums. Teachers in Oregon pay an average of 12 percent of their health premium, while federal employees contribute 25 percent to 45 percent of the costs of their health insurance premium.

Only two states, Oregon and North Dakota, do not require their state employees to contribute to their insurance premiums. But, North Dakota has an annual deductible of up to \$1200 while Oregon’s state employees deductible is \$0. In 2006, the average state employee across America contributed 19.2 percent to their health insurance premium.

###