

For Immediate Release
Contact: Stacey Dycus
541-350-2781 or 541-382-8481
stacey@benwestlund.com

Westlund's "Declare Your Independence" Tour Comes to Corvallis Today

Meets with Oregon State University Students

Bend, OR—(April 12, 2006) Senator Ben Westlund will be bringing his *Declare Your Independence Tour* today to Oregon State University today to speak to students at the Women's Center in Corvallis from 5:00 p.m. to 5:45 p.m. The forum's purpose is to encourage student voting and is open to all OSU students.

Westlund, who on February 14 of this year dropped his party affiliation and launched a run for Governor as an Independent, announced his *Declare Your Independence Tour of Oregon* during the primary season to meet with voters and work to gather the just over 18,000 signatures needed to secure his place on the ballot by August 30.

Under current Oregon election law, the simplest way for voters to help get Westlund on the ballot is to drop their party registration by April 25 to sign his petition. This will allow them to receive a nonpartisan ballot in the Primary election to vote on important local issues and still have their signature count for Westlund. Interested voters can re-register and download petitions online at www.benwestlund.com or order an action kit to be mailed by contacting the campaign at 541-382-8481.

Westlund's politics defy party labels. He came under fire last session with a threatened recall for his sponsorship of SB1000, which would have made it illegal to discriminate against gays and lesbians and allowed civil unions for same-sex couples in the state. Westlund is a strong advocate for reducing health care costs for individuals and businesses and believes that primary and preventative healthcare is a fundamental right. He is a champion of reforming Oregon's tax structure which is heavily dependent on the income tax. He received a 100% rating from AG-PAC for his efforts on behalf of farmers and ranchers and the Oregon League of Conservation Voters', an environmental organization named him "Best Consensus Builder" of 2005.

"Ask any Oregonian to describe themselves and very few will list party first, second or even third. We register to vote as Republicans, Democrats, Greens, Libertarians or no party at all -- but that does not define us. We are all Oregonians first and we all should be working together to make Oregon a better place."

Other upcoming events on the *Declare Your Independence Tour* include going door to door in Bend and Ashland and petition parties in Portland and Eugene. The campaign is seeking volunteer hosts around the state to help organize more events.

[To see the calendar: <http://www.westlundforgovernor.com/events.php>]

###