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## **Westlund Enters Race for State Treasurer, Governor Endorses**

BEND, Ore. (October 3, 2007) – Oregon Senator Ben Westlund (D-Bend) announced today that he is running for State Treasurer in a press conference at the Capitol with Governor Kulongoski.

“As Oregon’s next state Treasurer, I will draw on my twenty year business career and ten years as a legislator to provide a voice for investing in Oregon’s future...a strong voice for the stewardship of Oregon’s financial and natural resources.”

Governor Kulongoski endorsed Westlund at the press conference, “Ben Westlund is the right person to be our next State Treasurer and protect the hard-earned retirement dollars of working Oregon families. As a legislator and a former budget chief during some of Oregon’s toughest economic times, Ben balanced fiscal accountability with social responsibility. As long as I have known him, I have been impressed with his ability to work across the aisle to get results for Oregon.”

Westlund, 58, moved to Central Oregon in 1974 and helped found an innovative company that made non toxic, safe substance, known as “diamataceous earth” and commonly used in livestock operations. The best-known product to the general public was “Kitty Diggins” cat litter. After selling that successful business, Ben brought his marketing skills to bear in cattle-breeding. Centered on a prize-winning bull, Reggie, Ben built an international animal husbandry business, selling genetics.

Westlund has served in the state legislature since 1997, and was elected first as a Republican state representative from rural central Oregon and later as senator of Deschutes County. He became a Democrat last year after running for Governor as an independent.

A lung cancer survivor, Westlund brought many in the capitol to tears in June 2003 when he delivered his “return from the hospital” speech on the floor of the Oregon State House where he called on his colleagues to put aside partisanship and start being statesmen who put the next generation above their next election.

Upon recovery, he became a tireless advocate for health care, traveling the state to promote innovative solutions to the severe health care crisis facing the state

In the 2007 session, Westlund co-chaired the committee that produced the Healthy Oregon Act to reform Oregon’s health system to lower costs, improve quality and cover every Oregonian. He supported efforts to protect Oregonians from predatory lending and identity theft and to prevent expiration dates on gift cards. He also worked to expand

Oregon's use of renewable energy and passed legislation to expand opportunities for craft distillers.

Westlund is currently chairing the Senate Committee on Commerce and Labor that will be looking at Mortgage lending issues this year.

Professionally, Ben works with Northwest Professional Management to develop effective, affordable health care delivery systems. He and his wife Libby, who serves on the Mount Bachelor National Ski Patrol, recently celebrated their 20th anniversary. They have two children: a son B.J. (18) and a daughter Taylor (14). They live in Tumalo, just outside Bend.

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