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WESTLUND WINS SUPPORT OF NURSES, FIRE FIGHTERS IN BID FOR STATE TREASURER

FIRST WEEK IN RACE BUILDS MOMENTUM

Seaside, OR-- (October 8, 2007)--State Senator Ben Westlund (D-Bend) has received the support of the Oregon Nurses Association and the Oregon State Fire Fighters Council in his bid to be Oregon's next State Treasurer. Westlund entered the race last Wednesday with Governor Ted Kulongoski at his side. There are no other candidates filed for the seat.

The Oregon Nurses Association has supported Westlund in the past for his strong leadership on issues important to nurses including reforming Oregon's health care system to improve access and lower costs.

"Ben Westlund is an advocate for Oregon's working families and would be a strong ally to have in the State Treasurer's office," said Bruce Humphreys, president of the Oregon Nurses Association representing 11,500 nurses around the state.

Westlund has also worked closely with the Oregon State Fire Fighters Council to improve public safety.

"Senator Westlund has been a member and co-chair of the Ways and Means budget committee and not many people understand the state's finances like him," explained Kelly Bach, president of the Oregon State Fire Fighters Council that represents 3,000 fire fighters. "We know he will be a careful steward of our retirement dollars."

As a member of the Oregon Investment Council, the State Treasurer is responsible for the investment of over \$66 billion in the state employees' retirement funds. When returns on investments are high, as they have been, it saves local governments money.

Westlund spoke at the Oregon AFL-CIO convention this morning and made a plea for the support of other labor organizations. "I want to be Oregon's next State Treasurer, but I can't do it without the help of working men and women in this room."

Westlund, who is a business owner and health care consultant from Central Oregon, has served as a state legislator since 1997. 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 increase investments in sustainable, responsible businesses.

