Legislators make history as they prepare to open session in February

by Bend_Weekly_News_Sources

SALEM â€“ A special legislative session is set to open on February 4 based on a proposal passed early in the 2007 legislative session that establishes annual sessions. A twenty-eight day time limit is imposed as legislators gather to review proposals ranging from economic stimulus legislation to compensation for volunteers who donate their time to non-profit organizations.

â€œI believe that the idea of annual sessions is one that will make government more accountable and efficient in doing the peopleâ€™s business,â€• Representative Chuck Burley said. â€œThis is an historical moment for Oregon and we will have the chance to address some of the issues that we failed to address in 2007, as well as some of the new issues this year in light of the economic downturn.â€•

Another historical decision made during the 2007 legislative session was to proceed with a needed restoration project of the Capitol wings. The project is scheduled for completion by the beginning of 2009 and is currently ahead of schedule. For more information on the project visit: http://www.leg.state.or.us/restoration/.

During the Capitol Restoration Project, legislators, staff, and various legislative departments will have to meet the challenge of working in temporary locations. The Legislative Administration department has set up the Session Information Desk (SID) located in the Galleria of the Capitol building. It will be open at 7:30 a.m. and will remain open to assist the public, the lobby, legislators, and their staff throughout the day until the last

committee meeting concludes. The desk will be continually staffed throughout February and will serve as the primary source of information relating to the session and restoration project.

â€œWith the February 2008 session timeline so short, it is imperative that bills be considered efficiently,â€• said Burley. â€œMany bills have already been heard throughout the interim but there will be limited time for additional bill. Prioritization will be key to the success of this session.â€• For more information on committee schedules and bills to be heard, visit: http://www.leg.state.or.us/comm/.

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