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STATE REPRESENTATIVE, DISTRICT 14

MEDIA ADVISORY

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Legislative Workgroup on Autism to Hit the Road to Hear from Families and Community Members Across the State

EUGENE – In response to the rapidly growing numbers of Oregonians facing the challenges of Autism Spectrum Disorder, a legislative work group led by State Rep. Chris Edwards will host a series of community meetings across the state to hear from parents and advocates of people with autism.

The tour will begin in Bend on Monday Aug. 18th, with stops in NE Portland on Aug. 19th, Eugene Aug. 20th, Beaverton Sept. 9th, Coos Bay Sept. 10th, and Medford on Sept. 11th. In order to reach every corner of the state, a teleconference will be hosted from Salem on Sept. 8th. For more details see additional information below.

The Oregon Autism Project was conceived last May when State Reps. Peter Buckley (D-Ashland) and Mitch Greenlick (D-Portland) asked Rep. Edwards (D – Eugene/Junction City), to lead a legislative work group looking into ways children and adults with autism spectrum disorder can be better served.

Joining Edwards on the workgroup are representatives from the Oregon Department of Education and the Department of Human Services, the Oregon Developmental Disabilities Council, the Oregon Autism Alliance, as well as other legislative members including Reps. Peter Buckley, Sara Gelser (D – Corvallis), Linda Flores (R – Damascus), Ron Maurer (R – Grants Pass), and Senator Alan Bates (D – Medford). A number of legislators either have family members with autism or have been educated by constituents with family members with autism.

Over the course of the last two months the group has worked to assess current services, investigate other states' best practices and begin the process of bringing the various components of autism services in the education and health sector together to provide a higher and more efficient standard of care. The group has compiled a draft report with preliminary findings and recommendations for the 2009 Legislature.

Before presenting a final set of recommendations to a joint meeting of the Interim House Committees on Education and Healthcare, the workgroup will be hosting the statewide tour to receive feedback from individuals and families on the report compiled by the workgroup.

“Our group has worked hard to do the preliminary work pulling different stakeholders together, but now is the time to hear from families around the state about their needs, their goals and their

challenges in accessing state services for their loved one with autism,” said Edwards.” To view a copy of the preliminary findings please visit the Oregon Council on Developmental Disabilities website at www.ocdd.org.

Who: Rep. Chris Edwards, and members of the Oregon Autism Project

What: Statewide Autism Tour

When: Time: All meetings will be from 6:30-8:00 pm

Where:

Bend: Aug. 18th,
Bend School District Administration Center,
520 NW Wall St., Bend, OR 97701

N. Portland: Aug. 19th
Kaiser Town Hall
3704 N Interstate Ave, Portland, OR 97277

Eugene: Aug. 20th
Harris Hall
125 E. Eighth Ave, Eugene, Oregon 97401

Salem: Sept. 8th
Teleconference
Details TBA

Beaverton: Sept. 9th
Providence St. Vincent Medical Center, South Auditorium
9205 SW Barnes Rd.
Portland, OR 97225

Coos Bay: Sept. 10th
Coos Bay Public Library
525 Anderson Ave, Coos Bay, OR 97420

Medford: Sept. 11th
Details TBA

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