

Westlund Hits the Airwaves, Campaign Trail Calling on Oregonians to “Declare Your Independence”

April 25 Last Day to Drop Party Affiliation Before the Primary

For Immediate Release

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Bend, Or—(April 11, 2006) Gubernatorial Candidate, Ben Westlund (I-Bend) won't be on the May primary ballot, but he hit the airwaves today with a positive new television commercial calling for Oregonians to “Declare Your Independence” and join him in rejecting partisan politics as usual. The ad, starting in the Portland market, features images and text about Oregon's first Independent Governor, Julius Meier, who defied partisan politics to solve the state's fiscal problems in the 1930s. The ad closes with a call from Westlund to voters to “Declare Your Independence” by signing the petition to put him on the ballot in November.

“In the 1930s Governor Julius Meier called for an end to partisan politics as usual as he successfully addressed some Oregon's most pressing problems,” said Stacey Dycus, Westlund Campaign Manger. “This primary season, Oregonians from all walks of life are uninspired by the choices offered by the parties and ready for another independent-minded leader who has the courage and the track record to build relationships on all sides of the aisle in order to solve Oregon's toughest problems— Ben Westlund.”

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. His campaign has been building momentum and reported almost \$450,000 raised in cash, in-kind and pledges in the reporting period, most since he entered the race eight weeks ago.

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.

Under current Oregon election law the simplest way for voters who want 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.

The ad features the campaign's website address (www.benforgovernor.com) where voters can download a petition or order an “action kit” to get Ben on the ballot.

“Voters from across the political spectrum and across the state contact us every day to share their independence story about how they dropped their party affiliation” added Dycus.

The commercial ends with a slogan the campaign hopes will inspire voters to join them: “Forget politics as usual. If Ben can do it, so can you.