

Ben Westlund for Governor
MEDIA RELEASE

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Partisan Politics Benefit Independent Ben Westlund

Statewide Movement to End Partisanship Gains Momentum

Bend, OR- In the wake of Tuesday's partisan primaries, Independent candidate for Governor, Ben Westlund, and his growing statewide network of supporters see a clear path to victory in November.

"The negative campaigning by partisan candidates reinforces the rationale for a Ben Westlund governorship to voters who are already weary of politics as usual," said Westlund Campaign Manager, Stacey Dycus. "Instead of focusing on the issues that divide us, Ben will focus on the issues that unite us: affordable healthcare for all, stable education funding, opportunity for our small businesses and safe communities."

Westlund has raised over \$500,000 in cash and pledges from nearly 1000 contributors and has recruited nearly 400 volunteers statewide since entering the race in February. Through grassroots campaigning, Ben has discovered a growing reservoir of discontent Oregonians have with the current political structure, leaving them largely undecided for a pick in November. Westlund has emerged from the primaries with a growing network of supporters and a clear message that is resonating statewide.

"Ben Westlund's record as a leader who works across party lines makes him the right candidate at the right time for Oregon," added Dycus. "It's time to stop talking about empty ambitions and start acting on real solutions."

Westlund will continue to campaign across the state in support of a number of statewide ballot initiatives he has sponsored that are highly popular with voters. Already known as the "healthcare" candidate, Westlund is a chief co-sponsor of the Oregon HOPE Initiative (www.hopeoregon.org), to make access to affordable healthcare a fundamental right for every Oregonian. He is also at the forefront of the effort to institute a sixty-cent cigarette tax to provide health insurance to Oregon's 117,000 uninsured children.

As a former co-chair of the Legislature's budget committee, Westlund is also the only candidate for Governor with a workable plan to stabilize the state's finances in order to revitalize Oregon's public schools and the credentials to make it a reality.

"Ben is championing common-sense solutions for Oregonians on the issues they care about most," said Dycus. "Ben's leading role in the ongoing effort to improve healthcare and education, and the fact that he is the only candidate with the skills and record to actually achieve these goals, will be a major reason why voters will elect Ben in November."

Over one million voters will be eligible to sign Westlund's petition to qualify for the November ballot. With a low voter turnout in the primary and over 460,000 registered independents in Oregon, confidence is high that he will collect the necessary 18,368 signatures by the deadline in August.

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