



Representative David Edwards

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News Release

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State Representative David Edwards Carries Bill that Allows Thousands of Out-of- Work Oregonians to qualify for Unemployment Benefits

SALEM— Representative David Edwards (D-Hillsboro) carried a bill (SB462-A) to extend unemployment benefits to an additional 6,000 Oregonians. “Passage of this bill is critical to helping thousands of Oregon families put food on the table and a roof over their heads said Rep. David Edwards. He further noted that Oregon’s seasonally adjusted unemployment rate now stands at 12.1 percent in March, up from a revised 10.7 percent rate in February. Currently, an estimated 256,000 Oregonians are without work.

Senate Bill 462-A helps to ensure out-of-work Oregonians get credit from their most recent employment and receive the benefits they have earned. It changes the formula for calculating unemployment benefits, allowing workers to count their most recent experience when determining eligibility for unemployment insurance. The bill allows claimants who have sufficient earnings in the most recent four quarters, but who fail to qualify under the existing base year, to receive unemployment benefits. Currently, eligibility is calculated on a base year or the first four of the most recently completed five calendar quarters. Unfortunately, some workers are ineligible for benefits because the rules ignore recent months of work in determining eligibility. Senate Bill 462-A fixes this glitch, allowing the state to access about 91 million more in federal unemployment funds available through the federal stimulus package.

The bill now goes to the Governor for his signature.

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