2017 Legislative Agenda

**Parent's Bill of Rights**

*(Not yet introduced by Rep. Piluso)*

The purpose of this legislation is to protect the interests of children who are or may be parented by disabled individuals. It would require adherence to the ADA and would establish procedures to ensure equal protection in the context of: child welfare, foster care, family law, and adoption. Too often, decisions are made solely on the parent's disability without consideration of that individual's capacity to parent their child(ren).

**Support our children by protecting disabled individuals' right to parent.**

**Transit Board Reform**

*(Bill number pending)*

This legislation would increase the number of Transit Board members for Tri-met and LTD from 7 to 11 members. The 4 additional members would be comprised of the underserved populations who are most likely to take public transit: a student, a person with a disability, a person of color, and a transit worker. Currently, these boards are dominated by land owners and business people who do not represent the needs of those who ride the transit systems.

**Support Transit Board Reform**

**Commission for the Blind Budget**

The Governor's proposed budget calls for a $500,000 reduction in general funds. This would result in subsequent reduction of Federal matching funds, which bring dollars into Oregon's economy. The Commission for the Blind is a small agency, and a reduction of this magnitude would significantly impact the services provided to blind adults and students who are in need of education, training, and equipment to ensure their successful transition into the work force.

**Restore the Commission for the Blind budget to last biennium levels.**

**SB 841- Business Enterprise Program**

 This bill would make sweeping changes to the Business Enterprise Program (BEP), an entrepreneurial program operated through the Commission for the Blind. Supporters of this legislation argue that it is impossible for a blind person to earn a living if they are required to manage their business themselves, instead of sub-contracting the work to corporations such as Pepsi and Coke. This is simply not true. The BEP is a Federal program, and most states do not permit sub-contracting. Blind individuals throughout the country manage their own businesses with significant profit margins. The intent of this program is to provide employment opportunities for the blind, not large corporations.

**SB 841 is not good for Blind Oregonians.**