



National Building Trades Legislative Conference Report

Last week I traveled to Washington, D.C. along with representatives from Oregon State Building and Construction Trades Council to attend the 2011 Building and Construction Trades Department Legislative Conference from April 3–6.

On April 4th I had an energetic meeting with **Congressman Greg Walden** (R-OR). Congressman Walden has always been a strong supporter of the Building Trades and labor issues and this meeting was no different. We discussed budgetary issues and the potential of a government shutdown, Project Labor Agreements (PLAs), reauthorization of the transportation bill and most importantly job creation in Oregon. The Congressman is working on gathering support for a project in Prineville that will help make the Facebook expansion as well as other future projects a reality. The Trades and Pac/West will work with the Congressman's office in Bend to gain the necessary information for members to attend public meetings as well as write letters to the editor and op-eds in support of the project.

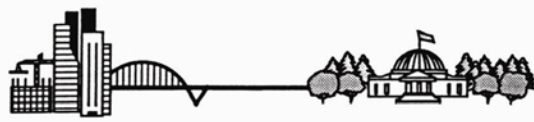
On April 5th the Council hosted the annual luncheon for the Oregon delegation, which was very well attended. Members who joined the trades for the luncheon were **Congressman Earl Blumenauer** (D-OR), **Congressman David WU** (D-OR), **Congressman Peter DeFazio** (D-OR), **Congressman Kurt Schrader** (D-OR), and **Senator Jeff Merkley** (D-OR). Each member spoke briefly on the current environment in Washington, D.C. before opening the floor for a few questions. The entire delegation is fully aware of the critical need for jobs in the state, and specifically in the construction sector. The tradesmen asked very pertinent questions related to the Columbia River Crossing and the delegation is committed to work to make that project a reality.

On April 6th I met with **Senator Ron Wyden** (D-OR), **Congressmen Peter DeFazio** (D-OR) and Anna Bartlett, legislative director for **Congresswoman Jamie Herrera Beutler** (R-WA) who represents southwest Washington. Senator Wyden and Congressman DeFazio are both very familiar with the issues important to the Council. Senator Wyden continues to support the need for a new bridge across the Columbia River. He is waiting to see the final bridge design is before advocating strongly for it in D.C. Congressman DeFazio continues to work on his plan to help fund infrastructure projects by indexing the gas tax to the rate of inflation and using those funds to bond for construction projects—a strong idea, but there is still a lot of work ahead to make it a reality. During my meeting with staff for Congresswoman Herrera Beutler, a freshman member, I used this meeting to introduce the Council, speak of our issues, including the Columbia River Crossing which will impact her district as much as it will impact the Portland area. We discussed in depth our building trades' apprenticeship programs, which while located in Oregon serve our members and contractors in SW Washington. I also extended an invitation for the Congresswoman and her staff to tour our training facilities to see the great work we are doing that benefits more than just Oregon.



John Mohlis with Congressman DeFazio

In the coming weeks, Pac/West's DC team will continue to meet with the delegation, distributing similar materials given to the Oregon legislators, and to convey the message that we are here to help when it comes to important construction labor issues.



**Oregon State Building &
Construction Trades Council**

Delegation Luncheon



Congressman Earl Blumenauer (D-OR)



Congressman David Wu (D-OR)



Congressman Kurt Schrader (D-OR)



Congressman Peter DeFazio (D-OR)



Senator Jeff Merkley (D-OR)