

# BEN WESTLUND

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## FOR OREGON STATE TREASURER

### MEDIA RELEASE

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## WESTLUND SPOTLIGHTS PUBLIC SAFETY MEMORIAL FUND

*Over \$1 Million in Benefits to Fallen Public Safety Officers, Families*

(June 24, 2008)---BEND, OR - To commemorate the anniversary of the creation of the Oregon Public Safety Memorial Fund, State Senator and Oregon State Treasurer candidate Ben Westlund (D-Bend), who sponsored House Bill 2391 in 1999, has created a new page on his website for Oregonians to learn about and donate to the Fund. The new link can be found at [www.benwestlund.com/memorialfund](http://www.benwestlund.com/memorialfund) or by visiting [www.benwestlund.com](http://www.benwestlund.com).

"Our public safety officers are there for us when we need help and Oregon is there in their time of crisis," said Westlund. "It was nine years ago this very week I carried this bill on the House floor and watched it pass unanimously. By working with legislators from both sides of the aisle, we accomplished something meaningful."

The fund, managed by the office of the State Treasurer and administered by Department of Public Safety Standards and Training, provides financial assistance to public safety officers who are permanently and totally disabled as a result of a line of duty injury, and to family members of public safety officers who have been killed or permanently and totally disabled in the line of duty. It is funded by criminal court fees.

Senator Westlund's new webpage has a brief background about the fund, explaining how the fund helps fallen public safety officers and how Oregonians can help support the fund.

The Public Safety Memorial Fund applies to family members of police officers (including reserves), corrections officers, fire service professionals (paid & volunteer), parole and probation officers, and youth correction officers. The 1999 law outlines potential benefits from the Memorial Fund to eligible family members, as follows: death benefits, health and dental insurance benefits, educational scholarships, and mortgage benefits.

"This fund would never have been created without the leadership of Ben Westlund," said **Kelly Bach, President of the Oregon State Fire Fighters Council**. "This law has helped members of the public safety community and given us the piece of mind that Oregon will be there if one us fall in the line of duty."

*(continued)*

### Successes of the Public Safety Memorial Fund:

- Over \$1 million dollars in aid has been given out in benefits to fallen and permanently injured public safety officers
- The fund has been well managed by the State Treasurer, maintaining a positive balance for nearly a decade without the use of public tax dollars
- Oregon's Public Safety Memorial Fund has helped 48 public officers or their families

"I am proud of the successes of the Memorial Fund, but I believe we need to make it easier for Oregonians to play a more active roll in this vital program," said Westlund. "As Oregon's next State Treasurer, my first priority will be continuing the wise management of the fund. I will also push to make it possible for Oregonians to give online donations and will send e-mail updates about the fund to the public, press, and public safety officers"

To donate to the Public Safety Memorial Fund make your check out to "Public Safety Memorial Fund" and send it to "Public Safety Memorial Fund, 4190 Aumsville Highway SE, Salem OR 97317." All donations to the Oregon Public Safety Memorial Fund are tax deductible.

### Ben's Background

As a legislator, Westlund has focused on creative financial approaches to improve Oregon. Westlund co-chaired the budget-writing Joint Ways and Means Committee. He also co-chaired the committee that produced the [Healthy Oregon Act](#) to reform Oregon's health system to lower costs, improve quality and cover every Oregonian.

Westlund is currently working on health care reform, on efforts to expand Oregon's use of renewable energy, and on increasing financial literacy to protect Oregonians from predatory lending and identity theft.

A retired successful business owner, Ben now consults with Northwest Professional Management to develop effective, affordable health care delivery systems. He and his wife Libby, who serves on the Mount Bachelor National Ski Patrol, have two children: a son B.J. (20) and a daughter Taylor (15). They live in Tumalo, just outside Bend.

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