

BEN WESTLUND



FOR OREGON STATE TREASURER

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**OREGON NURSES NAME WESTLUND “LEGISLATOR OF THE YEAR”
Co-endorsement with Sen. Alan Bates for work on Healthy Oregon Act**

Bend, Ore. (April 10, 2008) – Oregon Senator and candidate for State Treasurer Ben Westlund (D-Bend) received the Oregon Nurses Association’s highest honor last night, induction into the Nurse Hall of Fame. He along with Dr. Senator Alan Bates (D-Ashland), were also named “co-Legislators of the Year” for their work on the 2007 Healthy Oregon Act, Senate bill 329 (www.hopeforahealthyoregon.com).

“[Bates and Westlund] have marked a course to re-invent health care access, delivery and ultimately finance. This area of public policy is both incredibly complex and politically risky... If there is hope for designing a rational system of health care it rests with these two visionaries,” stated the program distributed at the awards ceremony in Bend.

Westlund was also inducted into the Nurses' Hall of Fame as a retiring legislator.

“The story of Westlund is one of transformation. His first several sessions, he was not a Friend of Nursing. Then in 2003 Ben Westlund almost died of lung cancer. It is not too strong to say he had an epiphany. Our nurses and the health care he received were part of that life changing experience. He has been one of the most driven and effective advocates of health care reform and public health ever since. The last four years have been heroic.”

In 2007, Westlund and Bates 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. They traveled around the state to talk about solutions, visiting twenty-five towns across Oregon.

The Healthy Oregon Act created the Oregon Health Fund which will allow individuals and businesses to pool their health care dollars to share risk and leverage buying power. The Health Fund will be managed by the State Treasurer if the plan is ultimately approved by the 2009 Legislature. Details of the plan are being determined by the Health Fund Board also created by the bill.

Professionally, Ben works 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, recently celebrated their 20th anniversary. They have two children: a son B.J. (19) and a daughter Taylor (15). They live in Tumalo, just outside Bend.