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NEWS RELEASE

Thursday, November 8, 2006

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Rep. Richardson Announces Bold Educational Initiative for 21st Century

Oregon State Representative Dennis Richardson (R-Central Point) and David Porter (a resident of Portland) have submitted a proposal to the Oregon Business Plan to increase and encourage the study of Chinese in Oregon schools.

“Developing the China Connection through Educational Programs” asks the Oregon Business Plan to develop an initiative to instruct 5% of Oregon high school students in Chinese—both through classroom instruction and subsequent study abroad immersion programs in China. Currently only a handful of schools in Oregon offer Chinese as a foreign language option.

Rep. Richardson states: “For more than a decade, China’s economy has expanded its Gross Domestic Product (GDP) growth rate by nearly 10% per annum. During the same period, the America’s GDP growth rate has hovered around 3.3%. Although the U.S. is the largest economy in the world today, it is estimated that China will overtake the U.S. in economic size by 2020. China is an awakening giant that will dominate international manufacturing, agriculture, energy and natural resources consumption and tourism for the foreseeable future.

“Oregon’s public officials and private business leaders should coordinate efforts to participate and partner in China’s dynamic economy for the benefit of both peoples. With the vision and cooperation of the Oregon Business Plan, Oregon students can lead America in the 21st century by providing and promoting Chinese language instruction through this bold and innovative proposal.”

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“Bold innovations are needed to capture the hearts and minds of our youth.”

Letters of support have been written by educators at University of Oregon, Oregon State University, Portland State University and Willamette University. Additional letters are forthcoming from elected officials and Oregon business leaders.

Richardson is a member of the Joint Committee on Fujian Sister State, and has led 3 Oregon trade delegations to China. Porter is a retired health administrator and is the former Director of Clinical Practices at the OHSU School of Nursing and Project Director of the West Salem Clinic.

The proposal “Developing the China Connection through Educational Programs” is available online at <http://www.dennisrichardson.org/pdf/OBPChineseProposal.pdf>

Information about the Oregon Business Plan is available from their website <http://www.oregonbusinessplan.org>

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