

QuickPoint! – For Oregon’s New Governor, Great Power Comes with Great Responsibility

By Eric Fruits, Ph.D.

It’s the day after Election Day and the votes are still being tallied. One thing we know for sure: Oregon will have a new governor. Our new governor can make substantial changes on Day One by shaking up the agencies that have overseen our state’s decades-long decline.

We need a new PERS board who understands Oregon’s public employee retirement system is an anchor that is dragging down both the state and local governments. We can’t afford a business-as-usual PERS Board. We need a board that is willing to overhaul the system from within.

Believe it or not, the governor appoints the TriMet board. Public transit ridership is plummeting, and costs are skyrocketing. Nevertheless, the current board continues a light-rail-at-any-cost agenda. We need a new board to face the new reality that public transit is never coming back to where it was pre-pandemic.

We need a new director of the Oregon Health Authority. We need a director who will quickly approve new health care facilities—especially those for mental health, substance abuse, and skilled nursing. We need a new director who will replace the Measure 110 committee with new members who will focus on drug treatment, rather than so-called harm reduction.

We also need a new Superintendent of Public Instruction who will abandon identity politics and focus on improving academic achievement and graduation rates for all students.

Oregon’s governor has enormous power and—as the saying goes—with great power comes great responsibility.

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