



Val Hoyle, Oregon House majority leader, receiving \$1,855-a-month stipend from caucus political fund

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House Majority Leader Val Hoyle, D-Eugene, right, talks on the House floor with Rep. Carolyn Tomei, D-Milwaukie. (AP Photo/Don Ryan)

Jeff Mapes | The Oregonian/OregonLive By **Jeff Mapes | The Oregonian/OregonLive**

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In what appears to be a first for the Oregon Legislature, Oregon House Majority Leader Val Hoyle is receiving a \$1,855-a-month stipend from the House Democratic political fund.

Hoyle, a Eugene Democrat, began receiving the stipend after the last session ended in July, according to Hoyle's spokeswoman, Lindsey O'Brien.

O'Brien said the stipend was unanimously approved by the House Democratic caucus in recognition of the large amount of work it takes to oversee the House Democratic campaigns in the election year.

"The caucus just recognized this is a full-time job and she should be compensated for the work she is putting in," said O'Brien, adding that it would be otherwise hard for Hoyle to make financial ends meet while working full-time on the campaigns.

None of the three other party leaders in the Legislature are receiving any additional compensation for serving in those positions, according to aides for House Minority Leader Mike McLane, R-Powell Butte, and the Senate majority and minority leaders.

Former House Speaker Dave Hunt, who also served as the majority leader in 2007 and as the Democratic leader in 2011 when the House was evenly divided, expressed surprise at the arrangement.

"We just never considered doing that," said Hunt, noting that legislators were expected to work as volunteers on Democratic campaign efforts.

Hoyle worked for several years in the bicycle industry. However, in her personal financial disclosure statement for 2012, she doesn't list any income besides her legislative pay and her husband's salary with an insurance company.

O'Brien said that Hoyle will only receive the stipend when the Legislature is not in session. Legislators receive a salary of \$1,801 per month as well as a \$123 per diem to defray expenses each day they are in session or at interim legislative hearings.

The stipend to Hoyle was not readily apparent on the **financial disclosure reports filed by the caucus fund**, which is known as Future PAC. The caucus lists payments to a payroll services firm and doesn't disclose any information about which individuals are receiving wages and benefits from Future PAC.

O'Brien said there was no intent to hide the payment to Hoyle, and reports show the caucus had used the payroll services firm in previous years.

-- Jeff Mapes

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