

Meeting Notes CCSS Joint Advocacy Committee January 4, 2012

Coffee & Conversation Event Summary:

A coffee & conversation event was held for the January meeting with Senator Chuck Thomsen from District 26.

- **Attendance:** There were 10 attendees at the event representing the following groups Area Agency on Aging Advisory Council, Community Action Board, Mental Health and Addictions Council, DSAC, and the Joint Advocacy Council.

Conversation Highlights

Senator Thomsen spoke about his background working as a county commissioner and his knowledge of the poverty work done by the Community Action Agency in the Hood River area. Senator Thomsen spoke about that it is easier to see direct impact of cuts on the county level than it is on the state level. He stated that he supported senior programs last session. Per Senator Thomsen, key issues that the legislature will look at this session include: Health Care Transformation, Education, the Columbia River Crossing, public safety and funding for prisons. He reminded folks that it is a short session and it will be hard to address any new issues.

Interest Areas

Senator Thomsen is a pear farmer and spoke of his interest in natural resources, agriculture, and the environment.

Issues Raised

During the conversation with advisory members some of the issues raised included transportation and the cigarette tax, senior services and OPI cuts, health care transformation reforms & its impact on home health care workers and clients, PERS, Veteran Services, and disability & long term care issues.

Talk to your Legislators

Senator Thomsen emphasized the importance of coming to Salem and talking to legislators. He also mentioned that he can take one person on the senate floor a day during session and told committee members to follow up on this opportunity. He stressed that it was important to get involved in the budget process and to ask questions of state agencies in Salem during budget hearings with agencies. He stated that both emails and letters are effective. But, that he is "old school" and prefers receiving letters from constituents.

Other Events & Next Meetings:

- **February 2nd:** Groundhog's Day/Shadow Your Legislator Event in Salem sponsored by the Campaign for Oregon's Seniors and People with Disabilities.
- **February 14th:** Have A Heart Day in Salem sponsored by CAPO and Oregon Thrives.