SENATE COMMITTEE ON HEALTH AND SAFETY IN PORTLAND PUBLIC SCHOOLS

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June 14, 2001 Hearing Room B 8:30 AMÝÝÝÝÝÝ TapesÝ 1-4 <![if !supportEmptyParas]> <![endif]> MEMBERS PRESENT: ÝÝÝÝÝÝÝÝÝÝÝ Sen. Margaret Carter Co-Chair Sen.Ý Ginny Burdick Sen. Bev Clarno Sen. Peter Courtney Sen. Ryan Deckert Sen. Ted Ferrioli Sen. Avel Gordly <![if !supportEmptyParas]> <![endif]> MEMBER EXCUSED: ÝÝÝ STAFF PRESENT: ÝÝÝÝÝ ÝÝÝÝÝÝÝÝÝÝÝÝ Jan McComb, Committee Administrator Paula Merritt, Committee Assistant <![if !supportEmptyParas]> <![endif]> MEASURE/ISSUES HEARD:ÝÝÝÝÝÝÝÝÝÝÝ Public Hearing **Occurrence**. Health Risk

These minutes are in compliance with Senate and House Rules.Ý Only text enclosed in quotation marks reports a speakerís exact words.Ý For complete contents, please refer to the tapes.

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TADE/#	Speeker	Commente
TAPE/#	Speaker	Comments
TAPE 1, A		
003	Co-Chair Carter	Calls committee to order at 8:30 a.m. and opens a public hearing on radon.Ý
RADON OVEI	RVIEWÝ PUBLIC HEARI	NG
005	Co-Chair Carter	Submits written testimony (EXHIBIT A) andÝ explains the agenda and speakers here today.
030	John D. Beaulieu	 State Geologist, Oregon Department of Geology.Ý Submits and presents written testimony (EXHIBIT B).Ý Explains radon measurement and movement into structures and explains that readings are lower in the winter than in summer.Ý Refers to map included in exhibit B.Ý Says there are 13 counties in the state where readings are greater than should be in 10% of residences.Ý
159	Sen. Clarno	Comments on building construction materials.
160	Beaulieu	Responds that it is not what the building is made of but more about how the building is a conduit

		regarding air and air flow.Ý
165	Rep. Clarno	Asks Beaullieu if schools should be built with cement or concrete.Ý
170	Beaulieu	Responds that he would like for the Health Division to answer.
180	Sen. Courtney	Comments on the 13 counties that are at risk.
189	Beaulieu	Clarifies that 10% of tested houses are at risk.
205	Sen. Starr	Comments on evacuation at high levels and what are the statistics.
209	Beaulieu	Responds that he does not know the statistics but the Health Division does.
211	Sen. Carter	Comments on the West Salem and Portland School Districts.
220	Beaulieu	Explains the higher uranium in sand materials and says that Oregon is a moderate to low radon state.
255	Sen. Ferrioli	Asks about the new information on indoor air quality.Ý
260	Beaulieu	Responds that this is true and explains reduction of radon with proper ventilation.
289	Sen. Ferrioli	Comments that the problem solving can be made by physical plant.
293	Beaulieu	Agrees that building construction is far greater than radon and building management is the most important.
318	Sen. Hartung	Comments on seismic refitting of schools.
337	Thomas Johnson	Administrator, Oregon Health Division.Ý Submits and presents written testimony (EXHIBIT C).Ý Gives overview of radon.Ý Describes the measurements for concern inside of a building and
		evacuation levels.
TAPE 2, A		
003	Sen. Courtney	Asks about standards and administrative rules or laws for construction of new homes and buildings.
005	Johnson	YRefers the question to the Building Code Division.
010	Sen. Courtney	Asks about animal reactions to radon.
020	Johnson	Responds that he does not know.
067	Terry Lindsey	Manager, Radioactive Materials Licensing Program.Ý Submits and presents written reports (EXHIBIT D) on state radon levels. Suggests testing on a regular basis.Ý Explains the EPA University Programs for contractor training.Ý
040	Co-Chair Carter	Asks if Oregon follows protocol.
044	Lindsey	Responds yes. Ý Explains the EPA testing that is done. Ý
050	Peggy Collins	State Building Official.Ý Explains building codes for construction of new buildings and explains that these standards are not in place for existing buildings.Ý States that in the late 1980's there was more emphasis placed on radon standards and again updated in 1996.
070	Co-Chair Carter	Asks if all buildings are in compliance.
072	Collins	Responds no; not buildings built after the requirements were set.
077	Co-Chair Carter	Asks what the state's role is for seeing everyone is in compliance
078	Collins	Responds that there is no role for doing this except

		through education.
079	Co-Chair Carter	Asks who is responsible for the older buildings.
083	Collins	Responds the owner of the building.
221	Johnson	Adds, through education and information.
223	Co-Chair Carter	Comments on assuring parents of compliance.
230	Johnson	Responds by PTA meetings and discussions.
250	Collins	Explains that construction will be regulated but not
230	Commis	older ones.
267	Lynn Penwell	Parent, Coalition to Keep Whitaker Safe. Ý Presents
207	Lymrrenwen	· A
		testimony and explains the safety of their children and the need for requirements
202		the need for requirements.
323	Jackie Wallace	Parent, Coalition to Keep Whitaker Safe. Ý Presents
TADE 1 D		testimony and explains the risk to children in schools.
TAPE 1, B	Son Condler	Commente en Co Chair Contenía leodershin of this
002	Sen. Gordly	Comments on Co-Chair Carterís leadership of this
		committee.Y Asks Wallace for her report. Asks about
		the options given to her by the school.
020	Wallace	Responds that they were not given options except to
		remove the child from the school.Y
030	Sen. Gordly	Asks if her child is now at Whitaker.
040	Wallace	Responds, no. Continues with presentation and requirements she would like.
050	Sen. Gordly	Comments on the cancellation of summer school at
		Whitaker School and asks if her child will attend
		Gregory Heights for summer school.
059	Penwell	Replies that her son is in special education and she
		will not send him back to any Portland Public Middle
		School.
076	Sen. Courtney	Asks when Penwell first learned about radon.
079	Penwell	Responds, from her Father in the 1990's and explains
015		that they had their house tested in 1993. \acute{Y}
088	Sen. Courtney	Asks Penwell when her concern began with the
000	Sell. Courtiley	school.
090	Penwell	Responds, with the article in the paper on May 23^{rd} .
		· · · ·
093	Sen. Courtney	Asks the same of Wallace.
097	Wallace	Responds, May 2001.
100	Chair Carter	YAsks Wallace about her security level after listening
100	XX7 11	to the state geologist.
130	Wallace	Responds that she does not feel secure because she
100		doesn't know the amounts of exposure.
139	Jim Scherzinger	Chief Financial Officer, Portland School District.
		Submits and presents written testimony and various
		reports (EXHIBIT E).Ý Explains the discussions held
		after levels of radon were taken and the closure of the
		schools.
148	Co-Chair Carter	Asks about steps taken and community concerns.
150	Scherzinger	Explains his feelings on the closing of the schools and
		the steps that were taken. Y Explains Whitaker
		School's complex ventilation problems.
160	Sen. Courtney	Asks if he has heard about radon in public schools.
166	Scherzinger	Responds that he had not before the newspaper
		articles.Ý
240	Sen. Gordly	Asks if indoor air quality testing had been done and

250 290	Scherzinger Pamela Brown	what were the results. Ý Asks about the community's concern with these particular problems in Whitaker;Ý soil, atrium, air circulation wells, tunnel system, a mildew spot in G-107 and a bad roof leak in the ceiling. Refers the question to Pamela Brown. Director of Facilities. Ý Explains the times that testing was performed, explains that in 1991 there was short-term testing and long term testing in 1992 consistent with standards. Ý Refers to exhibit reports. Ý Explains that the atrium was not tested until this year, the wells have not been tested or ordered to be tested, the atrium soil has not been tested, the air test result was 0.3, the tunnel system has a report from 1997 where it was tested at .2 when fans were off and 6-8 when fans were on. Ý Explains that the around the roof leak has not been tested, the around the roof leak has not been tested, and the latest indoor air was 950 in February.
350	Sen. Gordly	Comments on complaints about asthma and headaches, etc. and asks if they have checked the clinic's records.
425	Brown	Responds that they have not.
440	Scherzsinger	Explains the five-step plan he has planned for the
	5 •11 •1 25 ·11 8 •1	summer and the committee he has formed.
TAPE 2, B		
003	Sen. Gordly	Comments on parental involved on the committee.
005	Tom Picket	Incoming Principal, Whitaker.Ý Responds that the committee will have three parents.Ý Explains that there is a public forum planned with committee members, staff, ESL teachers and a parent from the Latino committee.Ý
032	Sen. Starr	Comments on roof leaks not being harmful.Ý
040	Co-Chair Carter	Asks Scherzinger how parents with children out of school can be helped.
050	Scherzinger	Responds that this was the biggest concern he had when deciding to close the schools.
060	Co-Chair Carter	Comments on the state being responsible for this issue.
067	Sen. Clarno	Offers her assistance this summer to this issue.
080	Sen. Ferrioli	Echoes comments of Sen. Carter.Ý
191	[if !</td <td>Portland Association of Teachers. Y Submits and</td>	Portland Association of Teachers. Y Submits and
	supportEmptyParas]	presents written testimony (EXHIBIT F).ÝÝ
	> [endif]	Explains the situation at Whitaker School and the
	Richard Garrett	problems he had with administrators and district officials with the seriousness of the radon problem.Ý Comments on OSHA's lack of responsibility and their suggestion to refer this issue to another agency.
230	Sen. Minnis	Asks about a conflict of interest.
250	Garrett	Responds that employees and representatives are entitled to have OHSA enforce standards.Ý
267	Sen. Minnis	Questions the responsible entity for this issue.
276	Co-Chair Carter	Comments on OSHA's work on behalf of all employees.
285	Garrett	Explains OSHA's referral to the Oregon Health

343	Carol Ingersol Palumbo	Division.Ý Teacher, Gregory Heights Middle School.Ý Explains that it was 5/23 when she heard about the school closure and explains that her first knowledge of radon was in the 1990's.Ý Describes her increased asthma.Ý Describes radon testing performed in limited areas only and explains that the Safety Committee had no knowledge of the final report.
TAPE 3, A		
003	Sen. Gordley	Asks Palumbo if the report was requested.
050	Palumbo	Responds yes but did not receive. Y Explains summer
067	Co-Chair Carter	school sites in the Gregory Heights facility.Ý Asks Lindsey what the results would be if radon were mixed with other gases.
080	Co-Chair Carter	Reiterates that Scherzinger is director of finance and is not that knowledgeable with this scientific subject.
100	Lindsey	Explains that lung cancer is the only known result from radon and that radon does not interact with anything and that carbon dioxide is an indicator of an air ventilation quality.
123	Sen. Minnis	Asks Lindsey what entity is responsible and is anyone addressing these concerns.
158	Lindsey	Responds that EPA protocols are being followed.
166	Sen. Minnis	Reads statute and comments on the responsible entity.
181	Patricia Sullivan	Public Relations, Portland Public Schools.Ý Explains her past work with OSHA and explains the federal program.Ý Explains that OSHA has jurisdiction over all safety and health issues of employees.
199	Johnson	Explains that they do not have programs for radon and are not responsible for programs they do not have.
200	Sen. Minnis	Comments on OSHA being involved in this meeting today and their responsibility.
249	Co-Chair Carter	Concurs.
[if !</td <td>Johnson</td> <td>Explains that they provide public information for</td>	Johnson	Explains that they provide public information for
supportEmptyParas]	001110011	anyone who requests it.
> [endif]		
256	Co-Chair Carter	AsksY Lindsey why Garretis letter was not answered
260	Lindsey	Responds that he was not directly requested to answer
		and he apologizes if he missed a call.
270	Sullivan	Suggests that OSHA be here. Y
281	Co-Chair Carter	Comments on Palumboís testimony and Portland Public Schools should not be answering to this problem alone and suggests that someone is dropping the ball.Ý Believes OSHA and Department of Consumer and Business Services be involved and this is a complicated problem.Ý Believes this issue requires a longer period of time to resolve and should be investigated further.
323`	Sen. Courtney	Comments on the age of public school buildings and the problems that could arise.
343	Sen. Minnis	Comments on the committee and the meetings involved.
[if !</td <td>Co-Chair Carter</td> <td>Suggests asking for another meeting.</td>	Co-Chair Carter	Suggests asking for another meeting.

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374	Suzanne Larson	Parent. Presents testimony. Explains her daughterís experience while attending Whitaker School with her taxed immune system.
TAPE 4, A		
003	Larson	Reads from testimony.Ý
005	Susan Walenza	Teacher, Whitaker School. Submits and presents written testimony (EXHIBIT G). Explains the tests that were done the high radon level results and how Willamette Week received a record of her testing. Speaks to the importance of ventilation.Ý
078	Sen. Minnis	Asks Scherzinger about functioning of workplace testing.
080	Scherzinger	Responds that he was not aware of this.
090	Sen. Minnis	Comments on hazardous substance statutes and is unsure if they apply.
099	Ann Schneider	Counselor, Whitaker School.Ý Submits and presents written testimony (EXHIBIT H) and explains illnesses she had while working in her office in the school over the years.Ý Comments on testing at Whitaker and that her tests showed levels of 19.Ý
148	Sen. Minnis	Asks if anyone filed a complaint.
[if !<br supportEmptyParas] > [endif]	Schneider	Believes that other school district employees wanted to be present today but had to attend work. \acute{Y}
167	Suzanne Larson	Parent of Whitaker School student. Ý Presents testimony explaining her childís health symptoms and time absent from school due to illness.
229	Sen. Minnis	Requests other meetings with knowledgeable agencies.
242	Sen. Gordly	Thanks parents for their testimony.
266	Co-Chair Carter	Assures parents that this will not be the last meeting on the radon subject and adjourns committee at 11:20 a.m.

A - Public Testimony, written testimony, Sen. Margaret Carter, Ý 5 pp.

B ñ Invited Testimony, written testimony and various reports, Dr. John Beaulieu, 14 pp.

C -Ý Invited Testimony, written testimony, Thomas Johnson, 2 pp.

D -Ý Invited Testimony, written testimony, Terry Lindsey, 2 pp.

E -Ý Invited Testimony, written testimony and various reports, Jim Scherzinger, 22 pp.

F - Invited Testimony, written testimony, Richard Garrett, 4 pp. G - Public Testimony, written testimony, Susan Walenza, 1 page H - Public Testimony, written testimony, Ann Schneider, 2 pp.