



**Salem, Oregon
April 12, 2012**

Public hearing to address proposed business highway sign fee increase

Oregon Travel Experience (OTE) will hold a special meeting on Monday, April 30, 2012 at 9:00 a.m. to collect public testimony on a proposed fee increase to the agency's Highway Business Sign Program. The hearing will be held at OTE's Salem offices located at 1500 Liberty St SE, Suite 150, Salem, OR 97302.

OTE is the state agency responsible for administering highway business signs along major interstates and highways. Since the agency is semi-independent, its Highway Business Sign Program operates much like private industry: the revenues generated from business sign permits fund the program. Since 1972 OTE has managed to keep permit fees lower than the national average.

The last permit fee increase was in 2006. However, since 2007, costs for materials such as steel, aluminum, treated wood posts and reflective sheeting needed to manufacture the signs have continued to increase. The permit fee increase is necessary to cover those costs.

OTE is proposing a permit fee increase to its customers of:

- Museum and non-profit signs: 10 percent per year
- For all other businesses: 20 percent per year

Public comment will be accepted in person at the hearing on the 30th, as well as in writing or via email. Members of the public wishing to submit or share printed materials in person are requested to provide a copy of their testimony to OTE. Testimony length may be limited, depending on the number of citizens signing up to testify. All testimony, written or verbal, will be reviewed.

The proposed fees will not take effect until the month that a current permit-holder renews. For help understanding the proposed fee increases, please contact OTE's Sales Director Harry Falisec at 1-800-574-9397, or by email to Harryf@oregonte.com

If you need special accommodations for the hearing, please contact Jenn Smith, 1-800-574-9397 at least 48 hours in advance of the special meeting. Email: Jenns@oregonte.com

For more information about OTE and its programs, contact Madeline MacGregor, OTE Communications Officer at 503-373-0090 or by email at maddiem@oregonte.com

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