



Oregon

Theodore R. Kulongoski, Governor

Department of Administrative Services

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Public Employees' Benefit Board and Educators Benefit Board choose new chief

Salem—The Public Employees' Benefit Board and the Oregon Educators Benefit Board have chosen Joan Kapowich as their new administrator, the state Department of Administrative Services announced Tuesday.

Kapowich will replace the current board administrator, Jean Thorne, who will retire from state service on November 30.

“Joan brings excellent credentials and impressive experience to this important position,” said Diane Lovell, Chair of the Public Employees' Benefit Board. “I know she will carry on the successful leadership of Jean Thorne in managing the benefits that mean so much to educators and public employees throughout Oregon.”

The Public Employees' Benefit Board (PEBB) is a labor-management board whose purpose is to provide high-quality benefits at a cost that's affordable to employees and state taxpayers. The Oregon Educators Benefit Board (OEBB) is a new institution that the 2007 legislature created to do the same for most of the state's public schools.

Each board's voting members are appointed by the governor and approved by the state senate. Both are part of the state's Department of Administrative Services. PEBB designs, purchases and administers healthcare and other benefits for state employees. OEBB will provide the same services for Oregon education system employees, beginning Oct. 1, 2008.

Kapowich will provide executive leadership for both boards. The PEBB serves 46,000 state and university employees and their families. The OEBB will serve employees and their families in up to 197 school districts and 20 education service districts.

Kapowich said she looks forward to tackling the job. “I'm anxious to begin the important work of ensuring that Oregon's public employees, school districts, and education service districts have reliable, effective benefit plans,” she said. “In this era of skyrocketing

health care costs, it's more important than ever that we provide plans that do the job at a cost Oregon can afford.”

Kapowich has an extensive background in health policy, benefits, medical contracting and state administration. After receiving degrees in both sociology and nursing, she began her career as a nurse consultant with the state of Oregon. She spent 11 years at SAIF Corporation as the medical services division director and the medical services manager. She subsequently worked eight years for the Oregon Department of Human Services' Office of Medical Assistance Programs as the policy section manager and the analysis and evaluation manager.