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University of Oregon's Lariviere, Kitzhaber strike a deal

Portland Business Journal - by Andy Giegerich, Business Journal staff writer

Date: Wednesday, March 30, 2011, 1:44pm PDT

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University of Oregon President **Richard Lariviere** has retrenched on his hard-line higher education reform stance.

Lariviere and Oregon Gov. **John Kitzhaber** reached an agreement through which UO would align two proposals — to establish local governing boards and public-private endowments for universities — with the governor's bill to establish an education investment board.

At the same time, UO would join the state's other universities, as well as board members and executives from the **Oregon University System**, in seeking more autonomy from legislative oversight. The schools hope to remove provisions that, among other rules, allow them to raise tuition only when legislators allow it.

Lariviere had previously indicated UO would essentially seek to operate independently of other universities seeking autonomy from legislative oversight. He's publicly espoused giving UO the right to issue its own bond, for perhaps nearly \$1 billion, that would fuel the school for the next three decades.

The schools want Oregon's senators and representatives to pass the autonomy provision this year and funding reforms during the February 2012 legislative session.

Lariviere said in a statement that Kitzhaber "embraced our vision of more accountability" through local governing boards" as well as the logic behind creating public-private endowment programs.

"We recognize that making big changes takes time; fortunately, this is a question of months, not years," he said. "We will continue working with the governor, legislature and other higher education leaders on our ideas for education excellence."

Kitzhaber and Lariviere exchanged letters on the matter Tuesday.
