

NORTHWEST

**Candidate discounts
need for tax reform**

SALEM — Despite the state's current budget squeeze, it's premature to say Oregon's tax system needs to be overhauled to provide more money for programs, gubernatorial candidate Kevin Mannix said Friday. 5038

Speaking to a group of child advocates, the Salem Republican also said the continuing squabbling in Salem over the state's \$482 million deficit has left many Oregonians disdainful of the state's political leadership.

His comments came at a forum sponsored by Children First for Oregon, a children's advocacy network, which a day earlier heard a presentation from Democratic gubernatorial contender Ted Kulongoski. Kulongoski said that more revenue is needed to support state services.

Mannix, a former House member who ran for attorney general in 2000, said the state shouldn't seek long-term changes in its tax system simply as a response to short-term problems brought on by the recession.

He said that as governor he would place top priority on programs involving public safety, education, seniors, persons with disabilities and young children.