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P R E S S R E L E A S E

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COUNTY/CITY LEAD BY YOUTH EXAMPLE

The Multnomah County Board of Commissioners votes tonight (Tuesday, May 22nd, 2007) to adopt Our Bill of Rights: Children and Youth, the first Bill of Rights in the nation written by youth and adopted by a local government.

The Multnomah Youth Commission, established a decade ago as part of the Commission on Children, Families & Community of Multnomah County, worked closely with the city of Portland and Multnomah County to organize young people and write the Bill of Rights. This past summer nearly 500 local young people came to what organizers called a “constitutional convention” to help write and ratify the Bill of Rights. The Board of Multnomah County Commissioners will consider adoption of the Bill of Rights during a public hearing from 5-6pm in the County Board Chambers (501 SE Hawthorne Blvd).

“It is my pleasure to support, along with my fellow commissioners, the Children and Youth Bill of Rights,” said Commissioner Maria Rojo de Steffey. “Our young people are one of our greatest resources and we will greatly benefit by their engagement.”

If adopted by the County, “Our Bill of Rights: Children and Youth” will study current efforts to engage young people and will look for innovative strategies to bring young people’s voices to the table.

Joshua Todd coordinator of the Multnomah Youth Commission stated, “As an adult my vote holds elected officials accountable, for youth the Bill of Rights ensures accountability to young people. In Multnomah County, one-in-five residents are under the age of 18. As a community we lose out on a lot if we don’t find ways to include them.”

NOTE: Youth will testify in Council on behalf of the Bill of Rights. Two of those testifying will be available for media interviews at 4:30 p.m. in the County Board Room.

TIME: 5 P.M.

WHEN: May 22, 2007

WHERE: Multnomah County Board Chambers, 501 SE Hawthorne Blvd.