

Palin raises money for GOP in liberal Oregon town



By JEFF BARNARD, Associated Press Writer

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EUGENE, Ore. – Sarah Palin praised Republicans at a fundraising dinner in a liberal-leaning Oregon town for having the boldness to invite her to speak Friday evening.

The former governor of Alaska and vice presidential candidate was the headliner in Eugene for the Lane County Republican Party's Lincoln Day dinner. She spoke as about 150 demonstrators gathered peacefully outside the fundraiser.

Eugene, home to the University of Oregon, is a Democratic stronghold in a blue state, and Lane County registers nearly twice as many Democrats as Republicans. But local GOP officials invited Palin to rally the GOP faithful.

Praising the spirit of the tea party movement, Palin exhorted local Republicans to run for office to take the country back from Democrats.

"Many of us are saying we've had enough, and it's time to take it back and put government back on the side of the people," she said to applause from about 800 people who paid \$250 apiece to hear her speak.

Palin said she read a story by The Associated Press on Friday that described Eugene as a crunchy granola town that reliably votes Democratic and loves organic food.

Palin told the crowd that she loves granola and organic food, as well as her Nike running shoes, which were developed by the company's founder in Eugene.

Reporters were prohibited from photographing or recording Palin, and watched her speech by video feed in a separate room.

She repeated familiar themes about drilling for oil in the United States rather than relying on foreign counties, the need to pay down the national debt and repealing the new health care law, which she called Obamacare.

"We have to make sure this Obamacare is short-lived or it will put us on this path toward insolvency," she said.

"To borrow their slogan, 'Yes, we can.' That's no way to lead a country. Just because you can doesn't mean you should. We say, 'Oh no you don't.' We're going to take it back."

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