



LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS® OF OREGON

Legislative Report

May 20, 2019

Volume 25, Number 14

2015 Legislative Session

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**Printer-Friendly
Version**

[HB 3470](#)

**ACTION ALERT
UPDATE: Work
Session on [HB 3470](#)
Climate and Justice
Act of 2015
postponed to 3:00
p.m. on May 20.**

We need you to act now!
to assist in achieving an
affirmative vote on this
Climate Stability and
Justice Act - a Carbon Cap
and Allocation Bill, HB
3470, in this session

**[Click here to read
LWVOR Action
Alert.](#)**

**[PERS Oregon
Supreme Court
Decision impacts
2017-2019 budget.](#)**

**[Click here to read
more.](#)**

Natural Resources

Climate Stability, Train Safety, ODFW, Capital Construction and More



[HB 3470A](#), the **Climate Stability and Justice Act of 2015**, work session was postponed to May 20 ([click here to see Alert in sidebar](#)) **It is expected to move to Ways & Means before a full House vote.** *Peggy Lynch, Natural Resources Coordinator*

We hope you all call or write your legislator and tell them how important it is to address climate change this session. Major coalition building is in process. Expect in the next three weeks that a major effort will be rolled out.

[HB 3225](#), the oil train safety bill, is also scheduled for a Work Session in House Rules on May 20. Oregon needs to be prepared in case of a serious train accident.

As part of the **Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife's** budget, the League reminded the Ways and Means Subcommittee on Natural Resources ([Click here for our earlier SB 5511 ODFW testimony](#)) that we support the proposed license/fee increase in [SB 247](#), along with a balance of General Funds to support programs of general public interest. With a big hole in their budget, those increases will be needed to preserve some important programs for the anglers and hunters in Oregon.

The League provided testimony to the Ways and Means Capital Construction Subcommittee on [HB 5030](#), the lottery bonding bill, noting the need for **better public access to Regional Solutions Advisory Committee meetings and asking that each Regional Solution project be considered on its own merit and not**

**Justice
Reinvestment
ACTION ALERT**
([Click here to read.](#))

[SB 5506](#)

Read the Street Roots
article: [Human
Reinvestment](#)
and see website:
[Partnership for Safety &
Justice](#)

The bill is still in the Joint W &
Means Subcommittee on Public
Safety

League Victory!

***Governor Signs
Firearms Safety
Act, SB 941, into
Law***

*This landmark
legislation was made
possible through the
passion and hard work
of gun safety
advocates. The
League's Action
member, Marge Easley,
is one who, with other
volunteers and alliances
helped make SB 941
law.*

***[Read Marge Easley's,
LWVOR Action Team
Member, testimony](#)***
*given during the marathon
hearing on this bill.*

[HB 2666](#)

put into a slush fund. ([Click here to read these concerns.](#))

HB 3549, the promised "aerial spray work group" bill, will have a public hearing and possible work session on **May 21**. We are hoping for amendments to strengthen the bill to address the issues from the **now-dead SB 613**. We are also advocating for **Policy Option Package 151** in the Department of Forestry budget (**HB 5019**) to increase public notification to nearby residents of a variety of forest operations.

We are watching two land use bills of concern. **SB 534** would allow urban services to be extended to airports-across farmland. Originally the Aurora Airport was the target, but Madras and other airports have now seen this as a way to make mini-industrial enclaves outside of small cities. **HB 3212** has a "relating to land use" clause that could make it a vehicle for "gutting and stuffing" the contents of **SB 25** or **SB 716**, both bills we thought were dead for the session. The contents of either would violate the tenets of our award-winning land use planning program.

Bills in Ways and Means We SUPPORT: **SB 246A** - onsite septic loan program, **SB 266A** - place based water planning, **HB 2633A** - natural hazards planning, **SB 830A** - suction dredge mining, **SB 952A** - task force on natural resource agencies-funding and efficiencies. With each of these bills, the Ways and Means Committee will need to weigh these requests for funding and their policies against current programs and funding needs.

Bills in Ways and Means We OPPOSE: **HB 3089A** - relating to mining.

Peggy Lynch, Natural Resources Coordinator; Claudia Keith, Climate Change Portfolio; Jennifer Haynes, Forests and Pesticides Portfolios; Marge Easley, Land Use and Aggregate/Mining Portfolio

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[Social Policy](#)

**The Revenue Forecast,
Budgets, Ways and
Means, Dept. of Human
Services, Bonding and
More**

What is best for Oregon farmland?

The League strongly opposed the bill that would alter key criteria to allowing mines on EFU land and "shift balance and overly favor the mining industry."* League and other opposition were met with powerful Aggregate Industry interests wanting to push this bill through on the fast track.

(This bill is currently in House Rules)

****Click here to read LWVOR testimony in OPPOSITION.***

Legislative Bill Work Session Deadlines:

05/22 - Deadline to post 2nd chamber work sessions

06/05 - Last day to hold work sessions for 2nd chamber.

ACTION ALERT SB 680

**National
Popular
Vote** 

Your involvement is needed. Senate Leadership is holding up a vote on this bill.

[Read how you can help.](#)

Support the Action
Committee!

The Revenue Forecast and Budget Committees grab our attention at this stage of the session. See notes on Social Policy directions in the past week.



Karen Nibler, Social Policy Coordinator

The **Joint Full Ways and Means Committee** met Friday to pass a few agency budgets and related bills. The most important bill was **[HB 5043](#)**, which was the Oregon Health Authority and Department of Human Services Rebalance of the 2013-2015 Budget. The Oregon Health Authority had a budget surplus because of lower costs. The Affordable Care Act (ACA) added 34,000 individuals in 14 months for a 17% caseload increase. Federal Funds have been available for services to this population, including addiction and mental health services. Budget committee members anticipate higher costs in the coming biennia to cover the expanded Medicaid population.

The **Department of Human Services** showed a decrease in Self Sufficiency cases as recipients returned to work. Child Welfare had an increase in guardianship and adoptions and in screening new referrals. Aging and People with Disabilities and Intellectual Disability populations had the highest spikes, with increased costs for community-based care and nursing homes for a larger population. OHA funds were shifted to DHS to balance the budget.

The **Revenue Forecast** revealed a 3% revenue increase and a kicker refund. The Budget Co-Chair announced that Ways and Means has five Fridays left to pass major budgets and that the budget will still be tight. The Chairs intend to keep ending balance contingency funds of \$100 - \$150 million.

The **Capital Construction Sub-Committee** held public hearings on Friday for **[HB 5005](#)** and **[5030](#)**, the bills for bonding public projects. Community members asked for funds for water projects in the eastern Columbia River and Deschutes River areas, redevelopment at Willamette Falls in Oregon City, replacement of a Fire Station in Baker County, a Health Clinic in Elgin, an alternative school in Rockwood, main street projects and the Oregon Housing Preservation Projects. All good projects, but how much will the bond funds cover?

The **Ways and Means Public Safety Sub-Committee** reviewed the Department of Corrections (DOC) Budget, **[SB 5504](#)**, in Phase 2 on Monday. DOC came to the Emergency Board in the interim for an



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Volunteer to work on issues for the 2015 Legislative Session
It's exciting!
Contact the [LWVOR Action Team](#)

State Bonding Capacity

For the 2015-17 biennium, the maximum recommended General Fund capacity is \$974 million and lottery bonding capacity is \$161 million. Both are less than the requests. Although our bond rating is AA+, factors that affect our rating include the Kicker Law, the volatility of our personal income tax and our active initiative process. Capital Construction informational hearing was held March 20th.

Information on bond financing: [State Bond Financing in Oregon](#) from the Department of Administrative Services (DAS)

additional \$29 million. The increased costs were largely from medical costs and medications for inmates. The request for this biennium is \$1.6 billion, with 45% of budget for prison operations, 15% for health care for inmates, and 16% for community corrections. DOC staff listed policy option packages for electronic medical records, an information technology system, a new telephone system, computers for educational purposes, and maintenance projects. The director and AFSCME asked for additional staff to provide relief for present prison staff. Too many prison employees were showing symptoms of stress and a staff wellness program is needed. The prison population was 14,584 as of March and is anticipated to grow to 15,046 in 2025. The women's prison is near capacity at 1280 and the annex at the Oregon State Pen may be opened if needed. [The League submitted a letter on March 19.](#)

The Justice Reinvestment Project in the Criminal Justice Commission Budget, [SB 5506](#), had a hearing on Thursday, May 14. Those who testified represented the courts, county commissioners, sheriffs, adult parole and probation and treatment programs. The most impressive testimony came from prior offenders who had reformed and now worked in community programs to help others. Legislators were visited that day by public safety representatives in their districts. The Oregon Coalition for Safety and Savings organized the visits. League members participated in the meetings and encourage local league members to contact their legislators to support the funding for community corrections services in their communities. The League submitted a letter on the CJC Budget on Feb 9 and sent the **Alert April 14** ([click here to see sidebar for the Action Alert](#)).

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Governance

Revenue Forecast, NPV, Women's Health & Wellness

Increased Dollars in Revenue Forecast

On May 14, the Oregon Office of Economic Analysis and the Legislative Revenue Office released the June, 2015 revenue forecast on which the Legislature will base its adopted budget for the 2015-17 biennia. While the figures could change between now and the final calculations after June 30, there is a



*Kappy Eaton,
Governance
Coordinator*

[Overview of the 2015
Debt Policy Advisory
Commission Report](#)

LWVOR Battle Front!
[Read the Issues on
Social Policy,
Governance and
Natural Resources as
captured by our
LWVOR Coordinators.](#)

*Are you ready for
"The Big One"?*

Use **OPB's
Aftershock** to find
the intensity and
community recovery
needed if the
earthquake hits your
area.

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Read Peter Wong's Portland
Tribune Article: [State
Revenue Forecast:
Kicker on the way](#)

Get the reactions from
Governor Brown and Others

Read the Office of Economic
Analysis
[May 14 Revenue
Forecast](#)

predicted 10.4% growth in the state's revenue from July 1, 2013 to June 30, 15. Looking at personal income and corporate tax returns, lottery resources and others, the projected 2015-17 biennial revenue is \$17,488.4 billion. That is welcome news, along with the increase in employment and some movement upward in wages. The economic uptick is finally taking place across the state, with rural areas showing improvement.

The state's reserve funds have grown substantially. The estimated Rainy Day Fund is \$212 Million. The Education Stability Fund is estimated at \$179.3 million. With the addition of reserves in the General Fund, the projected reserves total \$894.7

On the downside, the more than 2% increase in revenue from the projection in 2013, will trigger the kicker, amounting to a projected \$477.5 million return to personal income taxpayers. It will come in the form of a tax credit when individuals file their 2015 tax forms in April, 2016. The corporate over projected income of \$61.3 million will go into the General Fund, dedicated to K-12 education spending for 2015-17, as mandated in the constitutional amendment removing the money from corporation returns.

As might be expected, there are urgent calls from higher education presidents requesting additional budget dollars, social services programs with increased needs, expiring or new tax credits seeking funding, and new proposals asking to be included in the mix. When the \$7.25 billion K-12 budget was passed earlier, there was a hue and cry of a \$200 million inadequacy, which prompted legislative leadership to state that if there was a surplus, 40% would be added to the total. Between that and the \$61 million from the corporate kicker, K-12 looks better.

Rumors abound around the Capitol, and a current one is that in the Capitol backrooms, negotiations are going on regarding an **end-of-session Omnibus bill**. Now that an increased revenue projection has been made, a number of items on the back burner (so to speak) may move to a priority list. There also is a likely conflict growing between those legislators who want to save and those who want to spend, as well as on the priorities.

The **National Popular Vote Compact**, [HB 3475](#), passed from the House Rules Committee on May 11 and was scheduled for the House floor on Monday, May 18. With a significant number of prior bills carried over, the measure may not get discussed until later in the week.



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Two Redistricting bills passed from the Senate Rules Committee to the Senate floor. [SB 331](#) directs the Dept. of Corrections to determine the last-known address of inmates, so the Secretary of State can add the individuals to the populations of those places for the purpose of the census. [HB 2974 A](#) requires that 10 public hearings throughout the state must be held on congressional or state legislative reapportionment plans.

[SB 9](#), which passed the Senate unanimously, was heard in **House Rules** on May 13, but no action was taken. It directs the Secretary of State to conduct a Performance audit of state agency public records retention and disclosure practices, with analysis and recommendations on specified criteria by November 15.

The definition of "public official" is changed in [HB 2020](#) to include the First Partner, State Treasurer, Attorney General, Secretary of State and the Commissioner of the Bureau of Labor and Industries, and it prohibits any acceptance of money or other consideration for speaking or presentation engagements. The House Rules Committee held a hearing with no action on May 13.

Women's Health and Wellness

[SB 759](#), which requires both public and private colleges and universities to adopt written protocol for victims of sexual assault, has passed the Senate and it will go to the House Higher Education and Workforce Development Committee.

[SB 525 A](#), which prohibits the possession of firearms or ammunition by a person who is subject to a restraining order under the Family Abuse Protection Act, or who has been convicted of domestic violence crimes, was heard in Senate Rules on May 12. Some amendments are pending.

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