



LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS® OF OREGON

## Sine Die Legislative Report

August 24, 2015

Volume 25, Number 20

### In This Issue

#### NATURAL RESOURCES

SOCIAL POLICY

GUN SAFETY

GOVERNANCE

PUBLIC ACCESS

**Printer-Friendly  
Version**



*Congratulations!  
Norman Turrill,  
Government  
Specialist and  
LWVOR President  
named to serve on*

### Campaign Finance Reform Task Force

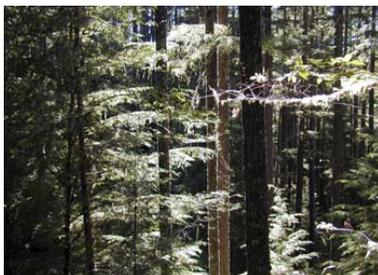
First meeting:

**Sept. 11 - Friday - 9:00  
AM - 1:00 pm** (Capitol, room  
TBD)

Secretary of State Jeanne Atkins,  
Chairperson

The task force was created  
as a result of

**HB 2178**



### Natural Resources

#### Land Use, Climate Change, Forests

Coordinator Peggy Lynch, Climate Change Portfolio Claudia Keith, Forests and Pesticides Portfolios Jennifer Haynes, Land Use and Aggregate/Mining Portfolio Marge Easley, Affordable Housing Portfolio Debbie Aiona.



*Peggy Lynch, Natural  
Resources  
Coordinator*

**Climate Change:** Claudia Keith. Our focus was on **HB 3470**, the Climate Stability and Justice Act. It would have required the Environmental Quality Commission to adopt, by rule, statewide greenhouse gas emissions limits every five years. Although it did not pass, many amendments were adopted and we expect some version of the bill to be filed in 2016.

We also supported **SB 324**, deleting the sunset clause on the Clean Fuels Program. The program is designed to reduce the life-cycle emissions of carbon from the fuel used in Oregon's transportation system. The importance of this bill is not only to reduce CO<sub>2</sub>, but to address Clean Air issues for the health of Oregonians. **HB 2281 B** was used as a mechanism to repeal **SB 324** and replace it with a transportation package that was intended to include programs that would equally reduce CO<sub>2</sub> emissions, but the calculations were incorrect AND did not address the Clean Air factor of Clean Fuels; therefore, we did not support **HB 2281 B** and it died in committee.

We supported **SB 477** with **-1 amendment**, a bill that would have moved Oregon from "Coal to Clean", requiring electric utilities to transition from coal to renewable energy sources. Although Portland General Electric's coal plant in Boardman is set to close in 2020, Pacific Power gets much of its electricity from coal plants in other states. This bill died in Committee, but we expect to see another effort in the future.

Photo Credit: Oregon Department of Forestry

**Elliott Forest:**  
*The League continues its work during the interim.*  
[Read the August 13 letter](#)  
*Natural Resources Coordinator Peggy Lynch and LWVOR Forestry Portfolio Jennifer Haynes submitted to the State Land Board.*  
*(More information in Peggy's report.)*  
[Read the press release.](#)

### Next Revenue Forecast from the [Office of Economic Analysis](#): August 26, 2015

*Want information about Oregon's Marine Reserves? Visit the brochure page of the OMRP website.*  
[\(Click here\)](#)

### [Join the League of Women Voters](#)

*A grass roots organization fighting for the involvement in our democratic government since its inception in 1920.*

**VOLUNTEER!**  
**Get in on the Action!**  
**The Team needs your help.**



Take part by using the Audio/Video capabilities available

**HB 3225**, addressing oil train safety, was significantly amended, but provides money to the State Fire Marshall to coordinate outreach, develop a spill response plan and for conducting exercises, training, and support for local public safety organizations. **SB 262** increases fees for an oil spill prevention program for planning and preparedness. We supported **SB 271** that requires the Oregon Department of Transportation, by rule, to establish a state safety oversight program that applies to rail systems in Oregon that are not subject to regulation by the Federal Railroad Administration. Again, inadequate to the need and possible consequences of any oil transport accident. *Imagine rail cars dumping into the Columbia Gorge?*

The League saw some good news with the filing of **HB 3415**, which would put a 10-year moratorium on hydraulic fracturing. However, with strong opposition, the bill was amended. After supporting the original bill, the League withdrew our support for the amended bill focusing on a study. It died in Ways and Means. We understand that a form of the original bill may be filed again next session.

**Land Use:** The League worked with others successfully to stop bills that would have weakened or destroyed our land use planning system (**SB 25**, **SB 716** and **SB 748**). Instead, we focused on **Goal 7 rulemaking** ([click here to read](#)). The tragedy in Oso, Washington, is evidence that we need to address not only earthquake and tsunami disasters, but also landslides, flooding and wildfires. Although not successful, we hope that a version of **HB 2633** will return next session. The Governor has authorized a new position of State Resiliency Officer to coordinate agencies around hazards issues.

As a member of the Housing Alliance, we supported **HB 2564**, which would have removed the ban on **inclusionary zoning** and allowed local governments to consider adding such a requirement to ensure that a percentage of units in a development is affordable to households below a certain income level. The tool is flexible and can be tailored to meet each community's needs. The bill passed the House but we were a few votes short in the Senate. **We expect to see the bill introduced again next session.**

**Mining:** Marge Easley: The mining industry was successful in convincing legislators that natural resource extraction would be good for rural economies. The League continues to be concerned

through the Oregon Legislative Information System (OLIS).  
You can listen in from home!

Test it out! Listen to a previous hearing [\(click here\)](#).

Or if you crave to feel history in the making you can sit in on hearings at the Capitol to take your objective notes.

*Unable to directly participate?*

Our coordinators and specialists are all volunteers, still there are costs associated with preparing testimony, keeping records and sponsoring events. Donations are always welcome.



## ***Environmental Litigation Who sues?***



According to the **Government Accountability Office**: nearly half of all litigation against the Environmental Protection Agency is brought by trade groups and polluting industries (48%). State and local environmental groups brought just 16%, and national groups 14%. You can view the full report here:

[Environmental Litigation](#)

about the environmental impact of these projects. The League testified in opposition to bills brought forward by Oregon's mining industry: Only [HB 3089](#) passed, while [HB 2666](#) remained in committee at the end of the session.

[HB 3089](#) authorizes DOGAMI to compile existing studies of the mining resource potential of Eastern and Southern Oregon counties and to present the results by September, 2016. The League objected to the use of DOGAMI's limited resources when drought conditions exist in much of the state, and groundwater studies should have priority. We also pointed out that adequate water is a vital component of mining operations, and mining exploration is typically the responsibility of the industry itself. \$25,000 in General Funds were allocated to this limited project.

[HB 2666](#) raised major red flags for the farming community and the League as it would have made it significantly easier to site a mine on farm or forest land. It not only redefined "surrounding lands" and "significant impact" but lessened environmental and transportation standards and set stricter criteria for when mitigation is required for a mining site.

In 2013, [SB 838 \(2013\)](#), a bill limiting suction dredge mining, passed. It included a provision that, should no bill to set limits on the activity pass in 2015, a moratorium would begin on January 1, 2016. We supported [SB 830](#) to remove the moratorium and direct the Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ) to do rulemaking on a consolidated permit program. **SB 830 did not pass**, so the **Departments of State Lands (DSL)** and DEQ are beginning the process of implementing the moratorium.

**Water:** The League worked with others to develop a comprehensive budget for the **Water Resources Department (WRD)**. As such, we did not have to address many water policy bills. [SB 266](#), that will establish an opportunity for broad geographic areas to plan for future water needs, did pass, along with \$750,000 of bonding money to begin this process in 2-3 areas of the state. **We encourage local Leagues to engage in efforts in their areas.**

Working with Senator Roblan and Representative McKeown, our other main priority was [SB 246](#), which would have set up an on-site septic loan program for low income Oregonians. **Failing septic systems are a major public health and water quality issue.** We were unsuccessful, but hope to see the concept return in 2016 or 2017.



## DAY AT THE LEGISLATURE

is coming

February 23rd

[Look for upcoming information on registration on our website.](#)

### **Oregon gets lowest ranking in lobbyist transparency.**

The [Sunlight Foundation](#), aptly named for its work to bring transparency to government, gave Oregon an "F" for lobbyist transparency. Read the [Oregonian article by Ian Kullgren.](#)

The League has a long history in fighting for more government accountability.

Click here for a list of lobbyists compiled by the Oregonian/Oregon Live: [Registered Lobbyists](#)



Although the League did not specifically testify on the water-related requests in [HBs 5030](#) or [5005/5006](#), the lottery and general fund bonding bills, we were generally supportive of funding for planning, feasibility studies and project implementation contained in these bills. We are hopeful that the rules adopted from the work of [SB 839 \(2013\)](#) will provide guidance for any storage projects considered under this state funding.

**Forests and Pesticides: Jennifer Haynes:** The League joined with others, including our partner, Beyond Toxics, to support [SB 613](#), a comprehensive aerial spraying bill. Although it did not get a hearing, a number of House bills were considered. After a Work Group was convened, a weak compromise was adopted. Due to the impact on Curry County residents who experienced a serious aerial spray incident, [Curry County League President Lucie La Bonte](#) provided testimony in support of [HB 3549](#) in hopes of getting some assistance in addressing this serious health problem. The League also supported increased funding in the Department of Forestry budget to enhance notice, including electronic notice to citizens of pending aerial spraying.

We supported [HB 3474](#) to allow for a Trust Lands Transfer of the **Elliott State Forest** because the forest has become an Oregon icon and something other than an "investment" that is meant to earn an income for the Common School Fund, if only for the endangered species that use the forest. As such, the League supports a plan to decouple the school funding from timber receipts from the Elliott State Forest, replace those receipts through more responsible sources, and keep the Elliott State Forest as a public treasure for future generations. The bill failed in committee. We also provided [testimony](#) to the State Land Board related to the future of the Elliott State Forest. That work continues.

**Regional Solutions:** The League has been engaged in the new governmental structure of 11 designated "regions" of the state where a number of state agency staff are co-located with the goal of fostering economic development. In 2014, [HB 4015 \(2014\)](#) passed, which set up formal Regional Advisory Committees (RAC) for each region. The League continues to work to increase public notice and participation at these meetings, particularly since the former Governor authorized each RAC to submit a \$2 million ask for projects in the 2015 state budget. We testified in support of [HB 3417](#)

Legislators, committees, agencies and statewide officials. 1003 were passed by the Senate. 1079 were passed by the house.

**[Enter the League of Women Voters Bill Matrix. Click Here!](#)**

### **Did you know . . .**

that fire seasons are now 78 days longer than they were in the 1970s?

These catastrophic blazes are projected to burn twice as many acres by 2050.



Governor Kate Brown declared drought emergencies in three more counties (Curry, Hood River and Union) bringing the total to 23. Doubling the 2014 total. Long-term forecasts continue to call for temperatures well above normal. Low river and stream levels are of concern.

For more information visit [www.drought.oregon.com](http://www.drought.oregon.com) that also launched twitter #drought.

**LWV<sup>®</sup> LWVOR and The Terminator have something of Oregon in common...a position on climate change.**

**[bit.ly/1e3wXao](http://bit.ly/1e3wXao)**  
**[bit.ly/1HOSjQL](http://bit.ly/1HOSjQL)**

to increase public notice for these RAC meetings. We also participated in a rulemaking discussion with Business Oregon to increase access and information. Although [HB 3417](#) did not pass, we have been promised additional conversations and rulemaking around increased notice and a more consistent process for these RACs. **We also followed the budget of the Office of the Governor, [HB 5021](#)**, since staff for these RACs are based in the Governor's Office. The End of Session bill included authorization to move 5 limited duration (one session) staffers to permanent positions in the Governor's Office but no new positions.

Because the RACs offered their \$2 million each wish lists that varied from capital projects to service/non-capital projects, we testified on [HB 5030](#), the lottery bonding bill containing the request for these Regional Solutions projects and on [SB 5525](#), the Oregon Business Development Department budget where a Regional Solutions fund is located. We asked the legislature to consider each request individually to assure that the "ask" fit their overall budget and recognize that these requests might also be contained in other budget requests. \$14 million of the requests were approved as individual projects, not placed in an Infrastructure Finance Authority fund. The \$7 million non-capital projects to be funded by lottery dollars (rather than bonds) were not approved.

**Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife (ODFW):** Natural Resource agencies are always challenged to get General Funds to pay for services they provide to the public. We supported [HB 3315](#) that requires ODFW to calculate costs for services provided to other agencies and to bill them to recoup these costs. Although we did not provide testimony on [HB 2402](#), we worked with others to help develop the final bill to define a Task Force on Future Funding of ODFW. We signed on to a letter in support of a complete, balanced ODFW funding package with a number of our partners.

**Department of Environmental Quality:** The League took note of [SB 412](#) and how certain dredge materials are placed in uplands. We worked with DEQ to clarify the bill and be sure that DEQ's responsibility to public health continued to be addressed. We also worked with others on amendments to [SB 829](#), a bill that would establish methodologies for the assessment of waters of the state. The League supports public involvement, but we did not want new standards required by the



[Click here to see and share the LWVOR tweet.](#)

### Bills with Bonds:

Many of the bonds authorized will not be sold until the spring of 2017 so that the cost of debt will not accrue until the 2017 budget cycle.

### Interim Legislative Days

September 28-30, 2015  
November 16-18, 2015  
January 13-15, 2016

### Possible Task Force Days (optional)

October 1, 2015  
November 19, 2015

### SHORT SESSION 2016: February 1 - March 6

### [Interim and Short Session Calendar](#)

### [SB 939](#)



### [Children of](#)

federal government stalled by cumbersome procedures potentially reducing water quality.

**Natural Resource Agency Budgets:** The League is a member of the Oregon Conservation Network (OCN). We work with the other 40+ members to assure fair funding for the 14 natural resource state agencies. OCN submitted a budget request letter to the Governor in 2014, to the Ways and Means Co-Chairs at the beginning of the 2015 session and a more detailed letter later in session. We met with the Co-Chairs of the Natural Resources Subcommittee of Ways and Means on individual budgets and on the Common Budget Letter.

### Separately, League submitted testimony on the following budgets:

The Department of Agriculture budget, [HB 5002](#), with a focus on Water Quality; The Department of Environmental Quality budget, [HB 5018](#), again with a focus on Water Quality, but also Air and Land Quality issues; [HB 5019](#), the Department of Forestry budget, again focusing on water quality, but also on the need for increased notification to citizens of forestry actions such as aerial spray; [HB 5027](#), the Department of Land Conservation and Development budget, where we supported monies for climate change work such as continuation of Metropolitan Planning Organization work to reduce transportation greenhouse gases, for monies for local planning efforts and for work on natural hazards rulemaking (This was our main budget failure-neither of these positions were funded.); The Land Use Board of Appeals budget, [HB 5028](#), to include a full time staff attorney-a position that works with the public to help better understand the appeals process; [HB 5037](#), the budget for the Department of State Lands, to assure their continued work on wetlands and waters of the state. We also commented on their role in the Portland Harbor cleanup, Elliott Forest and other management issues ([read the testimony](#)).; The Water Resources Department budget, [HB 5042](#), with a focus on implementation of the Integrated Water Resources Strategy that the League helped develop, including place-based planning, data collection so any storage projects being considered would be based on need and data and addressing the need for more data on groundwater as more areas of the state are tapping this resource; [SB 5512](#), the Department of Geology and Mineral Industries budget, to encourage General Funds to address their work on natural hazards and groundwater data; [SB 5522](#) and [SB 5525](#), the Oregon Marine Board budget and fees, that includes

## ***Incarcerated Parents Packet***

***[\(Click here to get  
detailed information.\)](#)***

***(Read the about activity on  
SB 939 in the [Social Policy  
report.](#))***

## **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)

### **[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.](#)***



**[LWVOR UPDATES HEALTH CARE PAYER STATEMENT \(click here\)](#)**

fees for stopping aquatic invasive species from entering the state; [SB 5528](#), the budget for the State Parks and Recreation Department, where we expressed concern at the proposed reduction in property acquisition funds, the need to move forward with scenic waterways designations and addressing climate change risks, especially at our coastal parks; the Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife budget, [SB 5511](#), with a focus on water quality, recognizing the importance of scientists to help with a variety of permitting actions for which the public's interest should be protected. We advocated for increased General Funding as well as supported [SB 247](#), a bill that increased hunting and fishing licenses and fees; we also supported \$5 million in [SB 5531](#), the budget for the Department of Police's Fish and Wildlife Division. This money was approved.

**The League participates in the development of these agencies' budgets during the interim.** Working with others and engaging early in the process helps increase our influence. The League not only testifies on legislative bills, but we engage with agencies in policy work. We testified to the Board of Forestry, to the Land Conservation and Development Commission and **are serving on a rulemaking committee to develop a "streamlined" Urban Growth Boundary process** for small cities and separately for larger cities. We commented with others on the Department of Agriculture's **Water Quality Program. Members serve on** the Healthy Climate Partnership group, DEQ's Blue Ribbon Advisory Committee, ODFW's External Budget Advisory Committee, Depts. of Agriculture and Water Resources stakeholders groups, as well as a broader Natural Resources Agencies stakeholders group convened by the Governor's Natural Resources Policy Advisor. **We have a member serving on the Oregon Health Authority's Drinking Water Committee.** We are active members of the Oregon Conservation Network and the Revenue Coalition. **We are watching the initiative process**, as there are potential measures that may support or oppose League positions. **For instance**, the oil industry is collecting signatures to repeal [SB 324](#), Clean Fuels. Remember to **"Think before you Ink"** on all initiatives being circulated.

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## **[Social Policy](#)**

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## Moments from the 78th Legislative Assembly

See the **Action Alerts** Issued by the Action Team for the 78th Assembly

[Click here to see all Action Alerts](#)

## Health Care, Judicial, WIC, Seniors and more . . .



*Karen Nibler, Social Policy Coordinator*

For the Sine Die edition we are reporting on final budget outcomes. There were pleasant surprises and a long list of local projects around the state that were approved. Earlier agency budgets had reduced requests, but in the last reconciliation and bonding bills funds were added in response to activists and citizen input. We are reporting briefly on some of the outcomes.

**The Ways and Means Subcommittee on Human Services** makes decisions on the level of support for both the Department of Human Services and the **Oregon Health Authority**. These two agencies represent the highest costs in the Oregon State Government, a total of \$26.7 billion. The most recent [Legislative Report #19](#) gave details on the DHS Budget and [LR #18](#) had details on the OHA related budgets. In the final days of the session, [SB 5507 A](#), a Budget Reconciliation bill, set aside \$39.7 million for potential caseload growth in both human services and health services.

Self Sufficiency enhancements in [HB 2015](#) will provide day care for working parents and [HB 3535](#) provides supplemental benefits to parents in the transition from welfare to work. The League was in favor of support for working parents. The Oregon Food Bank was transferred to DHS and additional funds for hunger were granted for the Women Infants and Children and the Senior nutrition programs. The Budget Reconciliation bill added funds to DHS for pilot programs for parents in community college and pilots for foster care with additional training for foster parents.

**Runaway and Homeless Youth** funding was expanded to \$1.6 million, and an Advisory Committee in [HB 2232](#) was appointed to make recommendations on the funding decisions. The League supported this bill and will provide input to this committee. The advisory committee is meeting and reporting back in December 2015, before the start of the 2016 Session.

The **Aging and People with Disabilities Division** received funds to maintain counseling for options for seniors and disabled persons in Area Agencies. A data system for elder abuse reports will be

**HB 2177**

Norman, Governor Brown, Kappy and Becky at Motor Voter Signing

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

**HB 2974 Signed by Governor.  
LWVOR Works to bring**



**Transparency to the Redistricting Process.**

Read **[LWVOR testimony](#)** by Norman Turrill, current President & Government Specialist.

**[Read the LWVOR Redistricting Study](#)**

**ACTION ALERT  
SB 680**

developed. Funds for residential care facilities staffing were reserved pending negotiations. Budget Notes included in the **[SB 5507](#)**  
**[A](#)** Reconciliation bill asked for reports back on direct care workforce shortages by December 2015.

**Oregon Health Authority Services** were expanded with dental clinics for children in pilot projects funded in the Budget Reconciliation. The school based health clinics received funds for equalization across the system, but not for additional sites as requested. **[SB 698](#)** added a school nurse consultant to the OHA staff, with a request to find financial support for school nurses. **[SB 478](#)** gave OHA the task of listing toxic chemicals in children's products within their approved budget.

The Study Bill, **[HB 2828](#)**, was supported with \$300,000 to start the process. The bill originally failed in the Senate, but it passed on a second attempt. The Basic Health expansion in **[HB 2934](#)** was passed earlier and application details will be reported in future sessions. A Budget Note in the Budget Reconciliation bill asked OHA to report on hospital assessment revenues available for 2015-17 to support the present health care system.

Addictions and Mental Health bills were passed at the end of the session. **[SB 465](#)** specified county and community responsibilities for mental health commitments, **[SB 696](#)** expanded coverage for services for children with autism, and **[SB 832](#)** integrated physical health and behavioral health services within the coordinated care organizations. Next session marijuana use prevention and treatment for youth is anticipated in both public health and mental health divisions. **[HB 2546](#)** contained restrictions on the use of e-cigarettes this session, but **[SB 663](#)** on adolescent use failed this session. A Budget Note requested a report from OHA on an increase in rates to addiction treatment providers by Nov. 2014.

**Two mental health bills** related to the legal process of determining fitness passed in **[HB 2382](#)**, which allows the fitness determination at any stage in legal proceedings and **[HB 3347](#)**, which changed the definition of mental illness to add "unable to provide for basic personal needs that are necessary to avoid serious physical harm in the near future." These changes were made in order to facilitate eligibility for mental health services. A Budget note in the Reconciliation bill asked OHA to hold 5 community meetings on the status of mental health services in different areas of the state.

National  
Popular   
Vote

Your involvement is needed.  
Senate Leadership is holding  
up a vote on this bill.  
[Read how you can  
help.](#)

## [HB 3470](#)

### **ACTION ALERT** **UPDATE: Work** **Session on [HB 3470](#)** **Climate and Justice** **Act of 2015**

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.](#)

### **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.](#)**

**The Oregon Housing and Community Services Department** will receive \$10 million for energy assistance from [SB 5507](#), and will get bonding authority of \$2.5 million for preservation of existing low income housing and \$20 million for new mental health housing projects from Lottery Bonds in [HB 5030](#). The League supported [HB 2825](#) on the mental health projects, as well as the OHCS Budget. [HB 3420](#) on the **Housing First** model died. [HB 2547](#) set up a **Task Force on Housing First** with Services, and the Task Force is to report back by Dec. 2015. [HB 3148](#) set up a fund for homeowners who lost housing in fires.

[HB 2198](#) on fast track housing for low income families was passed out of Ways and Means and was passed on the House floor. However, it was on the Senate second reading calendar on the sine die date, so it was not passed. The funds for this project, \$40 million, were approved in [HB 5006](#) for Capital Construction. This bill also provided for construction in Youth Challenge and Oregon Youth Authority campuses, as well as maintenance in the Department of Corrections facilities.

**The Public Safety Subcommittee** did not recommend judicial raises for the Oregon Judicial Branch, but the final budget bills included the cost of living raises for judges at the same rate as administrative managers. The Public Defense Services Commission received additional funds for expenses for mileage for defense attorneys. These agency budgets were reported in more detail in [LR # 18](#). [HB 5029](#) allocated Criminal Fines and Assessment (\$72.45 million) in funds to Courthouse security and facilities projects, to the Department of Justice for Victim Services, to the Oregon State Police for emergency services, to Community Corrections for juveniles and adults, and for Addiction Services. The Circuit Courthouses will have seismic upgrades if needed, but the Supreme Court remodel will not.

The **Oregon Youth Authority** received funds for **new construction on the MacLaren campus** in Woodburn. The Hillcrest facility will be closed and OYA intake will be moved to the MacLaren site. The League supported the remodel and new construction on this campus. **Budget notes** required a report on behavior management in OYA facilities before the 2016 session.

The Department of Corrections received funds for Electronic Medical Records in its health programs. The Coffee Creek Parenting Program in [SB 939](#) was

**ACTION ALERT****SJR 5****Campaign Finance Reform**

Your involvement is needed. Tell Senator **Senator Diane Rosenbaum** to move the bill forward. Senate Leadership is holding up a vote on this bill. **[Read how you can help.](#)**

## Support the Action Committee!



Please show your appreciation of the Action Committee and the Legislative Administrator by making a donation to **[LWVOR](#)**

It is your support that makes it possible to carry out this advocacy work at the Legislature



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

incorporated into the already determined DOC Budget in **[SB 5504](#)**. No new construction was approved for adult prisons. The **[HB 3503](#)** pilot programs for sentencing alternatives for parents was passed and funded in the Community Corrections section of the budget. The League advocated for both of these bills.

The **Criminal Justice Commission** received an additional \$5 million in the Budget Reconciliation bill to bring to \$40 million the resources for grants to County Community Corrections Departments for prison diversion programs to manage offenders in the community. The League sent out an Alert requesting support for this program. The original request was \$60 million. Most Public Safety Budgets were cut from their original requests, but the agencies can reappear in the Interim or the Session in 2016.

In the Department of Education Operations Budget, **[HB 5016](#)**, Early Learning programs received \$100 million in new, targeted resources to get our youngest Oregonians on track and ready to succeed in kindergarten. **[HB 3380](#)** created a new mixed-delivery preschool program. Three- and four-year old children whose families' income is up to 200% of the Federal Poverty Line will be eligible for the preschool program. Funding of \$27 million will go to Oregon Head Start Pre-Kindergarten to serve children on their waitlists and to mixed-delivery preschool programs for 1,400 children to have access to preschool starting in fall 2016. The League supported both the budget and preschool programs.

The legislature increased funding for the Healthy Families Oregon (HFO) home visiting program by \$9.5 million. Last biennium, there were over 1,100 families, who were screened, determined to eligible for the program, but were unable to because of lack of funding. This new funding will help serve many of these families. Budget Notes in the Budget Reconciliation bill required Healthy Families outcome metrics for the continuation of July 2016 funding.

The Legislature increased funding for Early Intervention/Early Childhood Special Education (EI/ESCE) by \$4 million. This increase in funding will help address growth in enrollments due to the expansion of developmental screening. EI/ECSE enrollments will need to be monitored to see if the \$4 million investment is sufficient to cover this growth. Budget notes stipulated that \$500,000 will support developing pathways from screening to services in the Early Intervention/Early Childhood



Special Education program and requested a report on screening and EI/SECE services for the 2017 session.

Relief Nurseries received an additional \$1.2 million in funding, bringing their total state funding to \$10.6 million. This increased funding will enable more families to be served and increase the number of satellite Relief Nurseries. These programs help stabilize families and prevent foster care placements.

[HB 5017](#), the General School Fund, funded statewide all-day kindergarten for the first time, further linking the transition from Early Learning to K-12. **HB 5017** had two new allocations for At Risk Students. \$12.5 million was allocated for English Language Learners programs, with \$10 million of these funds directed to 30 to 35 low performing schools and \$2.5 million for other districts to carry out the statewide English Language Learners plan. [HB 3499](#) created an English Language Learner program and required DOE to establish two advisory workgroups. The second new allocation, for just under \$2.4 million, provides free lunches to those students currently eligible for reduced price lunches. [HB 2545](#) passed Education Committees earlier in the session.

**Youth Development Division** programs are funded in the Department of Education Budget too, and seek to serve students ages 6-20 with school incentives and workforce programs. [HB 2016](#) requires a statewide plan for black and African American students experiencing disproportionate results across the education continuum. The **HB 5016 Budget** provided backfill for the loss of Federal block grant funds so that YDD will have \$12 million in General Fund money. The agency will have \$2.3 million for Youth and Community Grants, but the proposed projects far exceed the available funds.

The Senate Education Committee discussed these policy bills, [SBs 213](#), [214](#), [215](#) and [217](#), as they proposed major changes to education.

**SB 213** established the roles of the regional hubs and the outcome metrics for the hub organizations. **SB 214** proposed the **age 3 through grade 3 reading initiatives**. **SB 215** changed the OEIB roles. **SB 217** proposed investments in Oregon Early Reading programs. The League has monitored the Early Learning development throughout the 2015 Session and is reporting details on these bills.

**SB 213** removed the language of "demonstration project" from the statutory language governing regional Hubs. Hubs will be responsible for guiding community investments for \$1.3 million in Great Start funds, \$2.5 million in federal Family Support funds, and \$2.3 million in funds for Focused Child Care Networks. In the 2015 legislative session, Early Learning Hubs received a total funding appropriation of \$27,635,220, which was a significant increase over the last biennium, and will allow hubs to hire staff and develop local programs. **SB 214** proposed the "Age Three Through Grade Three Reading Initiative" and early literacy curriculum, but the bill was not passed out of the Joint Committee On Ways and Means. However, the Early Learning Division received \$5.1 million in new funding this legislative session, for the purpose of improving the readiness of children for kindergarten and an aligned pathway between early childhood services age three to grade three.

**SB 215** eliminated the OEIB Board, changed the name of the agency to the Chief Education Office (CEO), and renamed the head as Chief Education Officer. The CEO will focus work on coordination across agencies, but authority is limited to design and planning. **SB 217** aligns strategic investments to the new role of the CEO. A work group continues to refine changes that may become bills in the 2016 legislative session.

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## Social Policy: Gun Safety

The League was an active member of the Oregon Alliance for Gun Safety during this session and testified on a variety of gun-related bills. The primary accomplishment was the hard-won passage of **SB 941**, the **Oregon Firearms Safety Act**, making Oregon the 12th state to require background checks for firearms sales and transfers between private individuals. Another big win was **SB 525**, restricting the possession of weapons by domestic violence offenders. However, **SB 945**, the child access prevention bill, failed to win enough support, and we will be working hard for its passage in 2016.



*Marge Easley,  
LWVOR, Gun  
Safety  
Advocate*

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## GOVERNANCE

### New Motor Voter, Ethics, CFR Task Force

Governance includes the areas of elections, ethics, fiscal policy, public records, redistricting, and campaign finance reform. While the governance discussions during the 2015 legislative session were not extensive, the seven bills signed by the Governor are of significance and supported by the League. Also of note are several measures which died in committee or were not referred in the second chamber, although they had good citizen and legislative support.



*Kappy Eaton,  
Governance  
Coordinator*

The Governor has signed the following:

\*[HB 2177](#), nicknamed "**new motor voter**" and dealing with voter registration, was the primary proposal introduced by then Secretary of State Brown on the first day of the session. It passed both houses in two weeks. With implementation by January 1, 2016, Oregon again leads the nation in voter registration modernization by registering citizens automatically when they receive a driver's license, renew a license or receive an official identification card. Since the requirements for a vehicle license are the same as for voter registration (date of birth, proof of citizenship, Oregon residency) the ability of the Department of Transportation to electronically send the legally signed license information to the Secretary of State (SOS) enables the automatic registration.

By administrative rule, the SOS will establish the process. Upon receipt, the SOS will forward the information to the county election office in the appropriate county of residence. A postcard notification to the licensee will indicate their voter registration, county, and the opportunity to opt out or choose a political party affiliation. The recipient has 21 days to respond. The name of any person not yet 18 will not become of public record until they are officially eligible to receive a ballot. The statewide Central Voter registration list will be checked to determine if the licensee or person seeking an official ID card are already registered. The measure also relates to the status of Oregon minor political parties for the November 2, 2016

General Election. The total number of Oregon registered voters as of July 1, 2015 will be the total used in 2016 for initiative signature totals, and for the 2016 elections.

\***HB 2019 B** enacts important changes to the Oregon Government Ethics Commission. The number of members increases from seven to nine. All are appointed by the Governor, with eight coming from recommendations made by Senate and House leadership recommendations, and one independently. There can be no more than three from each of the major political parties, down from four. Additions to the list of state public officials who must file an annual statement of economic interest with the Commission are the spouse/partner of the Governor and the Deputy Secretary of State. Changes are made to the Commission's handling process for reviewing complaints, greater oversight by the Executive Director, and recommendations for quicker action on complaints as they move through the several stages of consideration. To expedite the Commission's work, \$200,000 has been allocated for an electronic case management system.

\***HB 2020** is the combination of four proposals regarding the definition and status of Oregon Public Officials. It arose from the resignation of former Governor Kitzhaber and the accompanying charges involving the Governor's "partner" and various staff members and consultants. The Governor's spouse or partner or whatever the person may be referred to, shall be known as the First Partner and designated as an official public official, subject to any and all regulations and policies regarding such officials. It also adds the Deputy SOS and First Partner to the mandated Statement of Economic Interest for the Ethics Commission, as well as all policy advisors in the Governor's office. There is a fine of \$10,000 for any violations of the regulations by the stated public officials, which now include the Governor, First Partner, Secretary of State, Deputy Secretary of State, State Treasurer, Attorney General, Commissioner of the Bureau of Labor and Industry, and legal counsels and advisors on the Governor's staff. Violations include any acceptance of honorariums, money, etc. for speeches or presentations.

\***HB 2178 B** started out as a campaign finance reform proposal. It would have required that any campaign contribution of more than \$2500, made within the last 14 days prior to an election, must be reported within 48 hours. It added critical, late disclosure information about campaigns for either a candidate or an initiative proposal.

By amendment to the original bill, a Task Force on Campaign Finance Reform, appointed and chaired by the Secretary of State, was added. Given the Legislature's reluctance to take any serious steps towards curbing the rising costs of elections, the final bill removed the disclosure requirement and kept the Task Force. The Secretary of State will appoint the 17 members of the Task Force, which will hold four meetings between September and the December 31, 2015 deadline for reporting any recommendations to the Legislature. The make-up of the Task Force includes five members representing Oregon political parties, with at least one member from the two major parties; two members not affiliated with any party; **one member representing interests of LWV of Oregon**; one member from organizations that focus on campaign finance reform; one member representing non-profits and one from for-profit organizations; two representatives, one from each party, by the Senate President; two representatives, one from each party, by the House Speaker. Is meaningful reform possible?

\*[SB 9](#) will hopefully bring about the much-needed changes to Oregon Public Records. Problems exist in records retention, exemptions to access, timeliness in answering requests and low funding for records staff, among others. The legislation requires the Secretary of State to conduct a performance audit of state agencies' retention and disclosure practices regarding public records with a sampling of agencies. The audit will examine large agencies (500 or more employees), medium size agencies (51-500), and small agencies (up to 50).

By November 20, 2015, the SOS is to report with recommendations for records practices and procedures, storage availability, system of cataloging entries, exemptions (over 400 currently), fees and waivers, workloads, staff accuracy, staff cuts, timeliness, training and responsibility, inconsistency, and complaints. Best practices in public records management and the use of technology are to be included in the report. The problems also exist at local government levels, and the expectation is that the recommendations can be useful in addressing those issues.

\*[HB 2924](#) codifies the public input necessary in any discussion of legislative and congressional redistricting required after each 10-year federal census. Oregon law mandates that the Legislature create the redistricting plan during the session immediately after the federal census or it will be

done by the Secretary of State. In 1981, 1991 and 2001 the task fell to the SOS, and each one made an effort to inform the public and offer the ability to offer changes and discuss the proposed changes. In 1991 and 2001, multiple meetings were held across the state, assisted by the increasing ability of technology to produce more distinct and accurate copies of the proposals. By 2011, the Legislature was able to put together a joint House and Senate, bi-partisan Redistricting Committee that developed multiple area maps, down to census blocks. Meetings were held in all areas, with consideration of public recommendations, and a successful reapportionment was achieved.

The public participation has increased each decade, but the decisions for inclusion have been up to the Legislature or the SOS. This new legislation mandates at least 10 public meetings across the state prior to formally proposing the redistricting plan. Five statewide meetings, if possible, will be held prior to any vote on a proposed plan. Efforts are mandated to provide video-conferencing or other means to reach remote areas. The public must be given appropriate and timely notice of all meetings with times and locations. There must be at least one hearing in each of the five Congressional Districts. At least one hearing of the 10, and one of the 5 must be held in the area where the largest shift in population over the decade has occurred, and priority given to holding additional hearings at remote sites.

**[HB 2960](#)** creates the Oregon Retirement Savings Board, the brain-child of State Treasury Secretary Ted Wheeler who championed the idea at the League's Legislative Day in January. The seven-member Board will be appointed by the Governor. With four year terms, it will include representatives from employers, investment expertise, associations representing employees, and retired citizens. Ex-officio will be one state Senator and one Representative. The Board first will develop a defined contribution statement plan for employed persons, followed by conducting a market and legal analysis of the plan.

Powers of the Board are to establish and maintain a plan, set up the Fund within the State Treasury, separate from the General Fund, and with interest kept in the Fund. This must be done before the Plan is implemented. Data gathered by the State Treasurer over the past five years indicated that more than half of middle-aged Oregon workers have less than \$5000 in retirement savings and no retirement financial plans. This savings plan is

voluntary for employees, and employers can choose to collect through payroll deductions an amount to be sent to the state Retirement Fund, but participation also is voluntary. Both employers and employees have expressed interest in the Fund, but marketing by the Board will be necessary.

Worth mentioning are three bills that either died in committee or were not allowed to have a hearing in the second chamber.

**[HB 3475/SB 680](#)** were the third attempts to add Oregon to the approval of the interstate compact for a National Popular Vote of the U.S. President. Eleven states, with 61% of the Electoral College votes needed to override, have now passed NPV. Supportive hearings were heard in House Rules, and the proposal was passed easily in the House with bi-partisan support. However, for the third time since 2009, and despite a majority of senators in favor, the Senate President blocked any hearing in Senate Rules, thus preventing a Senate vote.

**[HB 3555](#)** was yet another attempt to move surplus personal income tax revenue to the reserve Rainy Day Fund, instead of returning the excess to taxpayers as an income tax credit next year, with an impact on the state budget. While the hearings in the House Revenue committee were primarily positive, it did not move forward, and another savings opportunity was lost. Until there is a strong move for a citizen initiative (costly), legislative action won't take place.

**[HJR 5](#)** continued the battle for campaign finance reform. A strong coalition of more than 18 good government groups joined forces to lobby the issue and gained a majority of support from legislators, but it did not move out of Senate Rules. One of the problems with moving ahead is a reluctance/fear of causing Measure 47 (2008) with very low expenditure limits to be activated, even though there are ways to stop that from occurring. Currently, a 2016 citizen initiative is being prepared, with significant discussion about wording, as it is reviewed by supporting organizations. Again, there was senate leadership intervention, deferring committee action.

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## PUBLIC ACCESS

### Public Access, Technology and timelines

For the last few sessions we have been putting a lot of time and effort into making sure that we all have access to the legislative political process and that we are continuing to benefit (success continues to be ours). Most of what we have been continually asking for was there as the session started. The leadership of the Legislature started by again incorporating into the rules many of the things we have been pushing for in past sessions.



*Paula Krane, Public Access Coordinator*

Any bill with a price tag had to go to Ways and Means. Also many bills that had major policy implications ended up in Ways and Means since that committee continues to the end of session while policy committees close earlier. And because of this, again this session, we watched the Joint Ways and Means committee more closely. In the past when they were discussing these bills referred from other (policy) committees they sometimes made changes and added amendments to the public policy without a public hearing or public input on these changes. It is true that public hearings had been held in the policy committees, but sometimes these bills were totally changed and no public hearing was held on the changes. We again had to monitor this and try to bring it to the committee's attention when public policy was involved. But because of our past efforts they were aware of this issue and even looked to us for guidance. And because of our past monitoring of budget notes the committee tried to make sure that budget notes were not setting public policy, but only making sure that the agency was being accountable for their programs.

They are working harder to be sure people outside of Salem can participate. The Legislators have continued to add more new technology. You no longer have to go to Salem to testify or to observe a hearing or floor action. They have added the ability to take testimony via Skype or telephone at hearings (if you contact the Committee Administrator ahead of time) and are continuing to improve the legislative website ([OLIS](#)) with past session information and meeting materials, as well as new videos, etc. The presentations are usually online the night before the hearing with a one hour

minimum, so a citizen can read the materials early and get more out of the discussions. The new system allows access by many more citizens than would drive to Salem for hearings.

Because of all our hard work in previous sessions, and the knowledge that the League would be there watching, this Legislature was willing from the beginning to try and make the process more open and accessible. With each session our Legislators appreciate the need for the best possible access for the public. Working together over the last decade, many of the League's concerns have been met. However, as Legislators change, we need to keep reminding them of the importance of public access of the process. We can be proud of our successes - each session we have been included in more work groups and been active participants in some of the compromises worked on. However there are always areas of concern, as well as making sure that we do not lose any of our hard fought gains. It remains our goal to gain even better access to the Legislature and the political process. We have taken giant steps (from the time we made this an important priority) in making the legislative process more accessible to the public, but there is more that needs to be done and we can never let our guard down - constant vigilance.

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