



LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS® OF OREGON

## Legislative Report

March 17, 2015

Volume 25, Number 5

### 2015 Legislative Session

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#### **In This Issue**

[SOCIAL POLICY](#)

[GOVERNANCE](#)

[NATURAL RESOURCES](#)

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Happy St. Patrick's  
Day!



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#### **Social Policy**

##### **More Budget Requests**

The Oregon Health Authority Budget, [SB 5526](#), presentation to the Joint Ways and Means Human Services Subcommittee started last week and will continue this week. The Medical Assistance Program was first up with a discussion of eligibility for the Medicaid programs. The federal ACA expansion has added 350,000 clients to the Oregon Health Plan. The federal government will pay 100% for new clients through 2016. OHA will pick up 5% of cost in 2017.



*Karen Nibler, Social Policy Coordinator*

Two bills on the modernization of **Public Health**, [SB 663](#) and [HB 3100](#), were heard the same days in their respective health care committees. The bills are the result of a State Task Force on the "design of the public health system for the future". The Task Force has recommended that "foundational public health capabilities and programs be identified and funded so that appropriate levels of public health are accessible to everyone in Oregon". These comprehensive bills (the 2 bills are identical) are expected to have many amendments. Several public health agencies and organizations testified in favor of the bills with amendments.

The **House Health Care Committee** heard three bills, [HB 2022](#), [2023](#), and [2048](#), proposing changes in mental health assessments, confidentiality and discharge plans, although amendments are expected. The Senate Human Services Committee has scheduled similar mental health bills later in the month. The House Health Care Committee has recently passed the bills to the House Chamber. [HB 2395](#) continued the hospital tax on gross income which provides state matching funds for the federal

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Press Release:  
Governor Brown  
Appoints  
[Jeanne Atkins](#)  
Oregon's Secretary of  
State

Read Oregonian article  
["Kate Brown appoints Veteran Government Aide Jeanne Atkins"](#)

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funds that support the Medicaid program. **UPDATE: HB 2395 PASSED THE SENATE FLOOR AND IS ON IT'S WAY TO ENROLLMENT!**

Budgets for the State School Fund, [HB 5017](#), and operation of the Department of Education, [HB 5016](#), were heard in the Ways and Means Education Subcommittee. The Governor's Budget recommended \$6,914 million including \$220 million for all day Kindergarten, for the State School Fund to be distributed to school districts. The Department of Education was scheduled for \$7,309 million of General Fund to operate the state offices, provide management and business services, educator training, research and assessments, and transportation. The budget includes career and technical training, early learning hubs, childcare and preschool programs, and integration of early learning through 3rd grade.

The League priority is funding for the **Early Learning and Integration of Early Learning through Third Grade** within the Department of Education Budget, as reflected in the letter on [HB 5016](#). ([Read testimony](#).) The League did not recommend a certain funding level for the School Fund or the Education Department because it is a large proportion of the available state revenues. The Co-Chairs are expected to set the amount for the State School Fund so that school districts can plan for the next school years, but the total budget for the Department of Education may not be determined until near the end of session along with the other revenue needs of the state.

The **Public Defense Commission** met for 3 days with the Ways and Means Public Safety Subcommittee. As part of the budget process, the agency asked for an increase in salary for Public Defenders for parity with Deputy District Attorneys. Last session a request was made and granted to increase hourly wages and salaries, which was supported by the League. This session, a bigger pitch was thrown to decrease the discrepancy between public defenders and district attorneys. PDCS is losing attorneys, who have been trained, especially in the Appellate Division and leave for higher paying positions with the State Attorney General's Office. Both the Oregon Judicial Department and Public Defense Commission are requesting higher salaries for attorneys for these departments. There are many needs to cover with state revenues. We are watching the sunsets for tax credits and other revenue sources.

[Back to top](#)

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## Governance

### The Action Team and Governor Kate Brown at the signing for the Motor Voter Bill.



Left to Right: Norman Turrill, LWVOR Governance Specialist, Gov. Brown, Kappy Eaton, LWVOR Governance Coordinator and Rebecca Gladstone, LWVOR Voter Service

[Click here for video link](#)

[Governor Brown's Remarks as Prepared](#)

[Photos of Motor Voter Signing](#)

**UPDATE: HB 2395 PASSED THE SENATE FLOOR AND IS ON IT'S WAY TO ENROLLMENT! Read the Social Policy report.**

**Want to know how your senator/representative voted on HB 2395? Click here.**

**Oregon Transportation Commission will meet March 19 in the Oregon Transportation Building in Salem beginning at 10 a.m. For more information about the OTC,**

### Redistricting Discussion Begins

Both the House and Senate Rules committees heard testimony about Redistricting proposals on March 9 and 10. [SB 331](#) deals with how prison inmates should be counted in the decennial federal census.

Currently prisoners are counted as part of the community in which the prison is located. Under the proposed legislation, prisoners would be counted in the census of the area from which they were sentenced. The League supports this premise as do AARP, the City Club of Portland and Common Cause Oregon. The attitude of the committee members would indicate a positive consideration of the bills. ([Read League testimony provided.](#))

Three proposals were discussed during the House Rules committee hearings. [HB 2974](#) requires the Legislative Assembly, or the Secretary of State, to hold at least 10 public hearings across the state prior to proposing a congressional or legislative reapportionment plan, and at least five public hearings throughout the state after a plan has been proposed, but before adopting a plan. The bill also requires that appropriate public notice must be given regarding the time and location of each hearing. In addition, at least one hearing must be held in areas that have experienced the largest shifts in population since the previous redistricting, and prioritizes holding additional public hearings in these areas. Permitting and making provisions for individuals at remote areas throughout the state to provide testimony through the use of video equipment must be arranged. The League supports [HB 2974](#).

[HB 2944](#) would require 15 public hearings prior to the proposal, but also would require that no more than one hearing could be held in any single Senate district and also ban equal distribution of hearings across the state. ([Read League Testimony on HB 2944 and HB 2974.](#))

[HB 2945](#) would require the Secretary of State, or the Legislative Assembly, to provide any data purchased or used to create the reapportionment plan to any requester within 21 days. This would include any information about political party registration or



*Kappy Eaton,  
Governance  
Coordinator*

**[please visit their webpage.](#)**

**Scientific American Climate Change:**  
**"By 2020, warming rates should eclipse historical bounds of the past 1,000 years - and likely at least 2,000 years - and keep rising. If greenhouse gas emissions continue on their current trend, the rate of warming will reach 0.7°F per decade and stay that high until at least 2100."**

**[Click here to read the article.](#)**

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

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



demographic information paid for, or used by, the Legislature or Secretary of State in creating the plan.

### **Women's Health and Wellness Concerns**

The 22 year old Alliance for women's issues has a three part plan for 2015: (1) getting women into good jobs; (2) keeping women in good jobs; and (3) strengthening long-term economic security for women. These are the proposals to move that agenda.

1. Investments in Education and Job Training:  
[HB 2662](#) and [HB 2823](#) College affordability and accessibility.  
[HB 2008](#), [HB 2009](#) and [SB 610](#): Increasing the minimum wage.
2. Keeping women in good jobs  
[HB 2005](#) and [SB 454](#) Statewide Paid sick time  
[HB 2015](#) Affordable Childcare
3. Strengthening long-term economic security for women  
[HB 2006](#) and [HB 2007](#) E Equal pay for equal work  
[HB 2960](#) and [SB 615](#) Retirement Security

[SB 894](#) has just been introduced. It is a comprehensive statute designed to fill gaps in existing Oregon law, and to clarify and codify elements of federal law, to ensure access to a full range of reproductive health care for all women in Oregon.

The **Alliance meets every other Tuesday** and is chaired by Senators Sarah Gelser and Elizabeth Steiner Hayward and Representatives Jennifer Williamson and Barbara Smith Warner. The League is a member.

### **National Popular Vote (NPV) Activity**

This Interstate Compact to ensure that one person/one vote and every vote is equal has now passed in 11 states and DC ,reaching 61% of the 270 Electoral College votes required to elect the United States President. It has passed the Oregon House twice, most recently in 2013, but didn't get hearings in the Senate Rules committee. [SB 680](#) is the NPV for 2015 in the Oregon Legislature and has now received enough sponsors in the Senate to warrant a hearing in the Senate Rules committee. Passage in this session is a Governance priority for the League.

**Barry Fadem, chair of the NPV Board, and NPV President John Koza** were in Oregon March 10 and 11th for strategy meetings and a debate on the issue sponsored by the Oregon chapters of the American Constitution Society and the Federalist Society. In 2012 as part of the position in support of abolishing it from the Constitution, the LWVUS added approval of

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**From LWVUS:  
UPDATE**  
**Meeting Basic Human Needs**  
**Position**

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**Abigail Scott Duniway**

**The Statutory Hall  
Commission recommends  
Abigail Scott Duniway.**  
**[Read the Oregonian AP  
article.](#)**

**Oregon League of  
Conservation Voters  
Lobby Day  
March 24**

**[Click here to find out more.](#)**

**Look up bills at the  
Oregon Legislative  
Webiste (OLIS). [For](#)**

the NPV as an accepted way to address the Electoral  
College problem.

## **Motor Voter Celebration**

Governor Kate Brown signed [HB 2177](#), the newly  
passed, only one in the country, Motor Voter statute  
on March 16. The League has been a strong  
supporter of increased voter registration for decades,  
and **members of the Action Committee will  
attend the event.** (See the sidebar for picture of  
members of the Action Team and link to press  
release.)

[Back to Top](#)

## **Natural Resources**

### **Water, Rules, Public Health and More**

The League testified on [HB 5037](#),  
the budget for the Department of  
State Lands. They are the  
guardians of Oregon's wetlands  
and also protect the beds and  
banks of our rivers. Another  
responsibility is the management  
of our state lands, including over  
600,000 acres of grazing and  
ranchlands in Eastern Oregon and a most  
controversial asset, the **Elliott State Forest**.  
Management costs of the Elliott outstripped the  
revenue in 2013. The League has provided testimony  
to the State Land Board on this important issue ([link  
to testimony](#)). Legislators are working on legislation  
to consider how to save this public treasure while also  
providing jobs for the local timber industry. The State  
Land Board is expected to revisit this issue in June.  
Our new Secretary of State has now joined the Land  
Board, along with new Governor Brown and State  
Treasurer Wheeler.



*Peggy Lynch, Natural  
Resources  
Coordinator*

[SB 262 with -2](#) amendments to increase fees for  
vessels arrying oil was referred to Senate Finance  
and Revenue. The [League testified in support](#) of the  
base bill.

A hearing was held on March 10 in the House  
Committee on Agriculture and Natural Resources on  
[HB 2497](#). The League provided [testimony in  
opposition](#). The bill would require our small natural  
resource agencies to provide special notice to  
legislators of some rulemaking. The Oregon Dept. of

**the 2015 Session**  
**click here.**

**Legislative budget writers want the revenue committees to squeeze \$64 million worth of expiring Oregon tax credits in \$14 million made available on their budget framework for the next two years.**

**Click here to read Portland Tribune Article.**



**LWVOR UPDATES HEALTH CARE PAYER STATEMENT**  
**(click here)**

Justice expressed concern related to the 49-day notice requirement because agencies sometimes have an immediate need to adopt temporary rules. We expect amendments and hope these issues are resolved. **We encourage legislators to provide web links to these agencies so that citizens can sign up for notices directly.**

The League has been part of a work group on [SB 246](#), which would develop a low-interest loan program to address failing on-site septic systems. The focus is on achieving a water quality benefit. **On March 11, we provided oral testimony in support of the concept while awaiting further amendments.** The statistics from our Coastal Report and our testimony on [HB 3172 \(2013\)](#) were shared as reasons to address this serious water quality issue.

We are working with others on [HB 3417](#) to increase the notice time for certain Regional Solutions Advisory Committee meetings. The Oregon Dept. of Fish and Wildlife (ODFW) has a major revenue shortfall this biennium. Besides a license/fee increase and General Fund infusion, legislators are searching for other ways to increase their revenue. Rep. Dan Rayfield has introduced [HB 3313](#), which would give ODFW reimbursement authority to be able to bill for the services of their scientific staff when requested for permit applications from other agencies.

At the March 12 **Water Resources Commission** meeting the status of the Scenic Waterway **proposals for parts of the Molalla and Chetco Rivers** was discussed. After the Parks Dept. selects candidates for this designation, they do outreach and hold meetings to gather more information. The Water Resources Dept. then is required to set river flows should these sections be finalized. Both the Curry and Clackamas County Leagues submitted testimony in favor of this designation for specific sections of these rivers. A Curry County member will serve on an advisory committee for the Chetco proposal. A final decision is expected by the Parks Dept. in December. ([Click here for staff report: 2015 March Item C - 6368 wrdnotice](#))

Lane County League member Jennifer Haynes attended a Lobby Day on March 12 for [SB 613](#), **The Public Health and Water Resources Protection Act**. The bill would create greater public transparency through advance notification of aerial pesticide applications, increased buffer zones around waterways, schools and homes, and pesticide applicator record-keeping requirements for use by Oregon Poison Control and medical providers. After

listening to a variety of medical experts and citizens affected by aerial spray, she visited four legislators to talk about the bill and urge support. More info? Contact [Jennifer.A.Haynes@comcast.net](mailto:Jennifer.A.Haynes@comcast.net)

We have met with representatives of the **Dept. of Environmental Quality** as they work to provide adequate funding to process certain **wastewater permits**. Their budget request includes a 12% increase in permit fees. Since many of these facilities are those that provide all of us with wastewater services, it is a challenge to support increased fees, yet we all want these permits to address clean water rules. Stay tuned. **Their budget will be heard the week of March 23.**

**Drought:** The U.S. Drought Monitor, which measures risk of drought nationwide, shows an ominous red splotch over more than a quarter of Oregon, with nearly all of Lake, Malheur and Harney counties completely engulfed in "extreme drought." Much of the rest of the state is facing severe to moderate drought, according to the monitor. More than 1.5 million Oregonians are affected. Place-based planning, which the League supports ([SB 266](#)), is even more important so that we can plan for future water needs. ([Read Oregonian's article on Governor Brown on the Drought.](#))

**Watch List: Water:** [SB 266w/-2s](#). **Rulemaking:** [HB 2497](#) & [2975](#). **Natural Hazards:** [HB 2633](#). **ODFW Budget:** [HB 3313](#), **OSU Extension/statewides:** [SB 657](#); **Solid Waste:** [SB 412w/-3s](#). For information about these bills, please read them at the Oregon Legislature website or contact Peggy Lynch: [zuludar@aol.com](mailto:zuludar@aol.com).

**Climate Watch List:** [SB 20](#), [SB 22](#), [SB 23](#), **Coal to Clean:** [HB 2729](#) or [SB 477](#). **Carbon Tax:** [HB 2082](#). For information about these bills, please read them at the Oregon Legislature website or contact Claudia Keith: [ca.keith@comcast.net](mailto:ca.keith@comcast.net)

**Forestry Watch List:** [SB 257](#) and [SB 613](#). For information about these bills, please read them at the Oregon Legislature website or contact Jen Haynes: [Jennifer.A.Haynes@comcast.net](mailto:Jennifer.A.Haynes@comcast.net)

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