



LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS® OF OREGON

# Legislative Report

March 24, 2015

Volume 25, Number 6

## 2015 Legislative Session

### ACTION ALERT SB 680

### National Popular Vote (NPV)

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

### In This Issue

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Version**

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Newly Appointed

**Secretary of State  
Jeanne Atkins  
to Speak at the Day  
of the Legislature**

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## Governance

### HB 2177: Another 1st for Oregon

With the signing of the Automatic Voter Registration measure by Governor Kate Brown on March 16, Oregon became the first state to enact such a law. Supported by the Governor and introduced as one of her priorities when she was still Secretary of State, this legislation is Oregon's response to the suppression of voters in many states, where the right to vote is under attack. Oregon has led the nation in several areas of citizen participation starting in 1902 with the initiative process, followed by the public ownership of the coastline in 1920, land use planning in 1971, and Vote by Mail in 2000.



*Kappy Eaton,  
Governance  
Coordinator*

**Going back to 2013 records** of new and renewed driver licenses and moving forward, all persons receiving and renewing licenses will have their application information electronically sent to the Secretary of State. **After checking the state's central voter registration list, any person not registered will receive a postcard** stating their registration and given the option of opting out. If the person chooses to select a political party, that can be noted. Otherwise they will be registered as unaffiliated. Since there is now an Independent party, no one is registered as an "independent" but as "unaffiliated" if they do not choose to select a political party. **It is estimated that 300,000 citizens will be registered.** At 70%, Oregon is already one of the top states in registration, and since Vote by Mail, we also are averaging at least 70% in state and federal election participation.

## Election Updates

Deadline for  
registration is **March  
25!!** Space is limited!

### **OTC denies funding for dock proposal.**

*"The League was pleased to read that the Oregon Transportation Commission denied funding for the dock proposal that would have facilitated coal transport. Testimony was provided in July 2014 on this important climate change issue."*

**Peggy Lynch, LWVOR  
Natural Resources  
Coordinator**

**[Read the Portland  
Tribune article](#)**

### **Quick Links to OLIS**

[OR State Legislature](#)

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### **Legislative Bill Work Session Deadlines:**

April 10 - Deadline to post  
1st chamber work sessions

04/21 - Deadline to hold 1st  
chamber work sessions

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

The House Rules committee passed several election "housekeeping bills" sought by county election officials on March 16. [HB 2176](#) removes the requirement that persons elected to county office must file a certificate of election with the county clerk. [HB 2855](#) extends the time that a person nominated/elected to public office by write-in has to respond from 8 days to 15. [HB 2957](#) establishes specific dates for local government elections on measures not referred by governmental units. Probably the most important proposal in terms of public policy is [HB 2635](#). It requires that the ballot title for a local option tax measure must include the estimated costs of compression, early discount payments and the collection rate. All of these impact the actual amount of funding that will be available for services/projects being covered in the tax. Many voters are puzzled or angered by learning that the total amount actually available is less than advertised. Compression arises from Measure #5 (1990) which capped all parts of local governments together to a total \$10 per \$1000 in property taxes.

### **Campaign Finance Reform Possible?**

[SJR 5](#) was introduced at the request of then Secretary of State Kate Brown. It is a proposed amendment to Section 8, Article II of **Oregon's Constitution to add a new (2)**. It reads "**The Legislative Assembly, or the people through the initiative process, may enact laws limiting or prohibiting contributions made in connection with campaigns for nomination or election to public office.**" If the measure is referred to voters by the Legislature, it would be on the ballot for the 2016 November General Election. Some senators are beginning a campaign for a hearing, led by Senators Floyd Prozanski and Lee Beyer. The Oregon Supreme Court has ruled, in 1997, that such limitations are unconstitutional, so **any effort to change the ever increasing amounts of cash flowing in Oregon elections must be done by a Constitutional amendment.** The League could support this bill.

### **Fiscal Policy: Tax Credits, Property Tax Review and Kicker changes**

Since 2011, the Legislature has been reviewing tax expenditures. **These are tax credits, deferrals, deductions and exemptions that the state then does not collect**, which add up to over \$30 billion in a biennium - roughly the same amount it can budget. A Special Joint Tax committee each session **reviews the tax credits that will be expiring and recommends either not renewing, revising or continuing.** Hearings on each are held in the policy committees that consider the areas under review and

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

**March 28th**  
**"Legislators plan town hall in Coos Bay"**

*(Click above link)*  
**Reported by the Umpqua Post**



Press Release:  
 Governor Brown  
 Appoints

**Jeanne Atkins**

Oregon's Secretary of  
 State

Read Oregonian article

**"Kate Brown appoints Veteran Government Aide Jeanne Atkins"**

**League Links**

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refer the testimony and committee decisions to the Tax committee. The Ways and Means committee informs the Tax committee of the amount of funding that is expected to be available for those credits. This session the Tax committee is looking at credits worth \$36 million, with a Way and Means allocation of \$14 million. Among the credits are those for dependent children and working families. Representative Phil Barnhart, chair of the House Revenue committee, has announced there are 20 new tax credit proposals. Stay tuned as the drama unfolds.

The House Revenue committee is holding informational hearings dealing with **various property tax reform proposals**. The **Senior Property Deferral Program** is receiving review, with a Legislative Revenue Office (LRO) report and the bill.

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## Natural Resources

### Budgets and Policies

We continue to engage in the budget process. We supported [HB 5010](#), the Columbia River Gorge Commission budget. But we recognized that the Governor's budget grew the agency too quickly AND that Washington State would not match that growth. Senator Devlin did ask that they propose how they would spend another \$250,000 or \$500,000 in addition to the Washington budget proposal of less than \$1 million.



*Peggy Lynch, Natural Resources Coordinator*

We provided testimony in support of the Department of Land Conservation and Development budget ([HB 5027](#)), except for adding two new "alignment coordinators" to their staff. We provided testimony with concerns related to the Regional Solutions Fund in [SB 5525](#), the Oregon Business Development Department budget. Allowing Regional Advisory Committees to select spending of \$22 million seems like an abrogation of legislative authority.

This week, [HB 5018](#), the Department of Environmental Quality budget will be presented. The League expects to provide testimony in support of clean air, clean water and land programs. We



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**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](#)

***W&M Town Halls coming in April: Look for the dates and locations in your area!***

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

participate in their Blue Ribbon Advisory Committee related to budget and water permitting issues all year long.

[HB 3169](#) directs the Water Resources Department to do statewide groundwater studies. Rep. Bentz, whose district includes **Malheur County where a drought has been declared**, sponsored the bill in order to gain public attention that, with surface water limited, groundwater may be tapped beyond its ability to respond. **The League took the opportunity to support Rep. Bentz' call for increased groundwater studies.**

**Correction:** In the last Legislative Report, I listed the wrong bill number for Rep. Rayfield's bill related to ODFW. [HB 3315](#) will have a **hearing on 3/24** before the House Consumer Protection and Government Effectiveness committee.

On March 26, the House Committee on Agriculture and Natural Resources will hold hearings on a series of bills related to **pesticide use and misuse**. Persons in support of the **Public Health and Water Resources Protection Act** ([SB 613](#)) might want to watch the following bills that address pieces of that comprehensive Act: [HB 3428](#), [HB 3123](#), [HB 3434](#), [HB 3429](#), [HB 3430](#) & [HB 3482](#). There is a work group reviewing all these bills to seek a solution that can pass this session.

**Watch List: Water:** [SB 266w/-2s](#), [SB 829](#), **Rulemaking:** [SB 100](#), [SB 101](#), [HB 2497](#); **Natural Hazards:** [HB 2633](#). **ODFW Budget Issue:** [HB 3315](#), **OSU Extension/statewides:** [SB 657](#); **Solid Waste:** [SB 412w/-3s](#). **Land Use:** [HB 3214](#), [HB 3215](#), [HB 3431](#), [SB 716](#). **Fees:** [HB 2975](#). **Suction Dredge** [SB 830](#). **Onsite Septics:** [SB 246](#) w/ amendments. **Regional Solutions:** [HB 3417](#). 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: Coal to Clean:** [HB 2729](#) or [SB 477](#). **Carbon Pricing:** [HB 2082](#), [HB 3176](#), [HB 3250](#). **Vessel/Rail Oil Transport:** [SB 262A](#), [SB 271](#), [HB 3225](#). 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](#). **Elliott Forrest:** [HB 3474](#) & [SB 806](#). **Toxic Free Kids Act:** [SB 478 W/-8S](#). 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)

## 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](#)

### 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)

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## Social Policy

### The House Health Care Committee

**Dental care for children and pregnant women** was the subject of 4 bills in front of the House Health Care Committee on Friday. [HB 2021](#) promotes fluoride polish for children. [HB 2024](#) asks OHA to certify workers for preventive dental care. [HB 2972](#) requires public school children to have a dental screening before age 7 or within 120 days of enrolling in school. [HB 3023](#) provides pregnant women with oral health coverage. The public hearings on all 4 bills were opened concurrently. Amendments are expected as bills remain in committee. *Karen Nibler*



*Karen Nibler, Social Policy Coordinator*

**Drug Prescription costs** were considered in House Health Care on Monday 3/16/15. [HB 3486](#) requires a manufacturer of any prescription drug with annual wholesale cost of \$10,000 or more, or with wholesale cost of \$10,000 or more per course of treatment, to file an annual report with OHA on costs associated with prescription drugs for the previous calendar year. Kaiser Permanente, America's Health Insurance Plan and OSPIRG submitted testimony in support of the bill. Kaiser concluded by saying that there needs to be a "robust public dialogue about sustainable drug pricing and how drug prices impact affordability".

**The Biotechnology Industry Organization, Oregon Bioscience Association, and the Pharmaceutical Research and Manufacturers of America (PhRMA) all opposed the bill.** Some of the concerns expressed included an undue reporting burden, the "complex issue of pricing", and the value that an innovative therapy can have on an individual patient. *Jean Galleher*

### Senate Health Care Committee

Earlier in the week, the SHC considered SB 660 to develop a program to **provide dental sealants for students susceptible to tooth decay.** Several dental organizations testified in favor of the bill with amendments. [SB 672](#) sought to **establish an office of Public Health within the Oregon Health Authority to study and support oral health of**

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

**From LWVUS:  
UPDATE**

**Meeting Basic Human Needs  
Position**

***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.](#)

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Oregon Legislative Information System  
Find information on bills, committees, hearings, events and what's going on at the Legislature today.



**Abigail Scott Duniway**

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

**citizens in the state.** While in support of the bill, Dr. Jeanene Smith, Chief Medical Officer for OHA, recommended that the State move slowly as the new State Dental Officer (Bruce Austin) was just hired. Jean Galleher

[SB 336A](#) for additional funds for parity, planning and assistance for School Based Health Centers and [SB 337](#) to expand clinics in 11 more locations were passed and referred to Ways and Means for funding decisions. There are currently 68 school-based clinics and 8 more due in 2015. Operational funds come from county health authorities, but technical assistance comes from the Oregon Health Authority. *Jean Galleher and Karen Nibler*

[SB 440](#) considered a **new Metrics Committee** for Coordinated Care Organizations, the Public Employees' Benefit Board and the Oregon Educator Benefits Board. The CCOs have posted metrics on the OHA website after their first year. This bill would replace the current CCO Metrics Committee and would include members from OHA, OEBC and PEBB. While all organizations who testified were in support of the bill, they recommended additional representation.

**House Human Services and Housing Committee**

[HB 2015 A](#) extends the Employment Related Day Care subsidy to parents for one year, regardless of change in employment status, to parents in school and to self-employed parents. This option was supported in preference to tax credits, which were not available to pay monthly child care costs. The agency proposes to expand the program to cover day care for 10,000 families. This would restore the program to pre-recession levels, but the cost could be up to \$62 million. Human Services Ways and Means may decide on the level of program expansion. HHS & H has passed two amended bills, [HB 2232 A](#) and [HB 2031 A](#) to the House floor for votes and subsequent referrals to Ways and Means for funding. [HB 2232 A](#) directs the Department of Human Services to appoint an advisory committee for services to Runaway and Homeless Youth and their families. The League supported this bill with the possibility of expanding the available shelters.

[HB 2031 A](#) asks for a **pilot for in home services** for youth from age 10 under supervision in county Juvenile Departments. The cost is \$17,000 per family, with additional costs for the study and evaluation. If funded by the Public Safety Committee,

[article.](#)

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

the project would start 1-1-16 and sunset on 6-30-17.

The Joint Ways and Means Human Services Subcommittee heard from the **Oregon Health Authority** last week. The complex eligibility criteria were explained on the first day of the presentation. The Medicaid Program serves children in families, the aged, blind and disabled, and breast and cervical cancer patients. The expansion of the Affordable Care Act brought in low income adults, pregnant women and infants children up to 300 % of FPL, and qualified Medicare clients.

The **Coordinated Care Organizations in 16 regions** provide primary care homes in a local network of providers. Metrics are recorded on 33 measures and CCOs are paid for progress on 17 outcomes. Dental care has been included, but access to providers is limited. **Mental Health Care will be integrated into CCOs** in the next biennium and plans were presented to the Human Services Committee. This budget will continue this week on Addictions and Mental Health.

The Joint Ways and Means Public Safety Subcommittee heard the **Department of Corrections Budget, SB 5504**, this week. This budget contains the **operations of the 14 prison correctional facilities with 14,000 inmates and Community Corrections**, which includes local jail facilities and the adult parole and probation supervision in the counties. The major interest was in the **Justice Reinvestment Project**, which provides funds to local community corrections to serve offenders in the community in order to reduce the prison population. County Commissioners, sheriffs, and community corrections staff came to testify about the progress of their programs. The prison population has not decreased as much as expected, but the counties are rolling out the local programs, which require additional funds to counties. **The League testified in support of the Justice Reinvestment Programs.** An individual member, Barbara Ross, testified about the success of the Multnomah County Program. **The League letter expressed concerns about the transfer of youth offenders from Oregon Youth Authority to DOC facilities and the need for educational and treatment programs within the prison facilities.** Specifically we supported funding for parenting programs and substance abuse treatment programs within the facilities. *Karen Nibler*

Read the Leagues [comments on SB 5504](#) and

[testimony on HB 2232 A.](#)

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