



*The League of Women Voters of Oregon is a 99-year-old grassroots nonpartisan political organization that encourages informed and active participation in government. We envision informed Oregonians participating in a fully accessible, responsive, and transparent government to achieve the common good. LWVOR Legislative Action is based on advocacy positions formed through studies and member consensus. The League never supports or opposes any candidate or political party.*

March 1, 2019

To: [Joint Committee on Ways and Means](#)  
Co-Chair Senator Betsy Johnson  
Co-Chair Senator Elizabeth Steiner Hayward  
Co-Chair Representative Dan Rayfield

Re: **STATE BUDGET COMMUNITY HEARINGS – PUBLIC TESTIMONY– Comment**

LWVOR encourages informed and active participation in government. We envision informed Oregonians participating in a fully accessible, responsive, and transparent government to achieve the common good.

We commend the process whereby your Joint Committee on Ways and Means seeks public input through regional meetings. As Senators and Representatives, you know that the League has a team of Action advocates working in the Capitol specializing in various policy and budget areas ([see attachment](#)). You also know that the strength of LWVOR is our grassroots organization, so many of our local League members will be attending the four regional meetings.

As you consider regional needs, hearing testimony from many local constituents and those of organized stakeholder groups, we commend your ability to do the hard work of developing a balanced budget that best meets Oregon's critical needs. **Your hard task is balancing the many "asks" for Capital Construction, Education, General Government, Human Services, Natural Resources, Public Safety, Transportation and Economic Development.** Housing, Medicare funding, Climate Change, and so many other priorities all compete for limited dollars.

This is a year when the Joint Committee on Student Success is working to meet the needs of stakeholders based on regional meetings. That **new "ask" to the budget to improve education outcomes, which may be \$2B-\$3B, must be directly tied to the requirement for new revenue.** Committee hearings and initial input from business organizations give us cautious optimism that this may be the year for substantial tax reform and a corporate tax including firms doing business in Oregon, not just those physically located in state. We are hopeful, but also skeptical that this might also be a year where the property tax inequities created through Measures 5 and 50 are addressed.

LWVOR believes that the legislature, through the Ways and Means process, is best suited to determine investments in critical services. We believe that ear-marking funding outside of the Ways and Means process limits flexibility for future years with unforeseen factors.

Thank you for the opportunity to discuss the budget. We will continue to offer subcommittee testimony throughout the session in greater detail.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Norman Turrill". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Norman Turrill  
LWVOR President

Cc: House/Senate Revenue Committees, Student Success Revenue Subcommittee (all members)  
Senate President Peter Courtney  
House Speaker Tina Kotek