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## Legislative Report



League of Women  
Voters of Oregon

The "Ways and Means Public Hearings Tour" is featured in today's *Report*. The committee is making important funding decisions during these tough economic times and needs your input. Read Public Access Coordinator Paula Krane's article below for locations, dates and times plus League "talking points."

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### Cuts to Public Safety Have Drastic Implications



As the Ways and Means Public Safety subcommittee reviews agency budgets, it becomes apparent that cuts in one agency will affect the operation of others. For example, the Oregon Judicial Department (OJD) is dependent on the Department of Corrections and

the Oregon Youth Authority to carry out its orders for sentences in institutions and for community supervision. The OJD had received additional funding in this biennium to enhance staff and salaries. But the 30% reductions for the next biennium could knock the system out of balance again. Proposed reductions in DOC and OYA will have drastic implications such as:

- Delays for furnishing and staffing units at the Madras correctional facility,
- Release of up to 5,533 adult prisoners and closure of smaller rural facilities,
- Fewer beds in correctional facilities and residential programs for juvenile offenders, which will lead to greater numbers on the streets, and fewer parole staff for supervision, which could lead to recidivism or entry to the adult system.

[Read more about how these proposed reductions will affect Oregonians.](#)

*Karen Nibler, Social Policy Coordinator*

## Corporate Taxes Considered this Week

The House Revenue Committee has scheduled hearings on several corporate tax measures for the purpose of both raising revenue as well as increasing the percentage of tax support given to the General Fund.



- [HB 2913](#) increases the corporate excise tax rate using income brackets for tax years 2009 to 2013 to provide an average of 10% to 13% of all Oregon tax revenue.
- [HB 2119](#) increases the minimum tax that applies to C corporations and transfers this revenue to the Oregon Rainy Day Fund.
- [HB 3405](#) establishes five tiers of corporate minimum tax on corporations that are not S corporations, with the tax based on Oregon sales. It would begin after January 1, 2010.

*Kappy Eaton, Governance Coordinator*

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## Minor Measure 49 "Fixes"



The Legislature is considering either [SB 945](#) or [HB 3225](#) to address some potential Measure 49 claims. The League has been supportive of getting claims processed in order to keep faith with voters. These changes seem to meet that goal as well. Read the Statesman-Journal article "[Bill allows some land-use claims to be considered.](#)"

*Peggy Lynch, Natural Resources Coordinator*

## Election Laws Expected to Move

The House Rules Committee has held work sessions on several election measures, and they may go to go the House for action as early as this week. Proposals include changes such as:



- County elections officials may scan but not tally ballots starting seven days before election day ([HB 2451](#)).
- Electronic voter registration could be in place by 2010 ([HB 2386](#)).
- A candidate may be nominated by more than one party ([HB 2580](#)).
- Long-term absentee voters can receive ballots by email and return by fax with signature, but no secrecy ([HB 2511](#)).

*Kappy Eaton, Governance Coordinator*

## Clean Air, Clean Water, Clean Land



The League testified on the Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ) budget ([SB 5521](#)). We encouraged legislative policy action to guide DEQ's budget, such as cleaning up toxics, administering a new bottle bill and addressing greenhouse gases. We cannot afford to stop protecting our clean air, water and land for future generations. Again, our water study report, [Water in Oregon, Not a Drop to Waste, Part 1](#), was helpful in explaining the issues before this agency. (Read [League testimony on SB 5521](#).)

*Peggy Lynch, Natural Resources Coordinator*

## Ways and Means Public Hearings Tour



Starting this week the Ways and Means Committee of the Oregon State Legislature is holding public hearings around the state. The economic picture is not improving, so it is important that legislators hear from us to determine the state's priorities and direction. Legislators have some very important decisions to make on our behalf.

The LWVOR Action Committee will be delivering League testimony at some of the hearings. We encourage you to attend the hearings in your areas and observe the process. Two previous *Legislative Reports* ([#12](#) and [#13](#)) have included some background information.

[Link here to read the talking points for our testimony.](#)

The schedule for this week's hearings:

### **Tuesday, April 21 - Portland**

Portland Community College - Cascade Campus  
Auditorium, Moriarty Building  
705 N. Killingsworth Street  
6 p.m. to 8:30 p.m.

### **Saturday, April 25 - Pendleton**

Oregon National Guard Armory  
2100 N.W. 56th Drive  
10:00 a.m. to 12 p.m.

### **Thursday, April 23 - Salem**

Oregon State Capitol Hearing Room F  
College  
900 Court Street NE  
5:30 to 8 p.m.

### **Saturday, April 25 - Ontario**

Treasure Valley Community  
650 College Boulevard  
3 to 5 p.m.

### **Thursday, April 23 - Hood River**

Oregon Department of Human Services  
1610 9th Court  
5:30 to 8 p.m.  
*Via video link to Salem*

[Click here to view a schedule of next week's hearings.](#)

*Paula Krane, Public Access Coordinator*

## Ethics Revisions Ready for Governor's Signature



[SB 30-Enrolled](#) has been signed by the Senate President and Speaker of the House and will become law when signed by the Governor. The amended proposal, enlarged from one page to 20, makes changes that limit who must file the Statements of Economic Interest, taking care of the problem for many local appointed officials. It also adds candidates to the list of persons who must adhere to ethics rules and clarifies what is meant by administrative and legislative interests and gifts. The reporting threshold of \$50 was not changed, but honoraria and other recognitions for officials were defined to avoid misunderstandings. The date for an electronic filing system of reports with the Ethics Commission was extended from 2010 to

2012. The League supports this legislation.

*Kappy Eaton, Governance Coordinator*

## House Rules Committee Hears Campaign Finance Reform Bill



The [League testified](#) before the House Rules Committee last week in support of [HB 3009](#), which would limit campaign contributions. The [Democracy Reform Oregon](#), [AAUW](#) and [The Bus Project](#) also supported the bill. These same four organizations held a press conference on the bill that resulted in an [Oregonian article](#). The committee would also have to pass a referral of a constitution amendment ([HJR 26](#)) to allow the bill to go into effect. The Legislature has a good opportunity in these bills to continue the reform progress made in previous sessions with campaign finance disclosure and ethics reform. Voters

have always supported campaign contribution limits in various opinion polls by 70 to 80 percent. We await positive action on this bill by the House Rules Committee.

*Norman Turrill, Campaign Finance Portfolio Chair*

## Worldwide Cap-and-Trade Lessons



As the E.P.A. has recently declared that greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions are a threat to public health and welfare, Oregon, along with several other states in the [Western Climate Initiative](#) (WCI), are determined to stay one step ahead of the curve. This session Oregon is considering legislation ([SB 80](#)) to regulate greenhouse gas emissions through a cap-and-trade system. (For background information on cap-and-trade, read the article in [Legislative Report #11](#).) But how do we know a cap-and-trade system will work? What efforts are other countries taking and what tools have been successful in the past? [Read more here](#).

*Jonathan Goldberg, Legislative Intern*

## Budgets and Forecasts and Websites, Oh My

We erred last week when we reported that the Ways and Means Co-chairs' Budget would be posted on the Office of Economic Analysis' website. These budgets will be posted instead on the [Legislative Fiscal Office's website](#) on May 17. The budgets reflect the latest data from the May 15 Revenue Forecast completed by the Office of Economic Analysis. We will keep you informed as the information is released as well as report on what it all means from the League's perspective.

View the Legislative Fiscal Office presentation of [Oregon's Budget Process](#) (pdf) that provides information on policy, process, budget cycle, legislative paths (including the role of the Ways

and Means Committee) and more.

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## Speaking the Language of the Legislature



**Declaring an emergency:** A phrase that is included in a bill's **Relating-to Clause** when the bill has an emergency clause.

**Relating-to Clause:** The clause found just underneath the title of a bill identifying its subject matter: for example, HB 2000, *relating to* charter schools. In Oregon, a bill may only address one subject, and for this reason the relating-to clause becomes an important element of the bill. Relating-to clauses may be broad or narrow.

**Emergency Clause:** A statement added to the end of a measure which causes the act to become effective before the accustomed date (January 1 of the year after passage). An emergency clause either sets a specific date or is effective immediately, which means that the measure will take effect on the date of its signature into law. NOTE: *emergency clauses may not be attached to bills which would raise revenue.*

For more definitions, see the Legislature's [glossary of terms](#).

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### Mark the Date

**May 1 (Friday)** - [Global Warming Commission meeting](#), 9 am to 1 pm, Oregon State Library, Rm. 102-103. Public welcome.

#### *Legislature Action Dates*

**April 22 (Wednesday)** Earth Day

**April 28 (Tuesday)** Deadline for consideration of changes in chamber of origin\*

**May 4-16** Joint Committee on Ways and Means: public hearings on policy bills with budgetary impacts

**May 17 (Friday)** Ways and Means Co-chairs' budgets released

**May 20 (Wednesday)** Deadline to schedule work sessions in second chamber\*

**May 28 (Thursday)** Committees close\*

**June 30 or before (Tuesday)** Sine Die

\*Except Joint Ways and Means, Senate Finance and Revenue, House Revenue, Senate and House Rules Committees

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