

You're receiving this email because you are a member or have requested a subscription with League of Women Voters of Oregon. Please [confirm](#) your continued interest in receiving email from us.

You may [unsubscribe](#) if you no longer wish to receive our emails.

May 28, 2009

Vol 19, Issue 19



Legislative Report



League of Women Voters
of Oregon

Legislature Becoming Less Accessible with End of Session

*1 Hour Notice for Senate committee meetings
24 Hour notice for House committee meetings*

As the session winds down everything becomes very hectic. We no longer have 48-hour notice for hearings, and bills are rushed through the process as legislators try to finish by, rumor has it, mid-June.

There is still time to let your [senators](#) and [representatives](#) know how you feel about the issues.

You will have to be more diligent in following where a bill is in the process. If you wish to testify, be prepared to act quickly. Also, expect lots of closed meetings as legislators work on compromises in order to pass legislation. All of these changes mean it is even more important to let your legislators know promptly how you feel about the issues.

Paula Krane, Public Access Coordinator



In This Issue

Legislature
Becoming Less
Accessible with End
of Session

New Marine
Reserves

State Policy Ending
Homelessness
Passes Committee

Runaway and
Homeless Youth

Affordable Housing
- Two Bills Still in
Play

Governance
Two-Step

The Sky Hasn't
Fallen

Energy Efficiency
Bills Move Forward
with Compromises

Transportation Bills
Accelerate

Enter the Matrix

Calendar of Events

New Marine Reserves

[HB 3013, with -4 amendments](#), received unanimous support from the House Rules Committee last week at the Legislature. This bill, along with monies left over from removal of the New Carissa now in agency budgets, supports the recommendations of the Ocean Policy Advisory Committee (OPAC) by authorizing the adoption of "rules to establish, study, monitor, evaluate and enforce a pilot marine reserve at Otter Rock and a pilot marine reserve and a marine protected area at Redfish Rocks; studying and evaluating potential marine reserves at Cape Falcon, Cascade Head and Cape Perpetua; and supporting the development of a marine reserve proposal at Cape Arago-Seven Devils."



Peggy Lynch, Natural Resources Coordinator



Quick Links

[LWVOR Action](#)

[Team](#)

[LWV of Oregon](#)

State Policy Ending Homelessness Passes Committee

[SB 200](#), which establishes a state policy on homelessness, passed out of the House Human Services Committee on May 22 and goes to the House floor with a do pass recommendation. Homeless programs reside within the Oregon Housing and Community Services Department, and funds are funneled to 17 regional community action agencies for rental assistance, transition housing and shelters as well as food banks, energy assistance and weatherization programs.

Karen Nibler, Social Policy Coordinator

[Join the League
LWV of the United
States](#)

[Oregon State
Legislature
Contact List of
State Senators
Contact List of
State
Representatives
Eclips from Oregon
State Library](#)

Follow us on Twitter

Get updates on the League's action in the Legislature and more:
<http://twitter.com/LWVofOregon>

[About the
Legislature's Web
Site
Communicating
with Your
Legislator](#)

Runaway and Homeless Youth



The Oregon Commission on Children and Families (OCCF) retained the administrative expense for the Runaway and Homeless Youth Program but lost the \$900,000 for grants to counties. The Co-Chairs Budget did show a fund shift from federal Youth Investment funds to Runaway and Homeless Youth projects. The policy has been stated as retention of the infrastructure so that funds may be restored at a future time.

The OCCF Budget ([HB 5004](#)) suffered 20% cuts in Healthy Start and Basic Capacity in local county commission offices. The state office took additional administrative staff cuts to absorb some of the lost general fund dollars.

Karen Nibler, Social Policy Coordinator

Printer-Friendly
Version



Affordable Housing - Two Bills Still in Play



The session is in the final lap and there are two bills from the Housing Alliance agenda still in play.

[SB 5535](#): Lottery Backed Bonds. This bill contains, among other things, \$19.4 million in lottery-backed bonds with \$16.3 million dedicated to preservation of existing low income housing and \$3.1 million for assistance to community organizations or tenant groups seeking to acquire manufactured dwelling parks.

These resources will help keep hardworking families and vulnerable seniors in their homes. SB 5535 will be heard by the Capital Construction subcommittee towards the end of the session.

[SB 199](#): Oregon Affordable Housing Tax Credits. SB 199 would increase the cap on these credits. The increase will have little fiscal impact in the coming biennium, but will allow for future planning of low income housing projects. The Transportation and Economic Development subcommittee will hear this bill.

Passage of the Document Recording Fee earlier in the session was a big victory and will generate an ongoing source of revenue to meet the housing needs of low and very low income residents in both rural and urban areas.

The Co-Chairs Budget, released on May 18, eliminated General Funds for the first time buyers' homeownership program and severely reduced General Funds for Emergency Housing Assistance, but the budget allowed backfill with Other Funds. The Housing Assistance Program retained over 70% of its General Funds in the Oregon Housing and Community Services Budget ([HB 5019](#)) for 2009-11. Lottery funds make up over one third of their budget.

Karen Nibler, Social Policy Coordinator, and Debbie Aiona, Affordable Housing Chair

Governance Two-Step



[Link here for a brief update on several interesting bills on initiative and election reform.](#) Just when we expect to see these bills move, there will be last-minute amendments or the fiscal statement required for all bills will not have been received. We're doing the Governance Two-Step.

Kappy Eaton, Governance Coordinator

The Sky Hasn't Fallen . . .



But, it is cracked and leaking - leaking state jobs, leaking human services jobs, leaking teachers' jobs, leaking small business jobs, and more. Community colleges, which are the state's primary providers of job training and retraining, are facing 17% funding cuts at a critical time for the unemployed. There will be fee and tuition increases, but most of the institutions are "tightening their belts" to protect needed training programs through staff and other sacrifices, recognizing their importance to economic recovery.

As most legislators begin to comprehend the impact of the proposed Ways and Means budget for 2009-11, the revenue committees are hearing proposals to:

- Increase both individual and corporate taxes
- Fund a new health care plan
- Reconnect the definition of income to the federal tax code
- Consider a plan for funding Operation Independence to keep elderly individuals in their homes (now on the chopping block)
- Possibly sunset some additional tax credits before 2014 (HB 2057 doesn't kick in until 2014)
- Increase beer and cigarette taxes for specific programs
- Consider a six-cent gasoline tax to fund transportation projects at both the state and local levels.

The scenarios are all in flux - a moving Imax screen - stay tuned.

Kappy Eaton, Governance Coordinator

Energy Efficiency Bills Move Forward with Compromises



A plan for an energy efficient future is slowly taking shape in Oregon.



[SB 80](#), a bill to limit greenhouse gases, is now amended taking a sector by sector approach in a stepwise reduction over several years. This bill states that if the emissions plan is not economically or technologically feasible, then it must be redesigned for maximum benefit. Opponents think this language allows power companies an escape which undermines the original intent.

[HB 3039A](#) would implement a Solar Power Pilot Program. The bill passed the House floor and is currently being worked in the Senate Business and Transportation Committee. A compromise was reached between several different groups to make this bill possible. Supporters of the amended bill include the Cities of Salem, Hillsboro and Gresham who say that it creates job opportunities for unemployed high tech workers and businesses and benefits the communities who have the land and resources to support the closely-related solar power industry. Opponents say that it is flawed, supports large utilities over smaller businesses and allows solar companies to double dip with a Business Energy Tax Credit (BETC) which allows them a competitive disadvantage over biofuel businesses.

For descriptions of more energy efficiency bills being considered by the Legislature see [Legislative Report #18](#).

Elizabeth Rathbun, Committee member

Transportation Bills Accelerate



[SB 34A](#), a bill to fund transportation improvements for Lane County and Tri Met transit districts, has passed both the Senate and the House. The League testimony on May 26 supported the bill which will now move toward enrollment.

[HB 2001B](#), originally featured Governor Kulongoski's proposal (the Jobs and Transportation Act) to have a balanced transportation package that would include bicycle and pedestrian projects and strategies to relieve congestion and emissions from cars, passed the House on May 27 (read the House press release, [Oregon House Passes Transportation Bill](#)). While the bill includes creating an Urban Trails Fund, increases funds for elderly and disabled transit and some environmental provisions, some environmental groups believed it singled out big highway projects over others that would provide an alternative to more cars and higher emissions.

[HB 36A](#), which would create a bridge toll system to maintain Multnomah county bridges, passed the Senate floor on March 4 and is scheduled to for a vote on the House floor today.

Elizabeth Rathbun, Committee member

Enter the Matrix



Track the bills, read the testimony . . . enter the [Action Matrix!](#)

Mark the Date

Legislature Action Days

Shortened deadlines for meeting notifications. See "[Legislature Becoming Less Accessible with End of Session.](#)"

May 28 (Thursday) Committees close*

May 29 (Friday) No further action on legislation for all policy committees**

June 30 or before (Tuesday) Sine Die

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

**Revenue and Rules with signature from House Speaker only.

[Forward email](#)

 [SafeUnsubscribe](#)®

This email was sent to lwvor@lwvor.org by lwvor@lwvor.org.

[Update Profile/Email Address](#) | Instant removal with [SafeUnsubscribe](#)™ | [Privacy Policy](#).

Email Marketing by



League of Women Voters of Oregon | 1330 12th St. SE, Suite 200 | Salem | OR | 97302