



## LEGISLATIVE REPORT

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### **5 MINUTE ACTIVIST**

Take five minutes to call or write a letter to your legislators about an issue they are working on. Their job is to represent us - let them know how you feel. If they respond positively, thank them!

In future Legislative Reports, we will use this space to ask your help in letting our legislators know about issues of importance to LWV. Please link to this box to see what you can do to help.

For those without Internet access, please call the LWVOR office (503-581-5722) for a free copy of the Legislator Quick Card, a list of legislators districts, addresses and phone numbers.

See **Quick Links** on the back page for web links that will take you to useful information on the Legislature's web site and more information on the LWV.

## Welcome

Welcome to the LWVOR *Legislative Report*! The Action Team plans to publish these reports about every two weeks throughout the 2007 session. We promise to give you up-to-date information and our perspective on issues of concern to the League and other reform-minded citizens.

The *Legislative Report* explains the background behind decisions facing legislators, the human impact of bills being considered and the reasons the LWV supports or opposes these bills. We also highlight the progress of bills that are of particular significance. In addition, we tell you how you can find more information on these issues and how to communicate your views to your elected representatives.

Also, don't forget to check our website at [www.lwvor.org](http://www.lwvor.org) for additional information and to get access to past issues of the Legislative Report.

**How do you subscribe?** Just email us at [lwvor@lwvor.org](mailto:lwvor@lwvor.org) or call us at 503-581-5722. You can unsubscribe at any time.

The email version of the Legislative Report is free. If you prefer to print your report, use our printer-friendly version. A paper version is also published, and we ask \$50 for paper, postage and handling for the session. To subscribe to the paper version, call our office at 503-581-5722, or send us a check noting that it's for the Legislative Report. Our address is at the bottom of this newsletter.

Sincerely,  
 Norman Turrill, Action Chair  
 Marge Easley, Action Vice-Chair

## **Priorities for LWVOR Action - 2007**

LWVOR Action Committee's attempt to designate which areas of advocacy we will likely focus on for the upcoming 2007 Legislative Session. However, the items on this document are not set in stone, since it is always possible that other issues may suddenly take center stage. We will carefully monitor all issues on which we have positions and continually re-evaluate our priorities as the session progresses.

### **Citizen Access**

- At least 48 hours notice should be given for committee hearings and should include an accurate list of bills to be heard.
- Work groups (appointed to reconcile various opinions on a bill) should be balanced so that all views are heard. At present members are chosen solely at the discretion of the committee chair. Each work group's report should have a hearing.
- Budget notes should be included in the budget only after a full hearing. Budget notes frequently include important restrictions or instructions on how budget moneys are spent and are often added by the chairs of Ways and Means Committees, without agencies or other legislators being aware of what the notes say and without any public hearing.
- Support legislative reform involving citizen access.

### **Governance**

- Initiative Reform (following the PCOL recommendations)
- Rainy Day Fund and Kicker reform
- Repeal or suspension of the 50/50 (double majority) requirement put into effect by Measures 47/50 (1996/1997)
- Ethics reform (following the Oregon Law Commission's proposals)
- Fiscal policy: revenue, tax expenditures, school funding
- Campaign finance reform and possible implementation of Measure 47 (2006)
- Monitoring of the new Electronic Disclosure System
- Monitoring of elections law reform

### **Natural Resources**

- Prevent rollbacks to natural resource agency budgets.
- Prevent changes to key land use policies, including "transferability" of Measure 37 claims and regionalization of LCDC.
- Prevent limitations to "standing".
- Prevent reauthorization of Pollution Tax Credits.
- Support conservation of resources, including energy conservation, electronic waste recovery systems and modernization of the bottle bill.
- Support efforts to improve water quality and quantity, including prohibiting toxic mixing zones, protecting wetlands and protecting ground water.
- Support conservation including energy efficiency, electronic waste recovery systems and modernization of Oregon's Bottle Bill.
- Elevate status of climate change initiatives.

### **Social Policy**

- Adult Corrections – support alternatives to incarceration and community based programs, and treatment of mentally ill prisoners in prison or hospital
- Child Care – support affordable quality child care to increase employment and reduce poverty
- Children at Risk – support early intervention and prevention programs through Commission on Children and Families including parent support, youth development, juvenile crime prevention and shelter programs.

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- Education – support adequate funding for K-12, community colleges and the higher education system.
- Health Policy – Physical Care – support health care for all children, expand Oregon Health Plan adult coverage, support prescription drug coverage
- Adult Mental Health – support regional care facilities, and local crisis services and housing programs
- Children’s Mental Health – support mental health services in home, day treatment and residential treatment options
- Housing – support affordable housing programs for families, support shelter programs for families with children and for homeless youth and single young adults. Support Housing Alliance agenda as appropriate.
- Judicial and Mental Health programs – support drug court funding and substance abuse treatment through OHP
- Juvenile Corrections – support community intervention programs and treatment options, restored funding and mental health treatment in youth facilities
- Women’s Issues

## Legislature - Stay Connected at Home

Several developments at the Legislature make it even easier for you to follow bills and hearings from your home by computer and television.

- Oregon Channel provides gavel-to-gavel, unedited television coverage 24/7. This will include floor sessions, committee hearings, news conferences and other activities of our state government.
  - This is being broadcast over the airwaves on a digital television channel.
  - Detailed information about how and where to watch the Oregon Channel in your area can be found at [www.oregonchannel.org](http://www.oregonchannel.org)
  - The Oregon Channel website also gives you real-time streaming video of House and Senate floor action and other hearings and events in the Capitol.
- Use the Internet. The home page for the Oregon State Legislature (<http://www.leg.state.or.us>) is your computer access to the committee hearing agendas, the bill texts and the streaming video or audio archives of hearings

For those wanting to visit the Capitol, but are concerned about access, there are many ADA resources available, from audio tapes and hearing assistance devices to close-in parking, wheelchair ramps and gallery access. For more information on these services and more, contact Legislative Administration at 503-986-1848.

*Paula Krane, Citizen Access Coordinator*

## The Legislature Is Coming to Your Community

The 2007 Legislature will again be having hearings around the state and the first meeting has already been held, today, in Reedsport. We will include the field trip hearing schedule in the Legislative Report, so watch for one in your community.

As in the past I hope local Leagues and local members will monitor all of these hearings and testify when asked on a bill that is on the League priority list. Go observe a hearing. This is the best way to observe the process without going to Salem.

*Paula Krane, Citizen Access Coordinator*

## Social Policy Issues at Forefront

This session there is major emphasis on specific **social policy** issues:

**Health care** bills that have been proposed include Governor Kulongoski's plan for Healthy Kids, Kitzhaber's We Can Do Better initiative, and the Senate Commission on Health Care Access and Affordability bill. The Governor's Budget for **Mental Health** follows up on the siting of new regional mental health hospitals and a reinvestment in community mental health services. Funding for **addiction services** is also a priority for the League, and the Governor's budget restores substance abuse treatment funds which were decreased last session.

The Department of Human Services will be requesting additional staff for **Child Welfare** to cover the increased caseloads. The Commission on Children and Families will be requesting funding for **homeless youth** services, as well as other prevention services. Affordable housing advocates have been putting together a revenue plan to fund expanded low income housing availability.

In the area of **adult corrections**, prison construction has been completed, which may allow the expansion of prison education and drug treatment programs. In juvenile justice, the plan is to restore funding for closed correctional beds and to increase staffing levels and flexible funds. Finally, K-12 **education** continues to present the greatest demand on the state budget. The Governor's Budget commits a minimum 61% of the general fund revenue to education. This session may find increases in community college and higher education budgets.

*Karen Nibler, Social Policy Coordinator*

## Drowning in Claims

With the State of Oregon having received over 6,500 claims for waivers of state regulation and our county staff also receiving an overwhelming number, the 2007 Legislature has created a Joint Committee on Land Use Fairness. It will meet in Salem at 5 p.m. on Tuesdays and Thursdays. Look for a temporary delay in the 180-day claims processing deadline with work on how to make Measure 37 fair to both applicants and neighbors and to try to preserve the best of our Oregon statewide land use system.

*Peggy Lynch, Action Committee Member*

## Help Us Get This Information to You

The Legislative Report costs money to produce, yet we don't want to limit who can receive it by charging a subscription fee. Please support the volunteer Action Team's efforts to communicate with you by sending a donation, marked "Legislative Report" to the LWV address below.

Thank you, Rebecca Smith, Editor

## Oregon Housing Alliance Lobby Day: February 6, 2007

LWVOR is a member of the Oregon Housing Alliance and encourages League members and anyone interested in promoting affordable housing to attend.

**Tuesday, February 6, 11 am - 3 pm**  
**Oregon State Capitol, Salem, Oregon**

Printable Flyer available at [www.lwvor.org/documents/HousingAllianceLobbyDayFlyer.pdf](http://www.lwvor.org/documents/HousingAllianceLobbyDayFlyer.pdf)

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We need hundreds of people coming together on Tuesday, February 6 to show the Legislature that Oregonians believe that hardworking people should be able to afford housing and still have enough money for food and other basic necessities. Besides meeting with your legislator, there will be speakers, food and fun! We need to know who is coming. Please follow steps 1-3 below and RSVP as soon as possible!

1. Think about who you want to visit for Lobby Day! You can visit the Legislator that represents you where you live, or even where you work!
2. Find out who your state legislator is by clicking here: <http://www.leg.state.or.us/findlegsltr/>
3. Email your RSVP and the names of the legislator(s) you would like to visit to: Alison via email or 503.226.3001, x106 as soon as possible. The Housing Alliance will schedule the meeting(s) for you.

## Volunteer

Help is needed to monitor legislative committees and report back to the Action Committee. If you live close to Salem or have an Internet connection, you can learn to track bills and listen to hearings. It is a fascinating experience if you have time to dedicate to the legislative process. Contact LWVOR to volunteer.

## Quick Links

### League of Women Voters of Oregon

[Www.lwvor.org](http://www.lwvor.org)

### Oregon State Legislature

[Www.leg.state.or.us](http://www.leg.state.or.us)

### League of Women Voters of the US

[Www.lwv.org](http://www.lwv.org)

**Legislator Quick Card** (printable page of names, districts, phone numbers and addresses)

[http://www.leg.state.or.us/citizenguide/legislator\\_quickcard.pdf](http://www.leg.state.or.us/citizenguide/legislator_quickcard.pdf)

### State Senators

<http://www.leg.state.or.us/senate/senateset.htm>

### State Representatives

<http://www.leg.state.or.us/house/houseset.htm>

### Committee Information

<http://www.leg.state.or.us/comm/commset.htm>

### Find Your Legislator

<http://www.leg.state.or.us/findlegsltr/home.htm>

### Email Your Legislator

<http://www.leg.state.or.us/writelegsltr/writeset.htm>

### Sample Letter to a Legislator

[http://www.leg.state.or.us/citizenguide/letter\\_sample.htm](http://www.leg.state.or.us/citizenguide/letter_sample.htm)

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