

LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS® OF OREGON



VOTER

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VOTE YES ON BALLOT MEASURE 101

On the recommendation of the Action Committee, the LWVOR Board voted to support Ballot Measure 101. This position is supported by the LWVUS position, “Every U.S. resident should have access to affordable, quality health care, including birth control and the privacy to make reproductive choices.” Because BM 101 involves a law that was passed by the Legislature, this is a referendum. In order to keep the law in place, a “yes” vote is needed. The measure involves an assessment on hospitals, as well as an assessment on some health insurance policies.

A “yes” vote protects health care for one million Oregonians on the Oregon Health Plan, and lowers the cost of health insurance by **\$300 per year on average** for **210,000 Oregonians** buying coverage on the individual market. A “yes” vote ensures Oregon maintains federal matching dollars for health care, potentially protecting nearly **\$5 billion in federal funds** for Oregonians’ care.

Measure 101 raises between **\$210 million and \$320 million** for health care from the Oregon health care industry by increasing an assessment on large hospitals and reinstating a type of assessment on health insurance companies that had expired. Specifically, the measure adds 0.7 percent to the existing 5.3 percent hospital assessment. The measure also establishes a 1.5 percent assessment on health insurers, managed care companies including coordinated care organizations, and the Public Employees Benefit Board. The previous health insurance company assessment, which helped pay for health care in Oregon, **expired in 2014. Forty-nine states** use the same types of assessments to fund health care. Provider assessments are a federally-approved way for states to pay for their share of Medicaid.¹ Furthermore, the health care industry in Oregon generally supported this measure in the legislature because they would directly benefit from the increased federal dollars.

LWVOR encourages your “yes” vote and encourages you to volunteer with <http://yesforhealthcare.org/> to make sure that the measure passes.

Remember to Vote!

January 23rd Special Election

¹ The information about the specifics of Ballot Measure 101 is supplied by the Oregon Center for Public Policy.

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Sarah Andrews, Office
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Send address changes to:
 LWVOR State Office
 1330 12th St. SE, Suite 200
 Salem, OR 97302
 email: lwvor@lwvor.org

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LWVOR Mission

The League of Women Voters® of Oregon is a grassroots, nonpartisan political organization that encourages informed and active participation in government in order to build better communities statewide. The state League's purposes are to influence public policy through education and advocacy and to provide support for League members and the League organization.

Election Methods Position

Adopted November 10, 2017

The League of Women Voters of Oregon recognizes that election methods affect how voters participate in our democracy, who can run for office, and who can get elected. Therefore, the League supports election methods that:

- Encourage voter participation and voter engagement.
- Encourage those with minority opinions to participate.
- Are easy to use.
- Are verifiable and auditable.
- Promote access to voting.
- Promote competitive elections.
- Promote sincere voting over strategic voting.
- Discourage negative campaigning.
- Prevent political manipulation (e.g. Gerrymandering).
- Are compatible with vote-by-mail elections.

The League of Women Voters of Oregon does not believe that plurality voting is the best method for promoting democratic choice in all circumstances. For single-winner systems, the League supports ranked-choice voting; we do not support range or approval voting.

The League of Women Voters of Oregon supports election systems that elect policy-making bodies—legislatures, councils, commissions, and boards—that proportionally reflect the people they represent. We support systems that promote stable government, but we do not support systems that protect the two-party system.

The League of Women Voters of Oregon supports enabling legislation to allow local jurisdictions to explore alternative election methods. If an alternative election method is adopted, then funding for startup and voter education should be available.

The League of Women Voters of Oregon does not support nonpartisan elections for state legislators.

DAY AT THE LEGISLATURE

Mark your calendars for the LWVOR Day at the Legislature, which is planned for **February 23, 2018**. A registration form will be forthcoming after the first of the year.

President's Column

Norman Turrill, n.turrill@lwvor.org



By now all LWVOR members should know that we have endorsed a Yes vote on Measure 101. But how did we get to this point? The LWVUS has had a strong position on Health Care since at least 1995 (*Impact on Issues 2016-2018*, page 87). The LWVOR has used this position repeatedly over the years, particularly during the last legislative session to support the bill, which M101 has referred the funding parts to voters.

Your LWVOR Board takes such advocacy decisions seriously. We usually base these decisions on three factors that must accompany any advocacy: positions, resources and opportunity.

Positions: Our positions represent the collective political will of our members after a long process of program planning, convention, study, member understanding, consensus, and member agreement. We often have a member ask us to work on their favorite issue for which we have no position. Such a request might eventually result in a study. However, without the political will in the form a position, we would be unsuccessful and cannot do advocacy.

Resources: Resources are either the financial and volunteer capital necessary to do any advocacy. Finances are not usually a barrier for us to work on an issue, since we do most of our work with volunteers. Our 501(c)(3) status limits how much we can spend doing lobbying (in the IRS's technical definition), but is not a limit for general advocacy. We often have members say to us that we should do "something" about issue X, and we may actually have a position on issue X. However, without a volunteer or volunteers to work on the issue, we would be unsuccessful and cannot do advocacy.

Opportunity: An opportunity is a situation where we can make significant progress on an issue. The League can occasionally create an opportunity merely with our reputation and willingness to work on an issue. We have at times worked on an important issue for decades, making only incremental progress, e.g., campaign finance reform. However, this is usually not the case. We must usually wait for an opportunity to open up for us. An opportunity might be in the form of a viable bill in the legislature and a prominent champion to push the bill. There are many good bills in the legislature with good sponsors, but a bill does not become viable until it has a champion and at least gets a hearing. An opportunity might also come in the form of a coalition of organizations that wants to work on a particular issue, e.g., the Oregon Conservation Network. We can often make significant progress on an issue by partnering with other organizations. We may have both a position and the resources to work on an issue; however, without a viable opportunity, we would be unsuccessful and cannot do advocacy.

Therefore, without all three of these factors for an issue, we cannot make an issue a priority. M101 is a good example. We have the LWVUS Health Care position. We have Action Committee volunteers for this advocacy. And we have an opportunity in the form of the referendum ballot measure.

I hope everyone had happy holidays! I am looking forward to the new year working with all of you!



Corvallis Member Attends Climate Change Conference

Claudia Keith, Climate Change Chair

I just returned from the first week of the UN Climate Change Conference, Conference of the Parties (COP) 23, in Bonn Germany. I and three other League members from California and Florida represented LWVUS and LWVOR, as NGO (non-governmental organization) observers. Over 26,000 folks from more than 197 countries were expected to attend.

It was life changing and I am thankful for the opportunity. I am filled with experiences ranging from “observing” at formal UN meetings, to walking, biking, taking public transportation, while talking with folks from almost every continent. These memories have certainly given me a better understanding of the serious global challenges— especially with mitigation and adaptation funding—and yes, the unbelievable possibilities.

On a number of occasions, I talked with individuals about the importance of the judiciary branch of government, which historically has been used successfully to address many civil rights cases. As Judge Aiken stated in her Nov 2016 ruling, the constitutional “right to a healthy planet” is part of the Our Children’s Trust historical lawsuit (see National Geographic article). It’s not clear to me that the 22 previous COPs have elevated human rights litigation as an important element in global climate change efforts.

The COP23 President, Fijian Prime Minister Frank Bainimarama thanked the 400+ NGOs for attending as he commented on how the UN had been able to make room for more groups— basically more ‘public’ observers. He commented on improved transparency, access, and improving assessment processes. (On a side note, I was a rarity—very few women attending were over age 55 and very few had silver hair.)

One important item: I attended #uspeoplesdelegation press conference, which included a representative from Our Children’s Trust ‘Juliana v. U.S.’. This press conference provided a forum for their five major demands. I have recommended/proposed a LWVUS/ LWVOR COP23 public statement concerning the League’s amici standing with the Our Children’s Trust lawsuit. There will be more information on this soon as we prepare for Oregon’s 2018 short legislative session. #uspeoplesdelegation [press-release](#).

Our local League Climate Change committee hopes to have a COP23 LWV program this coming spring. I also hold the Climate Change Portfolio for LWVOR Action Committee and am actively involved in lobby efforts for the Clean Energy Jobs Cap and Invest 2018 Legislative Senate bill (2017 SB1070). Please contact me if you would like to have further COP23 details.

What is the Regional Solutions Program? Why Should You Care?

*Peggy Lynch, LWVOR, Natural Resources
Action Coordinator*

The State of Oregon has been divided into 11 regions for the purpose of solving economic development problems.

<http://www.oregon.gov/gov/admin/regional-solutions/Pages/default.aspx>

State agency staff are assigned to work with local leaders to assist in getting local economic development projects through any needed permitting and to gain access to state grants or loans to help projects succeed. This team concept originally started in the early 1990s and was more formally established by [Executive Order](#) in 2012 by former Governor Kitzhaber. It was enshrined in legislation in 2014 ([ORS 284.752](#)). The League has been involved the past few years, first in monitoring the process, helping to work with others to develop clear guidelines that include public participation and on-going as a Regional Infrastructure Fund was established and rules adopted to guide how any monies allocated by the legislature are expended.

Besides these agency staffers, each region has a Regional Solutions Advisory Committee (RSAC) appointed by the Governor. Some committees add members to their ranks to assure a greater representation. These committees set Regional Priorities (where the public can provide input). These Priorities are then used to guide support for any projects worked on by the Committee and the Teams.

From their website: *The Governor's approach to community and economic development, established by [Executive Order](#) and enacted by the legislature in 2014 ([ORS 284.752](#)), recognizes the unique needs of each Oregon region, and the importance of working locally to identify priorities, solve problems, and seize opportunities to get projects done.*

The League has worked with partners to encourage public participation in this

process. Each Regional Advisory Committee meets quarterly and offers a call-in telephone number so public members can listen to the discussions and can provide input during the public comment period on their agendas. Local Leagues should encourage their members to call in to listen and learn about the various issues being considered in their region. This is yet another layer of government that determines the expenditure of the public's money. In 2017, \$4 million in lottery bonds (to be sold in the spring of 2019) was set aside in the state's budget. Because it was such a small amount, the Regional Solutions Teams are soliciting a list of projects throughout the state that require money. That list is now well over \$150 million! Also, projects that might apply for other agency grants or loans get special consideration if they are on the Regional Solutions Priority Lists. That's your money, too!

Besides working on economic development projects, this program has recently requested information on the need for Workforce Housing (defined as 60-120% of adjusted median income). They received 37 proposals. As of Dec. 11, Regional Solutions is now asking for specific housing projects where the Oregon Housing and Community Services agency has set aside at least \$1 million. They are looking for projects that need technical assistance and actual on-the-ground projects that also have business support.

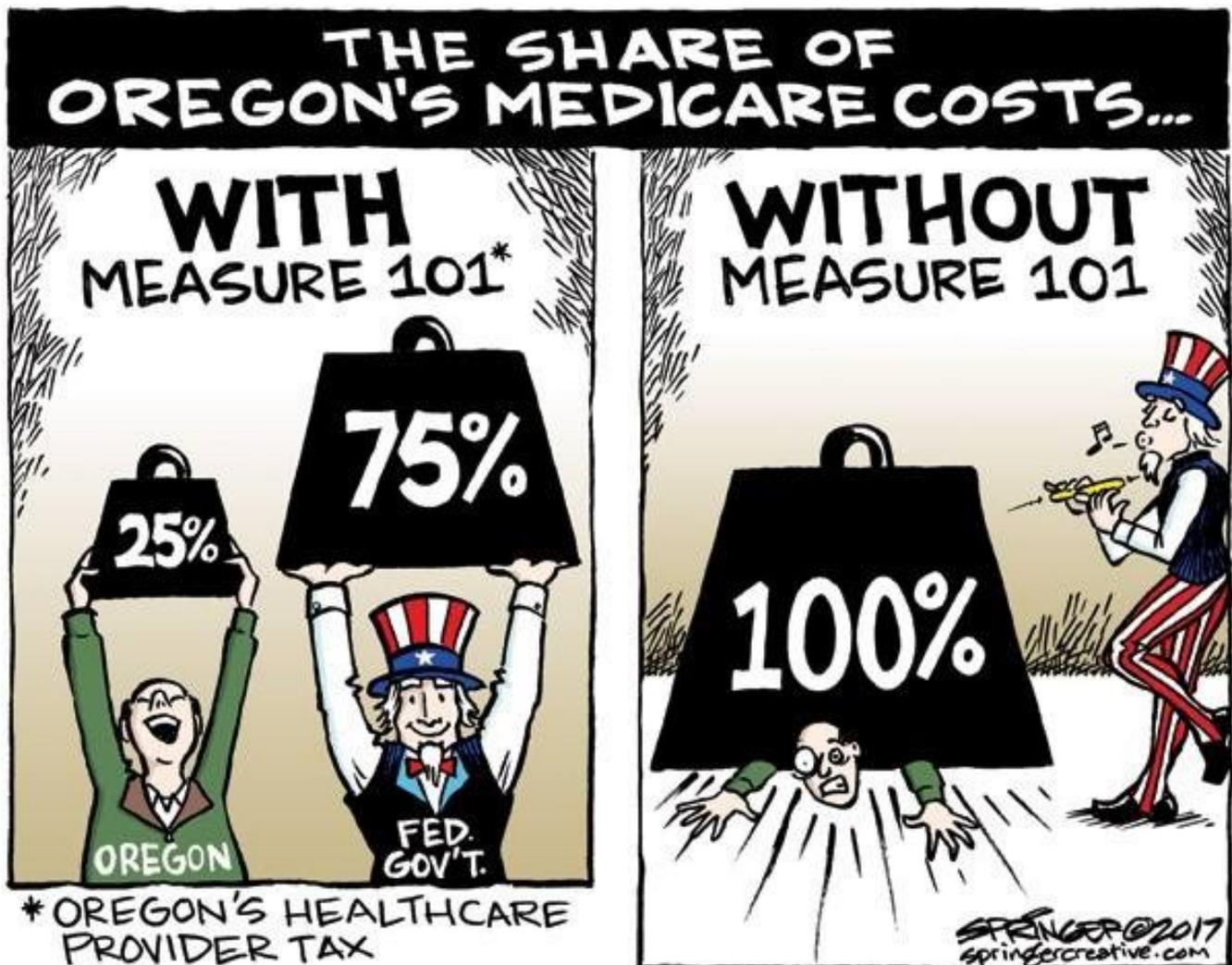
Find YOUR region. Contact the Governor's Regional Solutions staff for your region (<http://www.oregon.gov/gov/admin/regional-solutions/Pages/Regional-Solutions-Staff.aspx>) and sign up to receive notice of their meetings. Then call in! It's YOUR money! And YOUR agency staff! It's YOUR Oregon!

Drinking Water Advisory Committee Representative for LWVOR Needed

Enacted by [Senate Bill 156](#) in 2007, the Drinking Water Advisory Committee (DWAC) was created to advise and assist Drinking Water Services on policies related to the protection, safety and regulation of public drinking water in Oregon. Among the policies developed are [best management practices](#) for water systems and suppliers.

According to [Oregon Revised Statute \(ORS\) 448.153](#), DWAC consists of 15 members (appointed by the State Public Health Officer) that serve three-year terms, meet at least four times annually, and represent served communities, advocacy groups and professional organizations.

Unfortunately, the member who was representing the League recently passed away. The duties of the position are to attend the meetings and to send reports to our Natural Resources Action Committee Coordinator. If you are interested, please contact me at alicebartelt@comcast.net.



Members Enjoy a Successful Fall Workshop



LWVOR President and Workshop Speaker Lorena Reynolds



Fall Workshop was well attended

League of Women Voters® of Oregon

1330 12th St. SE, Suite 200
Salem, OR 97302
503-581-5722; FAX 503-581-9403

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