

Transformation Through Crisis



The people of Oregon face multiple crises. The COVID-19 pandemic and the ensuing economic, health and social fallout have challenged our communities and exacerbated existing inequities for Black, Indigenous, and People of Color (BIPOC) and low-income residents. Raging wildfires destroyed thousands of homes and hundreds of businesses, badly damaging the already precarious economies in our rural communities.

House Democrats will take bold, decisive, and transformative actions to ensure that the state's recovery reaches all Oregonians.

Equity and Justice for All

House Democrats recognize the state's long, painful, racist history as well as the many ways that bias and racism are threaded through everyday life and institutions. Dismantling these longstanding systems and building a more equitable future will require intentional effort to center the voices and leadership of BIPOC communities and low-income Oregonians in all of our decision making. We will take on urgently needed reforms to policing and criminal justice systems so that everyone is able to feel truly safe.

Economic Recovery for Every Part of Oregon

Small businesses across Oregon have been hit hard by the pandemic—many have shuttered permanently or are on the brink of closing. Workers, especially in service, retail, and low-wage industries, have struggled to pay their bills, and those in essential industries risked their health on the job. Women and BIPOC communities have been disproportionately impacted, further widening the wealth gap. We will advocate for economic recovery policies that protect workers and support the small businesses at the heart of our Main Street communities in every part of the state.

To Learn More, Visit:
<https://www.oregonlegislature.gov/housedemocrats>

Protecting Public Health

The pandemic shined a spotlight on the importance of robust public health programs. House Democrats will advocate for funding and implementation of essential public health strategies specific to our diverse communities, including housing, clean water, and healthy air. To combat the pandemic, we will advocate for expanding access to personal protective equipment, testing, worker safety, and sick leave, as well as a plan to support and accelerate the COVID-19 vaccine rollout.

Education and Workforce Development

Returning kids to school safely is a top priority. We must also address the technology barriers that have worsened existing racial and geographic inequities in education. House Democrats will protect funding for the Student Success Act and work to expand early learning and childcare programs. Investments in higher education should focus on access, affordability, and academic excellence. Innovative partnerships and apprenticeships should prepare students for the emerging post-pandemic workforce while creating new living-wage jobs. We will keep working to successfully reintegrate returning veterans into our communities, including sustainable care for military families.

A Place to Call Home

Our already fragile housing sector was pushed to the brink by wildfire and the pandemic. Far too many Oregonians, including children and families, are homeless or at risk of losing their housing. House Democrats will protect Oregonians against evictions and foreclosures during the COVID crisis; advocate for rent subsidies for tenants and small landlords; and lead efforts to build housing that's accessible and affordable, especially in rural and wildfire-impacted communities.

Access to Health Care

COVID-19 has stretched our health care system and demonstrated the need for universal coverage. House Democrats will fight for robust funding for the Oregon Health Plan and continue to move Oregon towards universal access to affordable, culturally appropriate health care that includes mental and behavioral health support, as well as support for growing the workforce in a way that meets the needs of our communities.

Combatting Climate Change

The intensifying wildfire season is a brutal reminder that climate disruption is already damaging our natural resources and targeting our most vulnerable. We will continue to fight for policies that prioritize environmental justice, reduce greenhouse gas emissions, spur clean community-based energy sources, and protect the natural environment. At the same time, we must modernize Oregon's emergency response system to prepare for and protect Oregonians from future natural disasters.

Modernizing the Legislature

For too long, the Oregon State Legislature has been structured to exclude the voices of many while catering to the needs of the privileged few. We will break down these barriers, centering the needs of those who have historically been pushed out, creating dedicated leadership opportunities for BIPOC legislators, providing language translation services, reforming the state's campaign finance laws to promote more diverse engagement, and much more. We commit to bold steps to create a more truly representative Legislature.

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