



# PRESS RELEASE

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For Immediate Release  
January 9, 2017

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## **House Democrats Release Agenda for 2017 Session** *Caucus will focus on moving Oregon forward together*

SALEM, OR—As the 79th Legislative Session gets underway with the swearing in of legislators and Governor Kate Brown, Oregon’s House Democrats have released their agenda for the session.

The next several months will present many big challenges, including deep uncertainty and dangerous rhetoric from the incoming presidential administration and Republicans in Congress.

“In the face of the hateful, fear-mongering rhetoric and erratic unpredictability that has defined the incoming Trump Administration, we will focus on protecting Oregon’s values and priorities,” says House Majority Leader Jennifer Williamson (D-SW & NW Portland). “As always, we will continue to fight for better opportunities for all, we’ll defend equality and fairness in our communities, and we’ll focus on moving Oregon forward together.”

The agenda, called “Moving Oregon Forward Together,” focuses on these key areas:

- Expanding Opportunity Through Quality Public Education
- Ensuring Transparent, Accountable Government that Effectively Meets People’s Needs
- Keeping Oregon’s Economy Growing
- Protecting All Working Families and Workers’ Rights
- Standing with Women, Seniors, Communities of Color, and Underrepresented Communities
- Supporting Healthy Communities

“The times ahead will be tough, but I know that there’s no challenge so great that we can’t face it by working together,” Rep. Williamson adds.

The full agenda for the session is attached separately.

Today saw the swearing in of 10 new House Democrats, all of whom have deep ties to their communities and a commitment to improving the lives of all Oregonians.

“I’m excited to get to work improving educational opportunities for all Oregon students and finding innovative ways to support small businesses,” says Rep. Janelle Bynum (D-Happy Valley). “Voters sent all of us here to be their voice and make sure that state government is working for them—that’s a responsibility I know we all take very seriously.”

Due to the results of the November election, the House Democratic Caucus is—for the first time in Oregon House history and only the second time in the state’s legislative history—majority women.

“There’s a lot of uncertainty and anxiety out there right now with what’s happening at the federal level,” says Rep. Teresa Alonso Leon (D-Woodburn), the first Latina immigrant to be elected to the Oregon House. “But in the House, we’re committed to protecting our neighbors and our communities from attacks and mistreatment. Oregon is seen as a national leader in passing policies that protect vulnerable families; that leadership is even more important now than ever.”

Here’s the full list of new House Democrats:

- Rep. Teresa Alonso Leon (D-Woodburn)
- Rep. Janelle Bynum (D-Happy Valley)
- Rep. Julie Fahey (D-West Eugene and Junction City)
- Rep. Diego Hernandez (D-East Portland)
- Rep. Sheri Malstrom (D-Beaverton)
- Rep. Pam Marsh (D-Ashland)
- Rep. Mark Meek (D-Oregon City)
- Rep. Karin Power (D-Milwaukie)
- Rep. Tawna Sanchez (D-North and NE Portland)
- Rep. Janeen Sollman (D-Hillsboro)

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# Moving Oregon Forward Together



In 2017, House Democrats will focus on meeting the needs of every community in every corner of the state. We will defend and preserve equal opportunity and fairness, while working to deliver on Oregonians' priorities:

## ***Expanding Opportunity Through Quality Public Education***

- Prioritizing funds for early childhood and K-12 education, the smartest investments we can make in our future.
- Improving opportunities and graduation rates by rebuilding career and technical education programs and making community colleges and universities more affordable.

## ***Ensuring Transparent, Accountable Government that Effectively Meets People's Needs***

- Building trust in state government through responsible budgeting, increasing effectiveness and efficiency, improving transparency by streamlining access to public records, and strengthening accountability in lobbying rules.
- Recognizing the need for a revenue system that's fair, stable, and adequate to fund our state's priorities, including education, health care, and senior services.

## ***Keeping Oregon's Economy Growing***

- Investing in a comprehensive transportation plan that will preserve the infrastructure we have and modernize our systems to meet the everyday needs of families and businesses across the state.
- Identifying critical projects to better prepare our state for natural disasters.
- Boosting small businesses and encouraging the growth of living-wage jobs in every part of the state.

## ***Protecting All Working Families and Workers' Rights***

- Ensuring that women are paid an equal income for equal work.
- Supporting working families through high quality, affordable childcare and workplace policies that allow workers time to care for family members.
- Taking action to address the statewide affordable housing and rent crisis.

## ***Standing with Women, Seniors, Communities of Color, and Underrepresented Communities***

- Minimizing the disproportionate impact that budget cuts can have on children, communities of color, low-income people, seniors and people with disabilities, veterans, and people experiencing homelessness.
- Protecting civil rights and addressing racial and economic disparity in the legal system.
- Preserving and expanding access to reproductive health care for all women.

## ***Supporting Healthy Communities***

- Tackling the high cost of prescription drugs and hospital care, prioritizing public health investments for long-term outcomes, and ensuring access to affordable health care.
- Reducing gun violence, domestic assault, and sexual violence through common-sense protections.
- Ensuring that our air and water are clear of dangerous pollutants.
- Supporting the clean energy economy to grow jobs and address climate change.