



State Representative Alissa Keny-Guyer



HD 46 * SE & NE Portland * Phone: 503-986-1446 * www.oregonlegislature.gov/keny-guyer

Dear Friends and Neighbors,

After 32 intense days, the Oregon legislature adjourned on Thursday with many of my policy priorities passing. With a focus on expanding opportunities for low-income families in an environmentally sustainable economy, I am proud that Oregon passed the nation's strongest minimum wage, and is the first state to phase out coal!

We also made progress on housing and health care bills that many thought not possible. I am enormously grateful to my staff, community partners, and legislative colleagues - particularly to Speaker Tina Kotek for shepherding such an impactful agenda to help move Oregon forward.



*Speaker Kotek and her fabulous staff,
Andee Short.*

I will spare the gory details of why many bills got held up and will just highlight what passed - and what remains to be done in 2017. See my [FB page](#) for my daily summary and photos of the session, the [list of bills](#) for details, and my [legislative website](#) for my past newsletters and media news about legislation. Another way to learn details from the session and share your feedback is by joining my next Town Hall:

Legislative Wrap-Up

With Sen. Dembrow & Rep. Smith Warner

Wednesday, March 9, 7-8:30pm

Ride Connection: 9955 NE Glisan St.

1) Housing

With my highest priority being to address the worsening housing crisis, I am delighted that we passed HB 4143 (tenant protections) and SB 1533 (inclusionary zoning) in the last two days of session. They were cliffhangers!

Although "weakened" in order to pass the finish line, these bills will make a



Celebrating the passage of tenant protections with Sen. Dembrow, Sybil Hebb and my staff!

significant difference. HB 4143 adds *immediate* stability and predictability to tenants by increasing rent notification, while SB 1533 provides *longer-term* relief by allowing cities or counties to require affordable housing in all major multi-family residential developments, and to charge a construction excise tax to pay for affordable housing.

I supported two other controversial bills in the "housing grand bargain" that will develop mixed income housing inside and outside the Urban Growth Boundary. While there are legitimate concerns about the bills, I believe we must take measured steps to increase density inside the UGB - and to see if developing land just outside the UGB can meet the affordable housing need.

We also allocated millions of dollars towards people suffering from the housing crisis:

- \$1.7 million for homeless, disabled people through HB 4042 (General Assistance)
- \$2.5 million to preserve affordable housing
- \$8 million for Emergency Housing Assistance (rent relief)
- \$2 million for the State Homeless Assistance Program (shelters)
- \$2.7 million for foreclosure counseling and \$.2 million for Legal Aid to help low-income Oregonians with housing issues
- SB 1582 puts sideboards on the \$40 million we allocated last year to the Low Income Fast Track housing for families.



General Assistance passes the House unanimously!

This was a great start for a short session - *but just a start*. I will work hard over the interim with tenants, landlords, and housing advocates to reduce no-cause rent terminations and increase the supply of affordable housing.

2) Human Services

We passed SB 1515 and HB 4080 to improve the quality of care for foster kids. While we did not pass HB 4083 to set up a task force to ensure the same accountability for people in memory care and nursing homes, I intend to work on this issue over the interim.

It is critical that our state agencies have the tools they need, both to support (with clear policies and adequate reimbursements) and to hold accountable the organizations that care for our most vulnerable citizens.

3) Healthcare

We made great progress on another focus of mine: improving health care access for vulnerable Oregonians. We passed HB 4017 to develop a blueprint for the Basic Health Plan, which covers health insurance for Oregonians under 200% of the



COFA advocates after HB 4071 passed.

federal poverty line.

We passed HB 4071 to help low income COFA Pacific Islanders with their health care premiums (read why they need this in the [list of bills!](#)) and allocated \$900,000 in SB 5701, the budget bill, to plan a program to extend health care coverage to

all kids.

We passed four bills to further regulate medical and recreational marijuana, and provided \$3.9 million for a new drug prevention campaign aimed at youth. Bills on tobacco licensing and taxing e-Cigarettes did not pass this session. I'll work on legislation for 2017 to prevent smoking, address mental health and addictions, expand nutrition and school health programs, and cover all kids.



Tonia Hunt, Rep. Mitch Greenlick, Linda Roman, Rep. Phyllis Gutierrez Kenney (WA), Alberto Moreno, and Speaker Tina Kotek advocating to cover all kids!

4) Wage Increases

As you may know from the state and national [media coverage](#), we passed a major minimum wage bill that not only sets us on a slow, steady course to have the highest wage in the nation, but also accounts for different costs of living in the [three regions](#) of our state. This will give a big lift to people who work full time and still fall below the poverty line.

We passed two other bills to help low income workers: SB 1587 provides wage theft protection, and HB 4110 will increase the state EITC from 8% to 11% for families with children under 3 years old. My bill to increase our state's utilization of the EITC didn't pass; but the Governor's office has agreed to set up a task force, led by DHS, to carry on this important endeavor.



Som Subedi and his Bhutanese family in the Capitol for Refugees and Immigrants Day.

Next session, I look forward to promoting EITC, paid family leave, and fair scheduling policies to support low income workers - while ensuring that small businesses get the financial and technical assistance they need.

5) Public Safety

Three bills to reduce sex crimes all passed: SB 1571 "Melissa's bill" to speed up the backlog on untested rape kits; SB 1600 to remove the statute of limitations on certain sex crimes; and HB 4082 to expand the crime of promoting prostitution.

We also invested \$1.5 million to perform DNA tests on a backlog of sexual assault kits, \$677,000 to create a special prosecutor for elder abuse cases, and \$1 million to help Oregon State Police process background checks on gun sales.

HB 4147 to close the "Charleston loophole" in background checks passed the House but not the Senate. I will work to pass this as well as "Safe Storage" and "Child Access Prevention" next year to reduce gun violence.



With former AZ Congresswoman and gun victim/safety advocate, Gabby Giffords (in white), and my fellow Representatives.

6) Education

Education starts early! We allocated \$5.3 million to bolster Head Start Prekindergarten programs, and \$17.5 million to expand access to high-quality, mixed-delivery preschool programs.

Several bills aimed at helping K-12 vulnerable students passed: HB 4002 aims to reduce absenteeism through a statewide plan; HB 4031 aims to reduce it through trauma-informed care pilot programs in schools; HB 4057 targets interventions for students in poverty; HB 4075 establishes

an anonymous tip line for student safety; and HB 4033 will improve the cultural competency of teachers.

HB 4021 will study ways to lower interest on student loans. HB 4046 allocates \$1.6 million to improve the academic performance of "Oregon Promise" students in community college. These are important steps to build on the significant funding increases we gave to K-12 and higher ed last year. Next year, we will likely be either cutting those budgets or increasing them, depending on whether the ballot measure to pass the corporate minimum tax wins in November.



PCC Day at the Capitol!

7) Environment

The huge environmental success this session was passing SB 1547, Clean Energy and Coal Transition, also known as "Coal to Clean." It phases out Oregon's use of coal and doubles our use of renewable energy over time. HB 4036 adopted many of the 41 amendments that were introduced before the bill got folded into SB 1547.

As written in the Bend Source Weekly, this "represents the most significant state level legislative action on climate change taken in the United State in the wake of the historic Paris agreement." While SB 1574 "Cap and Invest" did not pass, I am eager to work on this next year!

8) Air Toxics

In the waning days of the session, the Governor and legislature rushed to allocate



Community activists testifying on air toxics.

\$2.5 million to DEQ in SB 5701 (the major budget bill) in response to Portland's air toxics crisis. While groups like [Neighbors for Clean Air](#), [Beyond Toxics](#), and [Montavilla's Right to Clean Air](#), have been combating

air toxics in their communities for years, the recent news about toxic emissions from Bullseye Glass and Uroborus has revealed how weak our environmental regulations are.

The emergency funding will strengthen DEQ's Oregon Air Toxics Program by focusing more on industrial emissions. DEQ will:

- add monitoring equipment and 12 staff for monitoring, data analysis, and public outreach;
- use moss collection to map pollution levels in hot spots quickly and accurately, enabling DEQ to work with the regulatory community to effectively reduce health risk from air toxics;
- conduct rulemaking to create a risk-based approach to air permitting for industrial sources;
- provide technical support to businesses to lower the risk associated with their operations and seek less toxic alternatives or more effective emission controls;
- develop action plans to reduce emissions, work with OHA and local governments on health risks, and assist in sharing information with the public and businesses.

I will work with legislators on the health and environment committees to ensure stronger departmental leadership and expedited action in 2016. We will explore farther reaching legislation for 2017 to combat not only industrial emissions, but also wood smoke and diesel.



*Dr. Linda George, Mary Peveto,
Rep. Rob Nosse and me at [KATU interview](#).*

We have a long way to go to ensure our public health, and we need constituents to help us!

9) My Staff and Interns

I can't thank my team enough for the long hours and heart they put into working on bills, scheduling meetings, answering constituent emails, and providing a shoulder to cry on from time to time. I am delighted to have Jen Corbridge continue as my legislative aide. I am sad to lose Emily Langston after her second session; I hope she is able to return next year!



Staff Collage! ([Click](#) to see Sammie's inspiring story.)

Jen, Emily and I really missed Sonya Essaadi, our 2014 and 2015 intern who passed away in December. I honored her on the House floor as her mom and Willamette University friends filled the upper gallery to watch. Sonya's calming presence was felt throughout the session.



Sonya Essaadi

My 2016 interns learned and contributed so much in such a short time. Erika Hoover, Michaela Gradstein, and Sammie Saucedo will continue their studies while holding down jobs. All three are amazing in how much they can juggle, which is great prep for the legislature! Like many of my past interns, I hope they continue to work in the political field.

10) Sine Die (Adjournment!)



Celebrating Sine Die! Patti Whitney-Wise, Jen Corbridge, John Mullin, Rep. Barbara Smith Warner, Rep. Rob Nosse.



Democrat and Republican Representatives signing "V" for our colleague, Vic Gilliam, who is battling ALS.

Aside from a couple of international trips this spring, I plan on hunkering down on all of the issues mentioned above. As always, I appreciate hearing from and working with you!

Happy Spring,

Alissa

Office Phone: 503-986-1446

Jen's Cell: 626-375-4300

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