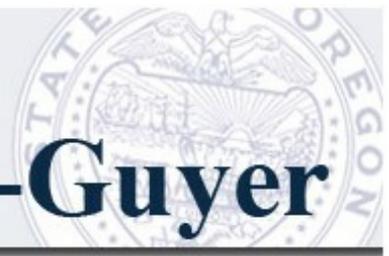




State Representative Alissa Keny-Guyer



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Dear Friends and Neighbors,

The 79th Legislative assembly continues to zoom ahead as we approach the first chamber deadline on April 18th. After that, bills from a policy committee either go to Ways & Means, Revenue, Rules, the floor for a vote, or they die... My staff and I have been spending 12 hour days in hearings, work sessions, and work group meetings to get good bills past the finish line!

Remember to keep up on my [list of bills](#) and other legislation through [OLIS](#). You can subscribe to get email alerts for bills and committees by clicking on "e-Subscribe email" at the upper left of every bill and committee home page. You will get an email alert each time a new agenda is posted, and you can then email your testimony for the record.

Revenue Debate

Revenue continues to be my biggest overall concern this session. We need fair, adequate, and stable funding, and our revenue system lacks all three of those! Our state deficit of \$1.6 billion could result in massive cuts, as summarized [here](#).

NOTE: those are only cuts to continuing service levels. I have long maintained that we need to go BEYOND our current expenditures to invest in areas we sorely need: increasing support to the foster care system, where we rank among the worst in the country; education; capital investments in our schools, our infrastructure (transportation, seismic preparedness, electric grid); and AFFORDABLE HOUSING!

FURTHER NOTE: Our deficit is based on federal support continuing as is, and yet we know from the preliminary federal budget released in mid-March that (potentially dramatic) reductions are likely.

Some of the federal funding streams due for possible reduction or elimination:

- State Homeland Security Program grants for state and local prevention and recovery from acts of terrorism and other catastrophic events

- Community Oriented Policing Services
- Legal services to low-income Americans, i.e. protecting seniors, rural residents, domestic violence victims, vets and disaster survivors
- Environmental programs

Some of the federal funding streams marked for ELIMINATION, not just reduction:

- Housing rehabilitation and home investment partnerships for low-income families
- Low income home energy and weatherization assistance
- Public services for seniors and youth programs
- Water main and sewer improvement, street and sidewalk improvement
- Assistance to poor, rural communities for clean drinking water and modern wastewater treatment facilities
- Grants for economically distressed communities to attract private \$ and higher-wage jobs
- Grants from National Endowment for the Arts and National Endowment for the Humanities



Thus, revenue sources to meet our basic needs will continue to be a major focus and moving target throughout this session. [Oregon Center for Public Policy](#) has excellent articles on many revenue ideas, including [13 steps to raise revenue](#). I agree with the vast majority of their ideas, including a corporate gross receipts excise tax (though I suggest a lower tax rate spread among a broader tax base), alcohol and tobacco taxes (though my [HB 2662](#) increases the tobacco tax by a lot more), and lowering tax credits and deductions for those who need public support less than others do.



One of my biggest passions is reforming the [Home Mortgage Interest Deduction](#), which amounts to nearly \$1 billion per biennium. Why are we giving thousands of dollars each year to the highest income earners for the most expensive homes when Oregonians are struggling to buy their first home, keep up with rising rents, and sleeping on the streets? The "MID" should be capped in order to redirect our support towards low and middle income homeowners, distressed renters, and helping the homeless get off the streets.

Human Services and Housing Committee

The Committee I chair received over 100 bills in the first half of this session due to such huge concern among my colleagues about Oregon's affordable housing crisis and the need to protect low income families, foster kids, domestic violence survivors, seniors, people with disabilities, refugees and immigrants in this uncertain environment. We have added a second evening session this Thursday in order to vet as many bills as possible before the April 18th deadline.



Housing

I am happy to report that [HB 2004](#), Tenant Protections, passed out of my Committee on Thursday. After hearing nearly 6 hours of testimony



from both sides last month, we had productive and tough conversations about how to protect tenants from continual displacement while being fair to landlords. (See my [list of bills](#) for a summary of the amendment). Although the vote was partisan, I am proud of the work my committee, the bill sponsors, and Speaker Kotek did to pass good policy; now

onto the floor!

We have had bipartisan agreement on many other housing bills in my committee to:

- increase the supply of affordable housing through preservation, land acquisition and construction
- help landlords and homeowners upgrade their homes and apartments
- help tenants with barriers earn a "certificate of good standing" and provide landlords who rent to them access to a mitigation fund if needed
- provide a variety of ways to help first time home buyers.

With a concentrated effort, I'd like to move Oregon from [6th lowest](#) home ownership in the country at 61.1%, to at least the national average of 63%. But the real struggle will now be in Ways and Means, where we *desperately need to fund programs* to increase the affordable housing supply, home ownership, and relief for renters and

the homeless. As Matthew Desmond, author of *Evicted*, told a Portland audience last month about housing programs, "We don't lack design, we lack dose."

Human Services

On April 6th, we will hear [HB 3359](#), which aims to improve the quality of care in Long Term Care settings. I have worked for the last year on this bill with Rep. McKeown, who brought this concept to my committee during the 2016 session. We have worked with a broad group of stakeholders and have made tremendous progress!

Likewise, we have had months of stakeholder meetings, a couple of hearings, and lot of progress on [HB 2661](#), which aims to set standards for Long Term Care referral agencies.



Other legislation impacting seniors and people with disabilities include support for Oregon Project Independence, the Gateway Project, the General Assistance Program, and several bills to provide more funding and accountability for the network of agencies serving people with Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities (IDD).

On the other end of the age spectrum, my senate counterpart, Sen.



Sara Gelser (chair of the Senate Human Services and Early Childhood Committee) and several bipartisan members of my committee have been working to reform our child welfare system. We have a myriad of House and Senate bills to improve policies in this arena; however *increasing funding will again be key to achieving much needed improvements.*

Health Care Committee

The House Health Care Committee always has among the most bills of any committee. Chair Greenlick and Vice Chair Nosse have both worked tirelessly between sessions to deal with sticky issues that create challenges to prevention, integrated health care delivery, and cost containment.

I applaud Rep. Nosse for his fabulous work on [HB 2387](#), which is a first-in-the-country attempt to reduce the high co-pay of

pharmaceuticals for patients with chronic diseases. It spreads the cost burden between patients, pharmaceutical companies, and insurers. The bill saw a lively public hearing and a thoughtful work session. I hope we buck the strong opposition from pharmaceutical companies and pass this bill.

For some Oregonians, especially those with high-deductible health plans, abortion and other reproductive health services are prohibitively expensive. The Reproductive Health Equity Act, [HB 3391](#), will preserve and expand access to reproductive health care, including birth control with no co-payment, prenatal care, abortion, and a number of other reproductive health services. It also covers vasectomies for men and STD testing and counseling regardless of gender.



View from my window of a reproductive rights rally

The bill codifies in our state insurance code the current federal requirement for insurance companies to cover 22 essential health benefits included with no-cost sharing under the ACA, a critical step considering the ongoing Congressional effort to repeal the ACA. It also expands preconception coverage, reproductive choice, and post-partum care to 48,000 women who are categorically excluded from the Oregon Health Plan.

On April 4th we will hear my two mental health bills, [HB 3090](#) and [HB 3091](#), that I have been working on with multiple stakeholders for over two years. HB 3090 addresses hospital discharge policies for individuals experiencing a behavioral health crisis and HB 3091 requires insurance to pay for coordination and continuity of care once folks leave high acuity settings.

Early Childhood and Family Supports Committee

On March 23rd, our Committee heard [HB 3087](#), the Paid Family and Medical Leave Insurance (FAMLI) Act. Funded equally by employers and employees, it will provide employees with partial wages while on family, medical, or military leave. Working families shouldn't



have to choose between paying the bills or helping a sick parent or child, or staying home with a newborn. Time for us to catch up with the rest of the world to support families when they are in their time of greatest need!

Reps Hernandez, Williamson & Alonso Leon introducing HB 3087

Wage Equity & Fair Scheduling

Another important bill to support working Oregonians is [HB 2005](#), the Wage Equity bill, which passed the House after a vigorous floor debate and is now in the Senate. It expands the number of protected classes (gender, race, disability, sexual orientation) and is supported by a [big coalition of groups](#).

[HB 2193](#) requires employers to provide a good faith estimate of hours and 14-day notice of a work schedule so working families can arrange for childcare and other employment if needed. [SB 828](#) requires employers to pay at least 4 hours of work if the employee is called in for work but is released before the entire shift is done.

Environmental Protections

I've focused on reducing toxic exposure since I first entered the legislature in 2011. I strongly support and have worked on many of the current bills that reduce toxic air emissions from industrial sources ([HB 2669](#)), from dirty diesel engines ([SB 1008](#)), and from wood stoves ([HB 2748](#) and [HB 2725](#)). I've continued working with Sen. Dembrow, to reduce toxics in home demolitions ([SB 871](#)), and in schools ([SB 886](#)). I'm working with Rep. McLain on [HB 3105](#) to get industry to share the costs of recycling household hazardous wastes; and I support Rep. Smith Warner's [HB 2131](#), to ensure the safe transport of hazardous materials.



View of the climate justice rally from my window

This Wednesday, I'll testify in the [Senate Environment Committee](#) against [SB 836](#), which would weaken my Children's Toxics bill that passed in 2015 after four sessions of fighting for it. Whether it's to reduce toxics or to reduce carbon emissions, as in "Cap and Invest"

([SB 557](#)), we need to make sure Oregon stays in the forefront of environmental protection, despite the constant national and local attempts to roll those efforts back.

Speaking up for Immigrants & Refugees

Speaking of fighting the national rollbacks of protections, I gave a [speech on the House floor](#) to protest the second of President Trump's



ban on Muslims from certain countries. At the state level, we are looking at every possibility of protecting our friends and neighbors who came here from different countries.

Besides my strong support for [HB 2726](#) and [SB 558](#) to provide health coverage to undocumented children, I support efforts in our legislative and judicial branches

to provide the greatest protection possible from the state. I applaud our cities and universities that have declared themselves sanctuaries. On the 75th anniversary of the Japanese internment on the West Coast, we must recognize the mistakes of our past and stand up to hate, bigotry and fear mongering.

National Popular Vote (NPV), Fair Elections & Good Governance

I was fortunate to speak about [HB 2927](#) (similar to [SB 824](#) and [SB 825](#)) on a panel with NPV founder John Koza in front of a packed town hall, and then in front of the House Rules Committee the next day.

The Electoral College does not fit the "We the People" and "One Person One Vote" style of government. Oregon's votes don't count as much as swing states in a presidential election. Nearly all of the candidate advertising and rallies occur in 12 swing states, and most of that is in 6 states.



Testifying with Dr. John Koza for National Popular Vote

Issues affecting the west coast (like coastal energy, carbon reduction, seismic preparedness) don't get the attention that issues affecting the swing states do. Post election implications are equally important: "Battleground" states receive 7% more federal grants than "spectator" states, twice as many presidential disaster declarations, more

Superfund enforcement exemptions, and more exemptions to "No Child Left Behind."

Oregon deserves a voice in who becomes president. The bill ensures that *every vote, in every state, will matter in every presidential election.*

I'm also sponsoring three other "fair elections and good governance" bills: [HB 2949](#) requires candidates for president and vice president to release the last 5 years of their tax returns in order to appear on the Oregon ballot. [HB 2578](#) provides "Voter Owned Elections" at the state level for candidates who are willing to limit each donation to \$250. [HB 2577](#) requires lobbyists to identify every bill or measure they lobby on, and who paid for their services.

Approaching the April 18th deadline

This is only a portion of the bills I care deeply about; see my [list of bills](#) for legislation on education, early childhood, gun violence prevention, domestic violence, human trafficking, and many other issues of concern.



Alliance to end violence against women

So now you know why I appear so ragged! But given that our laws are shaped for the most part in less than six months every two years, this is not the time to rest. I am grateful to my staff, interns, and colleagues for all of their shared sacrifice.

I also appreciate constituents and advocates who have poured their hearts and souls into these bills, and have come in droves to my constituent coffees and town halls. Please keep it up! Review my [list of bills](#) to support bills you care about before the deadline, and follow me on my [political FB page](#) and [twitter](#) for more frequent updates.



Constituent house party & town hall

Stay tuned for an email update after April 18th and a constituent tea on April 23, 4-5:30pm (place TBA) to see what bills survived past the deadline.

Until then... with warm regards,

Alissa