



SENATE MAJORITY OFFICE

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Oregon Senate Democrats Welcome New Members

SALEM – Today, four new members of the Oregon Senate Majority Caucus took their oaths of office to serve in the Oregon Senate. Senator Kayse Jama (D-East Portland), Senator Deb Patterson (D-Salem), Kate Lieber (D-Portland) and Chris Gorsek (D-Troutdale) will play a critical part of the 81st Legislative Assembly, which begins today.

“Senator Kayse Jama has already been an asset to our caucus and carries a significant gavel – chair of the Senate Committee on Housing and Development – a position for which he is well-equipped. He has dedicated his life to public service and advancing equity,” said Senator Wagner. “Senator Jama is a respected community leader and I have every confidence in how that will translate to his work as a State Senator. He is also the first Muslim member of the Oregon Senate. I am already grateful for the perspective and depth he will add to our caucus and the entire Oregon Legislature.”

In addition to chairing the Senate Committee on Housing and Development, Senator Kayse Jama will serve as a member of the Senate Committee on Labor and Business and as a member of the Joint Ways and Means Subcommittee on Transportation and Economic Development.

“Senator Deb Patterson has impressive roots in Salem and an outstanding reputation in the health care community,” said Senator Wagner. “That’s why I am thrilled she is chairing the Senate Committee on Health Care, especially today when public health is at the forefront. She personally knows the acute and important impact the pandemic has on vulnerable communities, including those who live with intellectual and developmental disabilities.”

Senator Patterson will also serve as a member of the Senate Committees on Housing and Development, Natural Resources and Wildlife Recovery as well as Veterans and Emergency Preparedness.

“Senator Lieber is taking on a hugely significant role in Oregon’s budget writing as chair of the Ways and Means Subcommittee on Health and Human Services,” stated Senator Wagner. “I cannot imagine a time when this job has been more important. Her intelligence, diligence and care for all Oregonians suit her well for this role. Senator Lieber is also a member of our leadership team, a distinguished role for a first term legislator, and I am grateful she will have a strong influence on the policies enacted by the Senate Democrats.”

Senator Lieber's other committee assignments include membership on the Senate Committees on Labor and Business, and Human Services, Mental Health and Recovery. She will also serve on the Joint Committee on Ways and Means as well as the Subcommittee on General Government.

"Senator Gorsek is a familiar face as he served as a State Representative since he was elected in 2012, we are excited to welcome him to this chamber. He has extensive knowledge of the Capitol, the legislative process and what it means to serve the community," said Senator Wagner. "He is a self-proclaimed 'transportation-nerd' so it's fitting he will serve on the Joint Committee on Transportation and I appreciate the historical knowledge he will bring to our caucus in doing that committee's work."

Senator Gorsek also holds an important gavel, as chair of the Joint Ways and Means Subcommittee on Public Safety and in addition will serve as a member of the Senate Committee on Education.

"I am heartened by who Oregonians elected to lead this great state and who the Senate Democrats have chosen to make up our leadership team," said Senator Wagner. "This session will be unique in many ways, but our collective commitment to Oregonians and her people is unwavering. I am ecstatic to welcome these new members to our team."

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