



Meeting the Moment 2024

While many families and communities in Oregon are thriving, far too many of our friends and neighbors continue to struggle. As we look to Oregon's future, we must address the root causes of the challenges we face and recognize that these challenges disproportionately impact low-income families, small businesses, veterans, and communities of color. To that end, Oregon's House Democrats plan to invest in our future, by addressing child poverty and rebuilding our middle class. In short, our North Star will be crafting a fair economy and modernizing our schools, so that every Oregonian can reach their full potential and contribute to Oregon's success.

Address the Homelessness Crisis

Increase Access to Addiction Treatment & Behavioral Health Support

Increase Housing Production & Infrastructure

Improve Community Safety

NEEDS, COSTS; PREVENTION, TRANSITIONAL HOUSING; RESPOND AND TACKLE ROOT CAUSES; LAW ENFORCEMENT RESOURCES; LOCAL INFRASTRUCTURE



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PRESSING ISSUES: 2024

We still have a large gap between the housing we need and the housing we have, contributing to homelessness and putting our addiction crisis in full view of the public. Drugs like fentanyl and meth have become so cheap, potent, and accessible that addiction and overdose rates have skyrocketed.

Oregonians have been crystal clear about their top priorities, which are all interrelated: Homelessness, housing, addiction treatment/behavioral health, and public safety. While these challenges are impacting the entire globe, our approach to them must deliver results and be rooted in Oregon values: compassion, accountability, and courage.

In the 2024 Legislative Session, Oregon's House Democrats will be laser-focused on effective policies addressing the issues that matter most to Oregonians.

Addressing the Homelessness Crisis

Homelessness has reached crisis levels across the country, particularly on the West Coast, as the costs of housing and other critical needs have outpaced income growth. With significant investments from the Legislature, including a more than \$2 billion investment in the housing and homelessness budget in 2023, communities around Oregon are crafting innovative solutions to help move individuals and families from sidewalks into stable housing. Recent legislative investments are preventing homelessness and are getting people into transitional housing, shelter beds, and treatment programs across the state. We are committed to investing in proven strategies to get people housed and holding agencies accountable.

Increasing Access to Addiction Treatment and Behavioral Health Support

In 2020, voters passed Measure 110, decriminalizing the possession of small amounts of drugs. Since then, the legislature has been tracking its implementation. We are responding to the crisis unfolding in our streets with additional policies addressing addiction, behavioral health, and public safety concerns. In February 2024, the Joint Committee on Addiction and Community Safety Response will present legislation (and other measures) that will emphasize prevention and tackling root causes of addiction, crack down on drug dealers, restrict public drug use, move people into addiction treatment, and reduce the number of overdose deaths. This committee's work will continue beyond the 2024 session. We'll focus on using every available tool to get people into treatment and improving accountability, without repeating the same mistakes as the failed war on drugs and its disproportionate impact on Black, Indigenous, and People of Color (BIPOC) communities.

Increasing Housing Production and Infrastructure

Oregon needs to build more homes to meet the needs of our residents, which will stabilize the cost of housing and address our homelessness crisis. Our goal is to ensure that everyone can afford to live in their own communities. Solving this problem requires action, investment, and partnerships. Collaboration with local leaders, housing experts, the Governor, and land-use advocates will help remove barriers to building critically needed housing, in addition to local infrastructure needs.

Improving Community Safety

While Oregon's rate of violent crime continues to be below the national average, rates of certain crimes--especially car thefts and other property crimes--have risen over the last few years. Much of this increase is directly related to drug and alcohol addiction, so the ongoing work of the Joint Committee on Addiction and Community Safety Response will be critical to turning these trends around. We'll ensure that our law enforcement agencies have the resources they need to prevent and respond to serious crimes in our neighborhoods.



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INVESTING IN OUR FUTURE

As we think about the kind of state we want to continue to collectively create, House Democrats know that thriving communities, both large and small, need adequate, reliable infrastructure and long-term planning. Our ongoing work includes:

- Affordable housing
- Critical infrastructure including roads, water & sewer systems, electricity, broadband, and cybersecurity
- Strong schools, addressing disrupted learning, and meeting every student's needs
- Economic development to improve economic opportunity, rebuild the middle class, and ensure that no one is priced out of their communities
- Childcare and preschool for our youngest Oregonians, a key need for working parents
- Career training, workforce development, and strong labor protections in healthcare and other critical fields
- Support systems for aging adults
- Critical services for veterans, especially combat veterans
- Affordable healthcare, including an emphasis on public health and social determinants of health
- A robust emergency management system, including response to climate change related disasters such as drought, wildfires, and heat domes.
- Climate change mitigation and adaptation
- Safe and secure elections
- And much more

By ensuring that we have reliable community infrastructure in place, all community members will have the support and resources they need in order to be successful. That means kids are in stable child care or safe schools, adults have access to good paying jobs, seniors are able to live their golden years in comfort and dignity, and we're reversing decades of disinvestments in BIPOC communities.

In addition to thoughtful, forward-looking legislation, this also requires ongoing oversight and accountability for state agencies and service providers. House Democrats are committed to building and protecting these structures now and into the future.