



The Jewish Federation  
OF LANE COUNTY

THE **STRENGTH** OF A PEOPLE  
THE **POWER** OF COMMUNITY

**Jewish Federation of Lane County/Jewish Community Relations Council (JCRC)  
2017 Legislative and Advocacy Agenda  
April 27, 2017**

The Jewish Community Relations Council of Lane County (JCRC) is the public affairs, advocacy arm and community relations arm of the Jewish Federation of Lane County. The JCRC focuses on government relations, Israel advocacy, inter-group relations, and social justice. In 2017, these are our top legislative and advocacy priorities:

**Protecting Civil Rights and Combatting Discrimination**

The Jewish Community Relations Council opposes bias in any form against any group or individual. We are committed to working closely with schools, civic institutions and other faith community leaders to foster an environment that embraces diversity and creates a greater understanding among people of all faiths and backgrounds.

- JCRC is committed to protecting and advancing civil rights for all Americans. We will continue our focus on expanding protections to individuals discriminated against on the basis of sexual orientation and gender identity.
- The organized Jewish Community has long supported a generous immigration policy in light of the modern Jewish historical experience and the belief that an open, pluralistic society benefits all. The Jewish Community remains especially concerned about the scapegoating of immigrants and increasing discrimination.
- There is a disturbing trend in the rise of anti-Semitism in Oregon, nationally and around the globe. We are committed to confronting and combatting anti-Semitism in Oregon and across the globe.

**We support SB 356 which widens the definition – and consequences – of crimes based on a victim’s characteristics and identity.**

**Increasing the State Budget to Serve Oregonians**

In Oregon, we are facing a \$1.7 billion deficit - in a year with a thriving economy. This is not due to waste and abuse, but systemic underfunding the very government that works for our common good. The JCRC will be supporting revenue reform efforts in Oregon, following the lead of *A Better Oregon*. Oregon corporations pay the lowest tax of any state in the United States and it is time they pay their fair share. Cuts to schools, health care, and critical services are devastating and the world’s largest corporations operating in Oregon must pay their fair share.

### **Protecting Services for Vulnerable Populations including: Seniors, People with Disabilities, and Children**

The JCRC urges the Legislature to protect Medicaid funding for Oregon's most vulnerable populations, as well as funding for home- and community-based service options. The JCRC strenuously opposes the cuts presented in the Governor's Recommended Budget, including a decrease in the Medicaid reimbursement rate for nursing facilities. Although Oregon currently faces a \$1.7-billion shortfall for the 2017-19 budget cycle, *the budget should not be balanced on the backs of Oregon's seniors, children and people with disabilities.*

### **Strengthening Food and Nutrition Programs to Help End Hunger**

Food insecurity continues to persist in Oregon leaving many struggling to find enough to eat every month. Between 2013 and 2015, Oregon was the only state to see an increase in food insecurity and hunger, even as the national rate declined and Oregon's economy grew. Approximately 39% of Lane County residents are eligible for food assistance. Seniors living on fixed incomes face difficult choices between paying for utilities, paying for medicines and buying food. Additionally, Oregon has one of the highest child hunger rates in the nation and 53% of K-12 public school students in Lane County participate in the National School Lunch Program (NSLP) and receive free or reduced lunch.

We at the JCRC know numbers do not tell the whole story, however they do give a picture of the scope of hunger and food insecurity in Oregon. We remain committed to ensuring people of all ages in Oregon are healthy and hunger-free. We support policies that connect people to nutrition programs (e.g.: School lunches, Summer Food Program, Cereal for Youth, Children's Weekend Snack Pack etc.), that make food affordable/ available (e.g.: FFLC Dining Room; Senior Grocery Program, Meals on Wheels etc. ) and alleviate those issues that make hunger an unwelcome reality (e.g.: Food Pantries; WIC, SNAP; Extra Helping etc.).

### **Protecting Our Environment**

Similar to the vast majority of Oregonians, core to Jewish values is protection of our natural environment, including protecting wild lands and rivers, increasing our renewable energy percentages, strengthening our urban growth boundaries to protect farm and forest land, and actively investing in land use and transportation systems that make it easier for more people more of the time to travel by foot, bike, or transit.

**In the upcoming legislative session, we specifically support the Oregon's Cap and Invest bill - SB 557: Oregon Clean Energy Jobs Act. In one bill, SB557 accomplishes what we hold dear: limiting the carbon that is undermining earth's basic climate systems and using the proceeds from the cap and trade approach to invest in other pro-environment activities that increase the livelihoods of Oregonians and the livability of our communities.**