



## HOUSE MAJORITY OFFICE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

March 7, 2024

**Press Contact:**

Lucas Bezerra, [Lucas.Bezerra@oregonlegislature.gov](mailto:Lucas.Bezerra@oregonlegislature.gov)

# House Democrats Make Bold Progress on Housing, Addiction, Safety, and More

*35-day session delivers on Oregon's most pressing challenges*

**SALEM, Ore.** — Oregonians have been crystal clear about their communities' biggest needs: **homelessness and housing affordability; improved behavioral health and addiction services; and safe neighborhoods.** Today, Democratic legislators ended the 35-day session by making major progress on those issues.

House Democrats also delivered **historic campaign finance reform**, made **healthcare more affordable**, **increased access to childcare** for working Oregonians, and **funded essential projects** around the state.

“We began this legislative session with a plan to make our neighborhoods safer, cleaner, and healthier,” said **House Majority Leader Julie Fahey** (D-West Eugene & Veneta). “By committing to collaboration and common sense, we succeeded in making big progress on the challenges Oregon faces. The legislation we passed and the decisions we made this session will make a lasting impact that Oregonians will feel throughout our communities.”

“This session demonstrates the opportunities to make progress when we put people over politics,” said **House Speaker Dan Rayfield** (D-Corvallis). “In just 35 days, we took meaningful steps to address our housing problem and create a comprehensive plan to invest in proven solutions to get people the treatment and services they need and keep our communities safe.”

“Investments we made this year directly addressed the current issues Oregonians face and positioned us well for responding to future challenges,” said **Rep. Tawna Sanchez** (D-Portland) and co-chair of the Joint Committee on Ways and Means. “We’ve made big

investments in the past and this is a continuation of that work. When we come back in 2025 we hope to continue making progress to create long-term solutions for Oregonians.”

Below are just some of the highlights from this historic session:

### **Urgent Priorities:**

#### *Housing Affordability and Homelessness*

Democrats passed the [Emergency Housing Stability and Production Package \(SB 1530, 1537, and HB 4134\)](#). This \$379 million investment and related policy doubles down on the 2023 session’s \$2 billion housing package, continuing the legislature’s ongoing commitment to get people off the street and into shelter, prevent more homelessness by keeping people housed, supporting renters, and ramp up housing production to make housing more affordable.

#### *Improved Behavioral Health and Addiction Services*

Democrats responded to the crisis unfolding in our streets by passing the [Oregon Drug Intervention Plan \(HB 4002 and 5204\)](#) which gives law enforcement and community treatment providers the tools they need to confiscate hard drugs and connect people to treatment. This sweeping package invests in prevention and the root causes of addiction, cracks down on drug dealers, restricts public drug use, moves people into addiction treatment, improves the behavioral health workforce pipeline, and reduces the number of overdose deaths.

#### *Safe Neighborhoods and Communities*

**Rep. Courtney Neron (D-Wilsonville)** [protected students](#) getting on and off buses ([HB 4147](#)). Democrats passed further [restrictions of use](#) of dangerous drugs like fentanyl on public transit ([SB 1553](#)). **Rep. Annessa Hartman (D-Gladstone)** [defended victims rights](#) by improving access to restraining orders ([HB 4146](#)). And **Rep. Jason Kropf (D-Bend)** [passed policy](#) to ensure future support for survivors of child abuse or domestic and sexual violence ([HB 4140](#)).

### **Investing in Oregon’s Future:**

#### *Supporting, Protecting, and Uplifting Working Families*

**Rep. Jules Walters (D-West Linn)** introduced and passed the [CHIPS Childcare Infrastructure Fund \(HB 4098\)](#) to provide childcare for the growing semiconductor workforce. **Rep. Ricki Ruiz (D-Gresham)** passed the Warehouse Workers Protection Act ([HB 4127](#)) that protects workers in creating transparency and accountability in Oregon’s warehouse industry. Democrats also passed the [Family Financial Protection Act \(SB 1595\)](#) that provides relief to Oregon families.

#### *Making Healthcare More Affordable and Expanding Access to Care*

**Rep. Emerson Levy (D-Deschutes County)**, unsatisfied with the high costs of life saving treatment, introduced and passed the [Co-Pay Fairness Bill \(HB 4113\)](#). **Rep. Nancy Nathanson (D-North Eugene)** introduced two bills - first was legislation [reigning in Pharmacy Benefit Managers \(HB 4149\)](#) and a second was legislation to speed up nurse licensure and give money to Lane County to pay for same-day healthcare ([HB 4136](#)). **Rep. Lisa**

**Reynolds (D-Washington County)** introduced a bill to fund nurse family partnership home visiting services in Oregon.

*Funding Education and Essential Projects Across Oregon*

**Rep. Susan McLain (D-Western Washington County)** introduced and passed a bill to [fund](#) crucial summer learning programs ([HB 4082](#)) and educational assistance for foster youth ([HB 4084](#)). Other investments go to communities across Oregon that will [see millions in investments](#) to spur economic growth, support vulnerable Oregonians, improve infrastructure safety

*Campaign Finance Reform*

Majority Leader Fahey worked together with Republican Leader Jeff Helfrich (R-Hood River) to bring labor, business, and good government groups together to pass [historic legislation \(HB 4024\)](#) that brings campaign finance limits to Oregon.

*Emergency Response and Preparedness*

**Rep. Dacia Grayber (D-SW Portland)** also passed the [EMS Modernization Act \(HB 4081\)](#), a policy framework more than twenty years in the making, that begins to address inefficiencies in Oregon’s emergency medical system after years of ranking near the bottom in national surveys.

“We did some truly amazing things this session to keep Oregon working, living, learning, and growing in our great state,” said **Rep. Ricki Ruiz** (D-Gresham). “Oregonians will actually feel what we did this legislative session because the policy and investments we passed will go directly into the communities we represent. Whether it’s expanding access to childcare, protecting our workforce, making it easier to own a home, or investing in historically under resourced communities, Oregon families have better opportunities to thrive.”

Learn more about the House Democratic Caucus and individual member accomplishments [here](#).

In 2025, House Democrats now begin the interim where members will regroup and prepare for a successful legislative session in 2025.

— END —