



Who's on our side?

By Graham Trainor Oregon AFL-CIO President

Voting during a pandemic couldn't be easier, or more important

Oregon voters should've received their ballot by now in the midst of one of the most challenging times facing working people in our lifetime. There is no question that prioritizing voting in an election during a global pandemic with so much pain, suffering, and economic crisis all around can seem hard, or even impossible. But I'd like to remind us all about why it is more essential than ever to be counted, and what is so unique about this primary season.

Not long ago, Oregon's unions had just come out of the 2019 Oregon Legislative session with several disappointments. From attacks on PERS to a failure to expand our state's prevailing wage law or pass the Oregon Taxpayer Reimbursement Act, our movement was reeling and frustrated with our elected leaders after so much work had gone into the groundbreaking 2018 election bringing pro-worker supermajorities and a re-elected governor into the Oregon Capitol. And while we ultimately made important progress towards a more fair and just economy during the 2019 Oregon Legislature, these disappointments could not be overshadowed.

That's why Oregon's labor movement came together in Seaside at the Oregon

AFL-CIO Convention in September to demand accountability for these betrayals felt by workers, and to recommit to changing the culture within the Democratic Party. At that moment, Oregon's unions turned our focus towards the May primary.

Since then, Labor has been hard at work recruiting and interviewing candidates, vetting their records, and ensuring that each priority race embodies the expectations workers have of their leaders: that they are consistent, unwavering champions for working Oregonians and not just lukewarm supporters when it's politically necessary.

Thanks to the good work done by so many worker advocates and leaders channeling the vision coming out of our convention last year, the 2020 Oregon primary has shaped up to be the most exciting, active, and principled primary election of my career, and likely the Oregon AFL-CIO's history. With five endorsed candidates running in contested primaries that are either current or former union members or staff, several more that are civil and workers' rights attorneys, and in every single targeted race either a woman or person of color running for the first time ever, this election has the poten-

tial to be truly transformational for workers in Oregon.

Let's start at the top. State Sen. Shemia Fagan is a once-in-a-generation kind of leader that Oregon workers need as our next secretary of state. Her experience of growing up in poverty in rural Oregon, watching her mom battle addiction, and experiencing what it's like to struggle in life have shaped her approach to public service. After putting herself through law school, she became a civil rights attorney because she wanted to help people, and that has been her guiding value ever since. In the state legislature, Sen. Fagan has been an unwavering champion for the labor movement and someone who has even been willing to stand up to leadership in her own party when it means fighting for workers over the corporate agenda. In challenging times like these, it's more important than ever to have unabashed champions for working families in elected office, and especially in the second highest office in the state. The office of secretary of state impacts the lives of working people in numerous ways, from ensuring voting access to protecting the integrity of our elections to being the chief watchdog for our ballot measure system. Working Oregonians can't afford

to sit this one out.

As we rebuild our economy, our communities, and our workplaces from the devastation caused by the coronavirus, we will need elected leaders at all levels to put workers first and fight for the fair and just economy that we deserve, and not the one we had before the pandemic. That system wasn't working for us and left far too many behind, despite what the mainstream media and pundits would have you believe. We need game-changing investments, worker protections, and safety net programs now more than ever. That will only be possible by winning on May 19 with game-changing elected leaders up and down the ticket.

Check out all endorsements made by the Oregon AFL-CIO on our website at oraflcio.org/endorsements and join us in supporting a game-changing slate of pro-worker candidates. With prepaid postage on our ballots for the first time in Oregon's history, it is even easier to have your voice heard.

When workers band together for change, there is nothing that can stop us. Let's prove it on May 19.

The Oregon AFL-CIO is a 138,000-member-strong federation of labor unions.

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UNIONIZATION → MAR-APR 2020

The following are Oregon and Southwest Washington workplaces where workers have decided whether to be represented by a union. The thumbs-up symbol means workers will be union-represented. Thumbs-down means they'll be on their own. The information comes from the National Labor Relations Board and the Oregon Employment Relations Board.

Union election results

Employer (Location) Union	Yes-No
Janus Youth Programs (Portland) Oregon AFSCME	7-0 👍
■ 14 workers at the Street Light and Porch Light shelters for homeless youth	
Growing Seeds Crystal Springs (Portland) ILWU Local 5	15-0 👍
■ 20 workers at a child care center at 2808 SE Steele St.	
Growing Seeds North (Portland) ILWU Local 5	34-4 👍
■ 40 workers at a child care center at 6505 NE Martin Luther King Jr. Blvd.	

Memorial to raise funds for PPE for health workers

On April 21, Kaiser Permanente dental lab technician Aurel Micurescu died at age 70 after contracting the COVID-19 virus. Now his co-workers and fellow members of Oregon

Federation of Nurses and Health Professionals (OFNHP) are

raising funds in his name to provide protective gear to safeguard health workers and first responders.

Supporters can contribute online at bit.ly/3ct0skq

