

# Salem Report

By Representative Brad Witt



On July 7, the gavel dropped on the 79th Legislative Assembly and we adjourned sine die. It was a productive session, almost in spite of the rhetoric that threatened to derail our work here. In Oregon, we have always prided ourselves on rising above the fray that exists on the federal level, and largely, we managed to do that. We balanced the budget, which is required by our Constitution, and in so doing we managed to fund those things that Oregonians have told us repeatedly are most important: Education, services to children and families, health care, veterans and public safety.

I think it's important to note that whatever wrangling took place between legislators was less about what needed to be done but more about how to get it done. Some were opposed to any changes in taxation or fees and wanted it all to be accomplished solely by cutting budgets. Some wanted much more in the way of taxation, especially for large corporations. Most, however, struck a happy medium of modest fee increases along with cost containment measures amounting to \$691 million when fully implemented. The Ways and Means Committee, including our own Sen. Betsy Johnson, did yeoman's work to pull this budget together.

One of the more spectacular successes to come out of the session was the 10-year Transportation Funding Package. Before Session started, a special Joint Transportation Committee gathered information during a state-wide tour to find out what constituents needed to see in their communities. Consistently, they were told: Reduce congestion, increase alternate transportation options, invest in maintenance and preservation, improve safety of existing infrastructure, and ensure accountability of how taxpayer dollars are spent. HB 2017 was passed in response; it will raise \$5.3 billion over the next

ten years to address these priorities.

This session was also an opportunity to reflect on our quality of life in Oregon and how best to bolster the support systems that we have in place should anything happen on the federal level. Here are a few things that we did to do just that:

- Increased funding for K-12 schools to \$8.2 billion, as well as improved funding for universities and community colleges.
- Equal pay for women and a Fair Work Week law to give workers predictability in scheduling.
- Preserving and expanding reproductive health care, and health care coverage for all children living in Oregon regardless of their status.
- Bolstering protections for seniors, particularly those in long-term care facilities

On a personal level, I was proud to introduce legislation that requires the Dept. of Education to develop and provide public high schools with written materials regarding apprenticeship opportunities. I also sponsored HB 3249, the Oregon Agricultural Heritage Program, that envisions providing voluntary incentives to farmers and ranchers to support practices that maintain or enhance both agriculture and fish, wildlife or other natural resources on agricultural lands. I also sponsored consumer protection legislation including HB 2562, that requires lenders to notify reverse mortgage holders that they are still responsible for property taxes, and HB 3338 that enforces requirements that gas station owners post accurate gasoline tax information.

As we are now back in the District, my updates will be coming to you on a less frequent basis and as needed for communicating information in a timely manner. Nevertheless, I encourage you to stay in touch and let me know if I can be of assistance to you when dealing with state agencies, policies or programs. Thank you for reading my report; I hope to see you as I visit the communities in our District.



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## Columbia Pacific CCO Awards Grants to Food Bank, Eight Other Organizations

Columbia Pacific Coordinated Care Organization (CCO) has included the Columbia Pacific Food Bank and the Columbia County Child Abuse Assessment Center (*Amani Center*) among the recipients of its spring 2017 Community Wellness Investment Fund (CWIF) grants.

The Columbia Pacific Food Bank, which provides services to the Vernonia Cares Food Bank, will receive a \$15,000 one-time contribution toward purchase of a refrigerated truck. The Amani Center will receive \$15,000 per year for two years for a part-time medical examiner.

Columbia Pacific is the nonprofit Coordinated Care Organization that provides health care services to Oregon Health Plan (Medicaid) members in Tillamook, Clatsop and Columbia counties.

"As a CCO our objective is to not only provide members with access to care when they are sick or injured, but also to go outside the clinics and hospitals and into the communities to promote healthier communities and individual well-being," said Mimi Haley, Columbia Pacific CEO.

The CCO this year awarded its CWIF grants to programs that support improved access to health oppor-

tunities at the community level for those who are low income or live in poverty, and to meet the population health goals of the Community Health Improvement Plan in a way that is participatory and educational.

Applicants had to show how the organizations will work collaboratively, how the program will be sustained beyond the grant, and demonstrate partnership with Columbia Pacific's county-level Community Advisory Councils (CACs).

The applications were reviewed by the CACs and their recommendations were passed on to Columbia Pacific's Regional Advisory Council, which made the final recommendations for funding.

Other programs receiving awards were:

- CASA Volunteer Training and Supervision, Clatsop CASA Program, Clatsop County, \$15,000 per year for two years.
- Food Bank Fresh Initiatives, Clatsop Community Action, Clatsop County, \$15,000 for one year.
- Community Education on Substance Misuse and the Opioid Epidemic, Jordan's Hope for Recovery, Clatsop County, \$15,000 per year for two years.
- Suicide Prevention and Intervention Training, Knap-pa High School, Clatsop County, \$10,210 per year for

two years.

- Oregon mORe Campaign to Prevent Underage Drinking, North Coast Prevention Works, Clatsop County, \$15,000 for one year.
- Clatsop Kids Go, Connect the Dots, Way to Well-ville, Clatsop County, \$15,000 per year for two years.
- Food Roots Farm to School Program, Tillamook County, \$15,000 per year for two years.

"This is a very good group of organizations that we have the privilege of working with," Haley said. "And we're eager to see these projects move forward toward our shared objectives."

Community Wellness Investment Fund grant proposals are accepted at any time throughout the year, and are reviewed in May or October. Proposals funded in 2017 will receive one or two years of funding with annual reports due to Columbia Pacific CCO. See <http://www.colpachealth.org/about-us/community-wellness-investment-fund> for the application and instructions.

For more information contact Jeanie Lunsford, Senior Communications Manager at (503) 416-3626 or [lunsfordj@careoregon.org](mailto:lunsfordj@careoregon.org).

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