

Bonamici Bulletin



**By Congresswoman
Suzanne Bonamici**

It is an honor to represent Northwest Oregon in our nation's capital. Whenever I vote on a bill, I consider the needs and priorities of Oregonians. This year it's been deeply frustrating that Congressional leadership has rushed through partisan legislation with little opportunity for debate, analysis, collaboration, or public input. The American people deserve better. I'll always stand up for your right to be heard, and for Oregon priorities like protecting access to health care, funding the Children's Health Insurance Program, and granting young Dreamers legal status in the country they call home.

2017 Was a Record Year

Hearing directly from the people I represent is an important part of my job. In 2017, I received a record number of messages from Oregonians — more than 146,000 calls, letters, and emails! That's doubled from 2016. It was your powerful messages of opposition that stopped Congress from passing a harmful repeal of the Affordable Care Act. And I hear your messages now to maintain strong Net Neutrality protections, oppose tax cuts for wealthy corporations and billionaires, and stop President Trump's attempts to gut the Environmental Protection Agency. More than 1,600 people came to the twelve town hall meetings I held across NW Oregon this year. We discussed concerns about the current Administration's ties to Russia, what Congress should do to make health care more affordable, college affordability, and many more issues. This year my office assisted more than 600 constituents,

including veterans and active duty military members, seniors and their families, people with disabilities, and people seeking to help family members immigrate from other countries. Thank you to everyone who took the time to reach out; I truly appreciate hearing from you.

GOP Tax Plan is Reprehensible

Congress just rushed through a highly partisan tax plan that will increase taxes on millions of families and workers while delivering enormous, unnecessary benefits to wealthy corporations and billionaires. This bill will exacerbate income inequality in our country at a time when wages are stagnant. And making things even worse, this debt-ballooning plan paves the way for future cuts to Medicaid, Medicare, and Social Security — life-saving programs that provide seniors with financial security and low-income and disabled people with access to health care. Capping the federal deduction for state and local taxes will hurt Oregonians and make it harder for communities to fund education, transportation, infrastructure, public safety, affordable housing, and other vital services. This bill moves us in the wrong direction and I will continue to fight for policies that benefit all Americans, not just the wealthiest.

Making College Affordable and Accessible

I worked my way through community college, which opened doors and created opportunities for me. I want students in Oregon and around the country to have the same chance to succeed and to reach for a better future. Republican members of the Education and Workforce Committee have put forward a partisan proposal to update the Higher Education Act that will make college more

expensive for many low-income students and working families, undermine consumer protections for student loan borrowers, and take away accountability over unscrupulous for-profit institutions. I proposed several amendments to improve this proposal, all of which were rejected on party-line votes. Oregonians value higher education, and as a leader on the committee I am committed to making college affordable and accessible for everyone who wants to attend.

Keeping the Internet Fair and Open

A fair and open internet is important to our future. Net neutrality benefits small businesses, supports innovation and economic growth, and helps us access the information we need to be engaged citizens. Yet President Trump's new chairman of the Federal Communications Commission recently led the effort to overturn net neutrality—the rules that keep the internet fair and open. Without these protections, internet service providers could block or slow down websites, charge more for “fast lanes,” and even censor or manipulate content online. I'm supporting legislation that would restore net neutrality and keep the internet open. As our public discourse increasingly occurs online, it's more important than ever that we maintain rules that keep the internet accessible and fair.

You can find more updates about my work around NW Oregon and in Washington, DC on Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, and YouTube. You can also contact my Oregon and Washington, DC offices with questions, comments, or for assistance with a federal agency.



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Recent Gains for Oregon Children Uneven Across State

Progress in children's healthcare coverage at risk

Children First for Oregon recently released “The Status of Oregon Children and Families: 2017 County Data Book,” which finds that Oregon children are doing better in recent years according to a variety of measures. Despite statewide gains, many counties have a long way to go to ensure all kids' needs are met.

“Outcomes for Oregon kids are significantly impacted by where they live,” said Children First for Oregon

Executive Director Tonia Hunt. “While child poverty, food insecurity, and unemployment are showing signs of improvement statewide, these gains aren't benefiting kids evenly across our counties.”

Rural counties in Oregon continue to face the largest barriers for kids. Overall, the biggest gains for children in the last year have disproportionately benefitted the five largest counties in the state. Often kids in these counties — Multnomah, Washington,

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