

Endorsements

Ballots have started to arrive in Lane County mailboxes by now. No ballot? Check your voting status at oregonvotes.com or call Lane County Elections at 682-4234. The deadline for ballots to arrive at Lane County Elections is 8 pm Tuesday, Nov. 4. The last day to mail ballots and assure their arrival is Thursday, Oct. 30. Ballots can also be dropped off at any of the white ballot boxes around town. Here are our endorsements in selected contested races along with state and local ballot measures.

NATIONAL & STATE CANDIDATES:

U.S. Senate JEFF MERKLEY

Jeff Merkley has served six years as a U.S. senator in the best tradition of Oregon. The one Merkley-Wehby debate told it all. Wehby doesn't understand the issues but thinks she should be elected because she's a doctor. Really! Merkley has joined Sen. Elizabeth Warren against the big banks and Wall Street, for fairness in student loans, for the global environment, for the middle class. His dad was an Oregon millworker. He's proud to call himself a "progressive," but he has worked with great patience and diplomacy, statesmanship, if you will, to reduce the power of the filibuster. This is a no-brainer. Re-elect Merkley.



on health care from the American Public Health Association and abortion rights from Planned Parenthood. While we like that Tootie Smith shares a first name with one of our favorite characters from *The Facts of Life*, we're going to go with Schrader's track record.

Governor JOHN KITZHABER

John Kitzhaber is better positioned to make the tax reforms and structural changes that Oregon desperately needs than his opponent, Dennis Richardson, a five-term Republican state representative. For the past four years, Kitzhaber has worked hard to bring Oregon's fierce factions together to move Oregon ahead in education, health care, economic development and prison reform. His efforts to curb the growth of Medicaid spending and slow the rate of growth for state employee health care costs will prevent more than \$3 billion in state health care cost growth over the next eight years. Add savings from prison reform and Oregon's budget could reach structural balance by the 2019-21 biennium and could have a structural surplus in 2021-23 to reinvest in education and other programs. Sounds wonkish, but that's what state government is all about. Kitzhaber is clearly the best candidate.



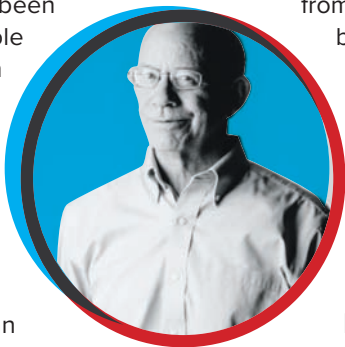
Senate District 8 SARA A. GELSER (D)

Incumbent Republican/Libertarian Betsy Close sees tax cuts as an economic strategy and has one of the worst lifetime ratings (7 percent) by the Oregon League of Conservation Voters. Her rating with the ACLU is also bad at 38 percent. Close has a serious challenger in Rep. Sara Gelser of Corvallis who has an extensive background in professional social services and education and has served well on several legislative panels in Salem, such as the House Revenue Committee. Close was appointed to fill the Senate seat vacated by Frank Morse in 2012, but she has not earned re-election. Democrats see this race as good opportunity to replace a Republican in the Senate.



U.S. House, District 4 PETER DEFazio

Rep. Peter DeFazio's well-funded challenger Art Robinson has been trying to play down his whole "raining down a little radiation is good for you, climate change doesn't exist and, by the way, please send me a sample of your urine" side, but we're not impressed. DeFazio might rub us the wrong way from time to time (ahem, O&C forest plan anyone?) but a vote for DeFazio isn't a vote for the lesser of two evils. The longtime congressman has a good track record, he's independent and he's spoken up on issues like the dangers of oil trains and reining in Wall Street long before other politicians even noticed there was a problem. Mike Beilstein of the Pacific Greens is also running and we're sure some folks in green Eugene will give him a nod, but ours this year goes to DeFaz.



Senate District 4 FLOYD PROZANSKI (D)

Floyd Prozanski has pushed for the legalization of marijuana, has taken steps to protect neighbors and the environment from mining, he's worked to end field burning and to protect pristine Waldo Lake. And he has spent a lot of years hanging out at the Oregon Country Fair. These are all things we like; Prozanski is another incumbent worth keeping.

Senate District 7 LEE BEYER (D)

Lee Beyer supports all Oregon workers getting paid sick time and women getting equal pay. He's good on education but needs some work on his environmental scorecard — we're going to give him a nod while we chide him for voting against letting organic farmers protect themselves from GMOs with local legislation.

House District 7 NO ENDORSEMENT

We might be squeamish about going to the dentist, but when it gets down to choosing between a dentist versus a dude who supplies insects and rodents to laboratories and pet stores in an election, we would usually go with dental hygiene over rats and bugs based on creep factor alone. In all seriousness, Cedric Ross Hayden, a Republican, got the nod from the Dems (because no one else ran) and the Repubs in the primary (opponent Brandon Boertje, the rat-raiser, is a Libertarian). Hayden's got the name recognition from his dad, the longtime politician also named Cedric Hayden, and he's got a focused platform that has integrating dental care into Oregon's health care system as a top priority. We would like to say go ahead, vote for a Republican, vote for Hayden, but we checked out his stance on abortion and we just can't endorse putting another right-to-life legislator in the Oregon House.

U.S. House, District 5 KURT SCHRADER

Kurt Schrader is a Blue Dog Dem and likes to buck the party line, but despite joining DeFazio on his O&C legislation, Schrader gets decent ratings from Environment Oregon and the Sierra Club on the environment and 100 percent positive ratings

House District 9 CADDY MCKEOWN (D)

Caddy McKeown is a moderate and energetic legislator seeking her second term representing the large 9th District that includes the coastal part of Lane County. Her focus has been on the economy and education. Her opponent is Casey Runyan, a disabled war vet with traditional conservative values and no experience in elected office.