

The Greg Walden of 1998 wouldn't vote for Walden today

Updated Sep 17 2018;

Published in The Oregonian Sep 17, 2018

By John Lamoreau

I live in Oregon's Second Congressional District. I have served as an elected Republican County Commissioner and in the past, have raised thousands of dollars for U.S. Rep. Greg Walden. My oldest son interned for him in Washington D.C.

I like Greg, but I can no longer vote for him.

I doubt that the Greg Walden of 1998 would vote for the Walden of 2018, either, based on his recent voting record.

Here's why:

Six years ago, Walden wrote "It's time for government to tighten its belt and balance its budget just like families and small businesses do every month. We can't afford more of the same."

When Walden took office, the national debt was \$5.5 trillion. Today it is more than \$20 trillion. He voted for a 2018 budget that has a projected \$833 billion deficit. Our children and grandchildren will spend lifetimes paying off the bills that Walden has helped accumulate while endangering programs such as Social Security and Medicare.

Walden also voted against senior citizens and families, and in favor of increasing medical costs. Since 2010, the cost of healthcare for a family of four has skyrocketed.

Walden voted against giving seniors the option of buying less expensive medications from Canada. He wrote the legislation that would penalize Oregonians who had pre-existing conditions. No member of Congress received more political action committee money from the pharmaceutical/health products industry than Walden during the current election cycle.

He has voted for those political action committees, not his constituents. The opioid crisis also happened under Walden's watch, while he was taking money from the companies that make the drugs. He chairs the House Committee that oversees the healthcare industry. That's why they have generously donated to him. And Walden has delivered. He watched drug companies get wealthy selling opioids as drug overdose deaths became the leading cause of death of Americans under the age of 50.

And Walden is no longer accessible to the citizens in his district. The 1998 Walden was accessible. There were meetings and forums open to the public. The 2018 Walden no longer holds public forums. We now read about him appearing at private meetings the day after those meetings took place. The only recent meeting that was advertised in advance was a fundraiser held outside of his district. The cost to attend this fundraiser started at \$2,500 a person. I now only see my congressman on billboards paid for by out of state political action committees.

Oregon needs a change. Walden has had 20 years in office. The national debt has grown. America has the most expensive health care in the world. The opioid crisis has affected all of our communities. Open meetings without congressman no longer happen.

I just recently called Jamie McLeod-Skinner. She answered the phone. That is something Greg Walden doesn't do anymore.

Jamie has my vote.

John Lamoreau is a former Union County Commissioner who lives in LaGrande.

www.jamiefororegon.com

PUBLISHED WITH THE PERMISSION OF JOHN LAMOREAU
Paid for by the Wallowa County Committee to Elect Jamie McLeod-Skinner to Congress.