

BEFORE THE BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS  
FOR MULTNOMAH COUNTY, OREGON

**RESOLUTION NO. 2010-012**

Adopting the Multnomah County 2010 State and Federal Legislative Agenda

**The Multnomah County Board of Commissioner Finds:**

- a. County officials are elected to protect the health and welfare of their constituents.
- b. Multnomah County has a vested interest in advancing state and federal legislative initiatives on behalf of its residents, especially vulnerable populations.
- c. Multnomah County finds that it is necessary to have a 2010 legislative agenda that harnesses county resources efficiently to promote priorities set by the Board of County Commissioners.
- d. Multnomah County Board of County Commissioners has developed a legislative agenda that identifies key initiatives to pursue in the state legislature and the Congress in 2010.
- e. Multnomah County 2010 legislative agenda promotes the physical and mental well-being of its residents through robust public services, good government, environmental stewardship, and the public's safety.
- f. Multnomah County 2010 legislative agenda provides specific policy guidance to county officials and its lobbyists acting on its behalf in the state legislature and Congress.

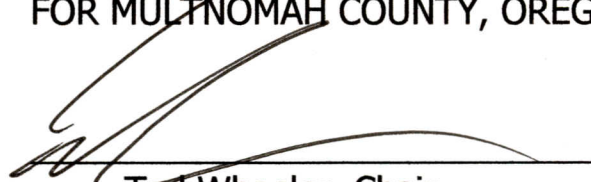
**The Multnomah County Board of Commissioner Resolves:**

1. To undertake all activities and use the necessary resources wisely to promote the success of the Multnomah County Oregon 2010 State and Federal Legislative Agenda, attached hereto; and
2. To reserve the right to modify any policy position in the 2010 State and Federal Legislative Agenda.

ADOPTED this 28th day of January 2010.



BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS  
FOR MULTNOMAH COUNTY, OREGON

  
Ted Wheeler, Chair

REVIEWED:

AGNES SOWLE, COUNTY ATTORNEY  
FOR MULTNOMAH COUNTY, OREGON

By   
Agnes Sowle, County Attorney

SUBMITTED BY:  
Chair Ted Wheeler

# **Multnomah County Oregon**

## **2010 State & Federal Legislative Agenda**



**January 28, 2010**

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**BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS**  
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**TED WHEELER • CHAIR**  
**DEBORAH KAFOURY • DISTRICT 1**  
**JEFF COGEN • DISTRICT 2**  
**JUDY SHIPRACK • DISTRICT 3**  
**DIANE MCKEEL • DISTRICT 4**

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## **2010 STATE PRIORITIES**

### **February Supplemental Legislative Session**



#### **COUNTY SPONSORED BILLS**

**Local Control.** Support legislation to lift preemptions and other restrictions on local government, including the preemption on local tobacco taxes. In the 2009 Oregon legislative session, the House of Representatives passed HB 2616 to remove the state preemption on local government tobacco taxes. The legislature adjourned before the Senate could fully consider the bill.

**Supervision of Forced Released Inmates.** Seek legislation that provides supervisory authority over inmates released as the result of jail capacity limits. Multnomah County does not have the legal authority to supervise and impose conditions of release for these inmates.

**Human Trafficking Hotline Info Posting.** Seek legislation that encourages retail establishments that sell alcohol to voluntarily post information on the national hotline for human trafficking. Public awareness of sex trafficking of minors is relatively low despite recent a nationwide law enforcement operation. The posting of hotline information can aid in reducing human trafficking. Other states have taken such steps in the effort to stop this exploitation of minors.

**Cancellation of Taxes on Low-Value Manufactured Homes.** Seek legislation that permits the cancellation of personal property taxes for manufactured homes whose assessed values are less than \$15,000. Multnomah County sees very little return on investment with these accounts because the cost of billing, servicing and collecting these accounts is high compared with revenue received. These homeowners are also generally very poor and unable to pay.

#### **PRIORITIES**

**State 2009-11 Budget.** Support efforts to protect state funded public safety and human service programs. The March 2010 state revenue forecast and the outcome of Measures 66 and 67 will determine the legislative action the Oregon Legislature undertakes. Multnomah County will respond accordingly to support or oppose legislative actions that promote the county's interests.

**Wapato Jail.** Seek a partnership with the Department of Corrections to utilize the Wapato Jail facility. The 525-bed facility offers many options that can meet county and state public safety needs.

**Elections.** Support legislation that removes the requirement to create a new voter precinct as the result of non-contiguous land being annexed by cities. The requirement places an administrative burden that is costly to Multnomah County.

**Mental Health.** Monitor the progress and outcomes of SB 5529's budget notes on mental health integration and psychiatric acute care funds. Support efforts that expand resources for both subacute and acute psychiatric care. Monitor reform efforts in the state's mental health system. Support efforts to ensure that uninsured populations are cared for and cost-effectively managed by the county. Oppose legislation that undermines Multnomah County's mental health system.

**Health Privacy.** Support legislation that permits the exchange of patient mental health information between health providers and mental health organizations as it pertains to state efforts in integrating physical and mental health care. Multnomah County mental health system is a significant provider of mental health services. How patient information is used and shared is

important to the well being of the individual and an important responsibility for physical and mental health care providers.

**Commercial Surety Bonds Industry.** Oppose legislation that reinstitutes the bail bonds industry in Oregon. A bail bonds system would undermine Multnomah County's Pretrial Release Services system and introduce the potential for abuse without any guarantee for improving failure to appear rates.



**2009-2011 STATE AGENDA  
POLICY AGENDA**  
(Carried over from 2009- descriptions modified slightly)



**LOCAL CONTROL**

**ISSUE:** *State preemptions and other restrictions on local government discourage creative solutions to local problems and undermine local authority. Multnomah County needs to have all the tools in its toolbox to meet the needs of its residents.*

**POSITION:** Support lifting state preemptions and oppose any new state preemption that reduces local authority or local revenue sources.

**STATE MANDATES**

**ISSUE:** *Multnomah County is bearing the brunt of underfunded services required by the State in corrections, health and human services, and other areas including court facilities. As a result, Multnomah County has supplemented what it receives from the state with County General Funds in order to meet its statutory obligations. Given the economic situation and growing community needs, the County General Fund is not able to sustain these services.*

**POSITION:** Support adequate funding to cover actual costs of providing state required services and oppose efforts that underfund these services.

**MENTAL HEALTH SYSTEM**

**ISSUE:** *First responders that treat persons suffering a mental health crisis do not have a viable and cost effective alternative to hospital emergency rooms or the County jail to take these persons for proper treatment. This means improper care and added expense to emergency responders, local area hospitals, and the jail system. The lack of a sub-acute assessment and treatment facility in Multnomah County is a huge gap in the mental health system.*

**POSITION:** Support efforts that expand resources for both subacute and acute psychiatric care. Monitor reform efforts in the state's mental health system to ensure that uninsured populations are cared for and cost-effectively managed for the county.

**PUBLIC SAFETY**

**ISSUE:** *Multnomah County is a very important part of the state's public safety system due to it being the most populated county in the state with the most active law enforcement, judicial, and parole and probation systems in the state. Multnomah County has proven that local knowledge combined with evidence based practices is a national model of success.*

**POSITION:** Support legislation and state partnerships that provide the best results in public safety and maximize resources in Multnomah County. This includes facilitating state partnerships in juvenile parole and probation services and with the county's Wapato Jail facility.



### **OREGON HEALTH PLAN**

**ISSUE:** *During the 2002 recession, the state drastically reduced the Oregon Health Plan Standard population to cut costs. Many thousands of Oregonians lost coverage. The consequences have dramatically driven up costs for the county's health clinics and for hospital emergency rooms. Reductions in enrollment have resulted in a loss of matching state and federal dollars to Multnomah County to pay for residential treatment services.*

**POSITION:** Support efforts to increase the Oregon Health Plan Standard population. Greater coverage reduces the out-of-pocket expenses for Multnomah County's health clinics.

### **PROPERTY TAX LIMITATION**

**ISSUE:** *Measure 50 created a permanent structural deficit for local government in Oregon. Multnomah County cannot finance public services with revenues generated by a property tax rate that grows slower than real market inflation. Measure 50 property tax system has created inequity for homeowners with equal valued homes but taxed unequally.*

**POSITION:** Support changes to the Oregon Constitution that make Oregon's property tax system more equitable for property owners and more in sync with real market conditions.

### **SUSTAINABILITY**

**ISSUE:** *Multnomah County strives to be more environmentally friendly and energy conscious in its operations. As a government that serves the state's most populated county, there is enormous opportunity to make a difference in promoting the local economy, reducing pollution, and conserving natural resources.*

**POSITION:** Support legislation that makes it easier for Multnomah County and its households to adopt environmental friendly practices in day to day operations.

### **TRANSPORTATION**

**ISSUE:** *Multnomah County is responsible for the maintenance of six Willamette River bridges and nearly 300 miles of roads. The Oregon Jobs and Transportation Act provided the County with needed funding. The State will need to continue working on sustainable revenues for the future that will provide maintenance to the existing system as well as continued growth.*

**POSITION:** Support a fair and reliable system of revenue sources for maintaining the existing transportation system as well as stewarding sustainable growth. Protect the County's revenue sources by advocating for a hold harmless provision for Bridge funding.



## **111<sup>th</sup> CONGRESS FEDERAL AGENDA FY2011 APPROPRIATIONS**



### **PUBLIC INFRASTRUCTURE**

#### **SELLWOOD BRIDGE**

*The Sellwood Bridge is the busiest two-lane bridge in Oregon with over 30,000 daily vehicle crossing. The 90-year old bridge rates very low in federal safety standards as a result of its age and the geological movement of the West Hills buckling the structure. Weight restrictions have been in place since 2004, affecting freight trucks and buses as well as the local economy. Multnomah County has completed the Sellwood Bridge Project DEIS and selected a Locally Preferred Alternative in February 2009. Construction is scheduled to begin in 2012. The cost is estimated at \$330 million in 2014 dollars.*

**POSITION:** Multnomah County seeks \$5 million in FY2011 to conduct the Final Design and right-of-way acquisition for the Sellwood Bridge project. The county is seeking \$40 million in the Surface Transportation Reauthorization Act to complete the project.

#### **BEAVER CREEK CULVERTS**

*The lower Beaver Creek in Multnomah County is critical habitat to federally endangered species including Lower Columbia River Chinook Salmon and Steelhead Trout, and candidate species including Lower Columbia River Coho Salmon. The existing waterway and wetland are neither conducive to fish passage nor other wildlife. Replacing the Beaver Creek Culverts will improve the habit and enhance fish passage.*

**POSITION:** Multnomah County seeks \$6 million for the replacement of the 3 downstream-most culverts, (Troutdale Rd., Stark St., and Cochran Rd.) with larger culverts or bridges, opening 4.6 miles of Beaver Creek to fish passage. Included is restoration of natural substrate under bridges and culverts; stabilization of stream bed to ensure no head-cutting occurs; removal of non-native exotic (plant) species and replant with native species along bank; and, enhance a forested wetland adjacent to the Stark St. crossing by removal of non-native species with native species. This would improve habitat for many wildlife species including neotropical migratory birds that use riparian habitat for nesting and cover, small mammals that use riparian areas as migration corridors, and native amphibians and reptiles that would utilize wetland habitats.

### **PUBLIC SAFETY**

#### **FINANCIAL AND ELDER ABUSE PROSECUTION PROJECT**

*While seniors comprise just 13 percent of the general population; they possess 50 percent of the total wealth, making them disproportionately targeted for financial fraud and abuse. As seniors live longer, they become increasingly vulnerable to financial manipulation, abuse and neglect. Financial abuse is the fastest growing form of abuse. It is estimated that for every one case of elder abuse, neglect, exploitation, or self-neglect reported to authorities, approximately five go*



unreported. Between 2007 and 2009, Multnomah County had 1361 cases of financial elder abuse.

**POSITION:** Multnomah County seeks \$595,000 for investigating financial fraud, prosecuting perpetrators, gathering forensic data, providing support services to victims, educating the public and senior care providers, providing forensic nursing, coordinating services among agencies; and providing enhanced referral services.

## **HEALTH/HUMAN SERVICES**

### **EAST COUNTY SCHOOL BASED HEALTH CLINIC**

*By working in partnership with schools, families, healthcare providers, and community agencies, the Multnomah County School Based Health Clinic(SBHC) Program is able to provide health care for the county's school-age youth in the most readily accessible locations. This results in the early identification and intervention of health issues and the reduction of barriers to care. SBHCs play a major role in the local health care delivery system's ability to curb high-risk behaviors and thus foster academic success for the county's youth. Expansion of these services will support better access to SBHC services to the youth of East County as poverty as shifted in this area.*

**POSITION:** Multnomah County seeks \$350,000 to for capital costs for a health clinic that would serve local income school children with the Centennial and Gresham/Barlow school districts.

### **GATEKEEPER PROJECT**

*The Gatekeeper model is a national best practice program that identifies at-risk older adults and people with disabilities living in our community and links them to critical social and health services. The program trains volunteers to identify signs and symptoms such as confusion, depression, poor health, functional disability, financial exploitation or unsafe living conditions that may indicate vulnerable adults needing assistance. Volunteers could be meter readers, bank tellers, letter carriers and others that come into contact with older adults or people with disabilities in their daily work activities.*

**POSITION:** Multnomah County seeks \$100,000 to recruit and train 840 volunteer Gatekeepers and 24 Gatekeeper volunteer trainers.

## **SUPPORTED APPROPRIATION REQUESTS FROM COUNTY PARTNERS**

### **LUKE-DORF MENTAL HEALTH SUPPORTIVE HOUSING**

*The single greatest impediment to diverting many mentally ill persons away from the criminal justice system is the absence of housing resources supported housing in particular. Supported housing, and the use of specialized courts like Community and Mental Health Court, focuses on the underlying issues that result in criminal justice involvement. For a variety of reasons, mentally ill persons with criminal backgrounds are excluded or unwelcome in many types of public housing. While those barriers are surmountable over the long term, they present a formidable challenge when attempting to expedite a speedy diversion for a homeless person from the criminal justice system. A supported housing resource dedicated to specialized courts such as Community Court and Mental Health Court would allow Multnomah County to place appropriate persons in a managed environment that provides mental health services while permanent living and treatment alternatives are arranged. Without an interim intervention like this, homeless mentally ill persons will have little opportunity for a successful court diversion.*

**POSITION:** Multnomah County supports Luke-Dorf's request for \$2 million in capital funds to

construct housing in the county.

#### **HUMAN TRAFFICKING VICTIMS SHELTER**

*The biggest obstacle to getting victims of trafficking and forced prostitution off of the streets is a lack of a safe facility where victims can sleep, get physical and mental treatment, and simply be comfortable. The only options currently available are placing the child in foster care or putting them in jail. By providing the victims with a secure and comfortable environment the victims will be given access to the resources and supports they need to provide for themselves away from the predators that control them with fear and intimidation. Not only will this help those wishing to exit the sex trade, but it will also help law enforcement and the District Attorney's Office achieve more convictions. While victims may initially be willing to testify against their abusers, when they have no safe place to stay they nearly always return to the same pimps and thugs who abuse them. This shelter will provide them with the safe bed and moral support that will encourage them to stay under supervision and make the difficult decision to testify against their pimp. Without such a facility, we have very little chance of ending the practice of human trafficking and forced prostitution in our region.*

**POSITION:** Multnomah County will support efforts undertaken by a service provider (to be determined) to seek federal capital funds if needed for building a shelter to serve victims of human trafficking.





**111<sup>th</sup> CONGRESS FEDERAL AGENDA**  
**POLICY AGENDA**  
**2<sup>nd</sup> Session - 2010**



**HEALTH/HUMAN SERVICES**

**AFFORDABLE HEALTH CARE FOR AMERICA ACT/ PATIENT PROTECTION & AFFORDABLE CARE ACT (HR. 3962/HR. 3590)**

*Experts from across the political spectrum agree that America's health system is broken and unsustainable in its present configuration. Families in Multnomah County are experiencing this crisis right now, confronting the high cost of health care that threatens their financial stability, leaves them exposed to higher premiums and deductibles, and puts them at risk for a possible loss of health insurance. It costs Multnomah County \$61.5 million in county general funds to meet the health needs of its residents including \$19 million for public health, \$14 million for indigent care, \$13 million for corrections health, \$1.5 million for local Medicaid match, and \$14 million for mental health and addictions obligations.*

**POSITION:** Multnomah County supports the inclusion of the following provisions in the federal effort to reform health care.

- 1) Inclusion of new federal designation: "Federally Qualified Behavioral Healthcare Centers"
- 2) Simplification of Medicaid coverage for nurse home visitations
- 3) Public Health Investment Fund/Prevention & Public Health Fund
- 4) Reimbursement of jail for health care costs for pre-adjudicated population eligible for Medicaid
- 5) Extension of the FMAP increase from the ARRA
- 6) Clarification that Medicaid does not prohibit state coverage of therapeutic foster care

**FULL SERVICE COMMUNITY SCHOOLS ACT (HR. 3545 – Co-sponsor: Blumenauer)**

*Multnomah County's SUN schools are an active and robust community school system of 58 schools and 6 regional service centers that links academic support, early childhood programs, parent involvement and education, anti-poverty assistance, health care, mental health and addictions treatment in a culturally suitable environment for the county's diverse school population.*

**POSITION:** Multnomah County would seek federal grants authorized in HR 3534 to strengthen its community school system.

**RESTORING THE PARTNERSHIP FOR COUNTY HEALTH CARE COSTS ACT OF 2009 (HR. 2009)**

*An estimated 21 percent of persons booked in Multnomah County's jails in pre-trial status have private or public health insurance coverage, i.e. Oregon Health Plan, Medicaid, Medicare, or SSI. Health care costs in county jails could be reimbursed, providing much needed relief for the county's fiscal health.*

**POSITION:** Multnomah County supports the passage of this legislation with an amendment that requires private health insurance to reimburse for health care provided by county jail staff.



## **PUBLIC SAFETY**

### **JUVENILE JUSTICE DELINQUENCY PREVENTION ACT OF 2009 (S. 678)**

Multnomah County juvenile justice program is a national model of successful implementation of the goals of the Juvenile Justice Delinquency Prevention Act of 1974. Most importantly, the county has reduced re-offense rates and delinquency of juveniles in its custody using evidence-based practices that prioritize safety. The county's success is in jeopardy because the Act has not been reauthorized. The federal leadership responsible for this success has declined considerably.

**POSITION:** Multnomah County supports the reauthorization of the Act, specifically raising the authorization levels for Title V grants. Since 2002, Multnomah County has lost over \$900,000 in federal juvenile justice funding that came to the county. The impact of these federal cuts has meant *fewer juvenile prevention and intervention services to young people and their families*. In 2002, Multnomah County served 1,200 young people a year in its juvenile justice system. Today it is down to 600 young people despite the need.

### **YOUTH PROMISE ACT OF 2009 (S. 435/HR. 1064)**

*Multnomah County sets the national standard on incorporating evidence-based practices to reduce juvenile delinquency and criminal street gang activity. The National Association of Counties, the National Conference of State Legislatures, and US Dept. of Justice have heralded the county's success. Close to 73% of youth served by the county's gang intervention services complete their programs. Of those served, 76% do not recidivate while in the program and 74% do not recidivate one year after completing the program. The Youth Promise Act will support evidenced based prevention and intervention strategies proposed by local councils with federal grants. Grants provided under the act could help retain juvenile justice probation officers.*

**POSITION:** Multnomah County supports the passage of the Youth Promise Act. The Act provides for a thorough evaluation of gang and youth violence prevention programs, including analyses of cost savings to society yielded by investing in prevention and intervention rather than in more costly prosecution and incarceration approaches.

### **RECIDIVISM REDUCTION ACT of 2009 (HR. 2829)**

*Key federal benefits are regularly suspended or terminated upon incarceration and take considerable time to be reinstated after an individual is released. Without the health coverage and other benefits, many newly released individuals cannot fully focus on securing gainful employment and developing a supportive home life. Without these benefits, counties and states end up paying the "full freight" of any health care, disability and other support for people under the supervision of the county's parole and probation, and juvenile justice department as they wind through the system.*

**POSITION:** Multnomah County supports the Recidivism Reduction Act of 2009. HR. 2829 will ensure prompt access to supplemental security income, Social Security disability, and Medicaid benefits for persons released from certain public institutions (such as a jail, or a juvenile detention center).

### **NATIONAL CRIMINAL JUSTICE COMMISSION ACT OF 2009 (S. 714)**

*With the highest incarceration rate in the world, overcrowded prisons, growing gang violence, lack of focus in reintegrating ex-convicts who have paid their debts to society, the criminal justice system in the United States is in great need of repair. Prison spending continues to outpace education and human services in many states. Communities throughout the country would benefit tremendously from a comprehensive review of policies and practices that produces meaning reform.*



**POSITION:** Multnomah County supports the passage of the National Criminal Justice Commission Act. The Act will create commission charged with a top-to-bottom review of the criminal justice system and propose recommendations designed to reduce the overall incarceration rate; to improve drug policy; to improve mental illness treatments, to improve prison management, and to establish a system for reintegrating ex-offenders.

**SECOND CHANCE ACT OF 2007 (HR. 1593/S. 1060)**

When the Congress passed and the President signed the Second Chance Act of 2007, the law provided an important source of federal funds for critical re-entry services such as family-based substance abuse treatment, education programs in jail facilities, job training, mentoring and for program evaluation. Unfortunately, the global recession of 2008 have had a severe impact on local governments' ability meeting the federal match requirement. Many parole and probation services have been reduced, including employment, education, housing, and treatment services.

**POSITION:** Multnomah County supports removing the local match requirement as a result of the recession's recession impact on the county's budget.

**TRAFFICKING DETERRANCE & VICTIMS SUPPORT ACT OF 2010**

*Human trafficking of minors for prostitution is growing problem in Multnomah County and in the nation. In order to effectively stop human trafficking in the United States, a comprehensive approach that includes law enforcement and prosecution, victims' assistance, counseling, public outreach, shelters for victims, and investigations is needed.*

**POSITION:** Multnomah County supports the effort to introduce legislation that authorizes a pilot project of six block grants to provide a comprehensive approach to addressing human trafficking. The grants would be administered by the Office Justice Programs in the Byrner-JAG grants.

**LAND USE/TRANSPORTATION**

**SURFACE TRANSPORTATION REAUTHORIZATION ACT**

*The reauthorization of the federal surface transportation act is the critical final piece of the Sellwood Bridge Project's funding plan. Multnomah County has successfully pulled together diverse sources of funds to complete the reconstruction of the bridge. The plan includes \$30 million from ODOT, \$100 million from the City of Portland, and \$127 million in new county vehicle registration fees from Multnomah County. Clackamas County is considering a vehicle registration fee that would contribute \$22 million to the replacement of the Sellwood Bridge.*

**POSITION:** Multnomah County requests an authorization of \$40 million to complete the reconstruction of the Sellwood Bridge.

**HEALTHY PLACES ACT OF 2006 (S. 2506/HR. 5088)**

*The Portland metropolitan region is undertaking a massive project in rebuilding the Interstate 5 bridge between Oregon and Washington, as known as the Columbia River Crossing. The volume of pollution from vehicles crossing the I-5 bridge 24/7 greatly affects the health of the many neighborhoods on both sides of the river. Multnomah County's Health Department took the initiative to submit its assessment of the health impacts during the development of the DEIS. The assessment was an invaluable tool for decision-makers, transportation planners, and the public in understanding the health effects of each bridge options.*

**POSITION:** Multnomah County supports a federal grant program that encourages local public health agencies to conduct health impact assessments for transportation projects.