**OPHA Legislative Wrap-Up 2016**

Sine Die (adjournment with no date for return) came for the 2016 session of the Oregon Legislature on Thursday, March 3. OPHA advocacy efforts this session were focused on: addressing the social determinants of health; creating a healthy environment; protecting Oregon’s youth; and preventing gun violence.

**Social Determinants of Health**

**Raising the Minimum Wage SB1532 (OPHA joined the Oregon Raise the Wage Coalition)**

Passing a statewide minimum wage increase was a top priority for Governor Brown, Democratic legislators and the Raise the Wage labor and community coalition this session. After getting certified language for a ballot measure that would raise Oregon’s minimum wage to $13.50 and lift the state’s ban on local governments enacting their own wage limits, the Raise the Wage coalition worked with the Legislature to take action this session.

SB 1532 establishes three geographic minimum wage rates that will rise gradually over the next six years. In Portland’s Urban Growth Boundary the minimum wage will rise to $14.75, on the coast, the Cascade Foothills and the Willamette Valley the wage will rise to $13.50 and in rural eastern and southern counties the minimum wage will rise to $12.50.

SB 1532 represents the most significant action any legislature has taken to increase its state’s minimum wage.

*Signed by the Governor, effective date, March 2, 2016*

**Renter Protections: HB 4143 (OPHA Endorsed)**

HB 4143 is a renter protections bill. It was part of a package of measures legislative leaders passed to address Oregon’s housing crisis. HB 4143 was designed to prevent landlords from issuing no-cause evictions but was later changed as part of a compromise with landlord and housing industry representatives. The final version of HB 4143 prohibits rent increases for month-to-month leases for 1 year and requires landlords give 90-day notice before increasing rent after the first year of occupancy.

HB 4143 passed the House with bipartisan support and the Senate by a vote of 16-9.

*Signed by the Governor*

**Inclusionary Zoning (IZ): SB1533** **(OPHA, no position on amended bill)**

SB 1533 allows for cities and counties to adopt inclusionary zoning policies, essentially establishing a reduced sale or rental price, for up to 20% of units of a 20 or more unit structure; “affordable” is defined as 80% of the median family income. Additionally, it lifts the ban on local construction taxes but limits it to 1% of valuation and dedicates it for county or city and state affordable housing programs and for developer incentives.

*Signed by the Governor, effective date, June 2, 2016*

**Healthy Environment**

**Safe Well Water: HB4125 (OPHA Endorsed and submitted testimony)**

HB4125 would have required the Oregon Health Authority to analyze ground water contaminant data and provide education in areas with ground water contaminant problems. The bill would also create a revolving loan fund for landlords and low-income homeowners to purchase treatment systems or repair or replace wells. Passed out of the House Committee on Energy and Environment with referral to Ways and Means.

*Died in Committee*

**Transitioning from Coal to Clean Energy: SB 1547 (OPHA Endorsed)**

SB 1547 eliminates coal from Oregon’s energy supply over time and requires Oregon’s two largest private utility companies to supply half their electricity from renewable resources by 2040.

Prior to SB 1547’s passage, the Renew Oregon coalition proposed a 2016 ballot measure to achieve these same goals via public vote. This effort helped encourage industry groups to negotiate a legislative agreement and avoid a costly ballot initiative. SB 1547 passed the Senate and House with bipartisan support.

*Signed by the Governor, effective date, March 8, 2016*

**Healthy Climate bill: SB 1574 (OPHA Endorsed)**

SB 1574 would have capped Oregon’s carbon pollution, while funding programs to reduce energy costs for consumers and businesses, as well as renewable energy and transportation investments. Passed out of the Senate Committee on Environment and Natural Resources with referral to Ways and Means.

*Died in Committee*

The legislature did provide funding for DEQ to investigate this opportunity, including how Oregon will link to other states and protect disadvantaged communities in Oregon.

**Protecting Oregon’s Youth**

**Children’s Special Districts: SB1545 (OPHA Endorsed and submitted testimony)**

SB1545 would have established a new type of special district that would authorize local communities to levy property taxes to fund children’s services outside of school time. “Children’s services” are broadly defined so that they can be customized to meet the community’s needs for their children.

*Died in Committee*

**Tobacco and Nicotine Prevention: HB 4062 (OPHA Endorsed)**

HB 4062 would have implemented a tax on electronic cigarettes (e-cigarettes) and inhalant delivery systems to help prevent youth from accessing tobacco and nicotine products. Following initial discussions in the House Health Care Committee about the health effects of electronic cigarettes, House Bill 4062 did not move forward this session.

Toward the end of session, public health partners gave testimony during a special hearing of the Joint House Health Care and Revenue Committees to continue emphasizing the importance of this issue and build support for future legislation. A broad coalition of health professionals, community organizations and public health leaders stressed the importance of taking sensible actions to regulate electronic cigarettes and inhalant delivery stems in Oregon to curb youth access.

*Died in Committee*

**Tobacco Retail Licensure: SB 1559 (OPHA, no position)**

SB1559 sought to require all retailers of tobacco products and inhalant delivery systems in Oregon to be licensed by Oregon’s revenue department. As part of a compromise with the tobacco and grocery industries, SB 1559 was changed to include a preemption on local governments.

*Died in Committee*

**Gun Violence Prevention (OPHA is a member of the Oregon Alliance for Gun Safety)**

Update from the Alliance:

“Although we were not able to strengthen Oregon's firearms background check system by closing the Charleston Loophole, we were able to achieve several important victories that we can build on in future sessions:

* The Charleston Loophole bill (HB 4147) passed the House, with support from legislators that have not been supportive in the past.
* Additional funds to strengthen the state firearm background check system.
* An updated school safety hotline to allow people to share anonymous tips.

Governor Brown emphasized she remains committed on this issue and will be working on this issue in the months to come.”