Advocacy

The Oregon Commission for Women (OCFW) gives underrepresented populations of women statewide a voice in policymaking. We maintain an independent voice within state government, collaborating with the Governor, legislators and community partners on key equity issues and lifting lesser known but important policy areas into prominence with advocacy.

OCBA's top policy priorities are Jobs/Economy, Justice/Safety/Policing, and Health/Healthcare.

Biggest successes: Passage of 2016’s HB 4143 on rent increases. Oregon families, and especially those headed by women, are good renters easily burdened with sudden, significant rent increases that can cause homelessness and catastrophic disruption of school/work schedules as families scramble to find affordable shelter in a matter of days. This bill requires 90 days’ notice prior to rent increases.

Passage of 2015’s HB 2007A on wage transparency. Women in the workplace make substantially less than men doing the same work in the same fields and women of color make even less. This bill provides a key negotiating tool for

OCFW’s 29 supported bills in the 2015-16 Legislative sessions

**OCFW supported 29 bills with testimony or letters of support of which 85% passed.**

OCFW continues to champion the underlying issues, supporting future bills on those subjects.

**OCFW Testimony by Strategic Area 2015–16 Sessions**

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strategic Area</th>
<th>2015</th>
<th>2016</th>
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<tr>
<td>Education</td>
<td>SB 187A, Student data protection ✓*</td>
<td>SB 1532, Raising the minimum wage ✓*</td>
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<td>SB 215, OEIB sunset ✓*</td>
<td>SB 454A, Employer sick time benefits ✓*</td>
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<td>HB 2968B, Investment outcomes for students in poverty ✓</td>
<td>SB 491, Pay equity in state contracts ✓</td>
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<td>HB 3308A, HECC group on disparities ✓*</td>
<td>HB 2005, Employer sick time benefits *</td>
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<td>HB 2006, Wage equity requirements</td>
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<td>HB 2007A, Wage transparency ✓</td>
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<td>HB 2010, Flexible work hours</td>
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<td>Housing and Stable Families</td>
<td>SB 1533A, Inclusionary zoning ✓*</td>
<td>SB 445, Public health info for marijuana sales</td>
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<td>HB 4143, Tenant protections 90-day notice for rent increases ✓</td>
<td>SB 478, Chemicals in children’s toys</td>
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<td>HB 2600, Health coverage during leave</td>
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<td>HB 2934A, OHA Basic Health Plan ✓*</td>
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<td>Jobs and the Economy</td>
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<td>Justice, Safety and Policing</td>
<td>SB 1571, Testing of sexual assault evidence kits ✓</td>
<td>SB 4071, COFA Premium Assistance ✓*</td>
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<td>Environmental Justice</td>
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**passed ✓ OAC joint support**

**accomplished through budget note**

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OCFW continues to champion the underlying issues, supporting future bills on those subjects.
employees and especially women, to learn what colleagues are making, having those conversations, and be protected from retaliation for asking.

Emerging area of policy interest: Improving women veterans’ access to services; alternative sentencing for property crimes and other non-violent crimes that land women in prison. OCFW is raising awareness about the plight of women veterans who have large disparities in accessing veterans’ services for varied reasons. OCFW is concerned about the dramatic rise of Oregon women incarcerated for property and other nonviolent crimes, and is exploring alternate sentencing for non-violent crimes.

Public Policy Research

OCFW provides Masters, PhD, and Law students with for-credit public policy internships addressing our strategic priorities. The research is conducted jointly with state partners and the Governor’s Office to study data, best practices, effective policies, literature review, analyze gaps, suggest remedies and produce reports used by the Advocacy Commissions and their partners to inform new policies, develop strategic approaches and craft bills that improve the success and grow prosperity of women and girls statewide.

OCFW 2015–17 Policy research projects

Incarcerated parents in Oregon; prison nurseries and community-based alternatives, problematic foster care laws and parenting programs. In the summer of 2015, OCFW partnered with the Department of Corrections (DOC) and the State Library Government Reference Division to compile data on incarcerated women and men in Oregon and the needs of their families as a foundation for additional public policy research. OCFW and OCBA jointly sponsored a research intern to conduct an environmental scan and national literature review on effective policies for reuniting families divided by incarceration.

Oregon Equity Policy Toolkit and Playbook focused on prosperity and women. The OCFW partners with the Oregon State Library Government Reference Division to begin a research repository of equity-focused key studies and successful model collated into the Library’s useful Info Guide series, providing simplified access to such studies to policy makers within state government focused on the strategic priority of Stable Families and Housing.

Partnerships

2015–16 Joint Legislative Days with AAUW

The OCFW joined its community partner AAUW for a joint Legislative Day at the Capitol in 2015 and 2016. OCFW Commissioners, and Dr. Cancel-Tirado’s students from WOU in Public Health joined the other attendees including AAUW members from across the state. The participants were welcomed in the Capitol with presentations from legislators and budget leaders and meetings with legislators on women’s issues.

2016–17 Policy Research Partnerships

As part of its policy research work building a public policy toolbox of best practices around stable families and housing, OCFW built on their multi-year partnership with the State Library Government Reference Division, and the Governor’s Office on Equity and Inclusion to identify best practices, analyze data, and identify policy areas of interest that will be built into a series of Info Guides of equity policy resources. Info Guides is a service that the State Library provides for State agencies wishing to share data and resources internally and externally.

Leadership

Growing leadership for women statewide

The OCFW works to grow the number and influence of women within all branches of state government and in policy making circles.

■ In 2015-17 the OCFW designated six inspiring leaders from across the state as Women of Achievement, honored by the Governor and acknowledged before the Senate for their inclusive leadership in a variety of fields, improving success women and girls from Enterprise to Coos Bay.

■ In 2015, OCFW awarded leadership scholarships to five diverse candidates statewide to attend the PSU/Center for Women’s Leadership’s NEW Leadership Oregon for emerging leaders.
Oregon Commission for Women

The mission of the Oregon Commission for Women (OCFW) is to work for the implementation and establishment of economic, social, legal, and political equality for women and to maintain a continuing assessment of the issues and needs confronting women and girls in Oregon.

Principles and Values

- Equity for women and girls in the economy, education, health, safety, family stability, environment, and civic engagement.
- Equal treatment and protection against discrimination.
- Access to helpful information on services and available resources.
- Working in partnership on research and policy analysis of longstanding issues and barriers to success for women and girls statewide.
- Inclusion of women’s viewpoints in policy making at the state level.
- Celebration of and education about the contributions and achievements of Oregon women.

Goals and Activities

- Advocate for women’s issues at the state policy level.
- Engage community and state partners to promote equity for women and girls across Oregon.
- Study and analyze issues affecting women and recommend policy remedies to state policymakers.
- Grow and develop leaders among women at the state level in all branches.
- Increase the viability and visibility of women’s contributions and achievements in Oregon.

OCFW Commissioners

Clara Elena Beas-Fitzgerald* Hermiston
Dr. Doris Cancel-Tirado* Corvallis
Nikki Fisher* Portland
Dr. Adrienne Ochs* Tualatin
Kimberly Olson* — Vice Chair Salem
Dr. Barbara Ramírez Spencer* — Chair Portland
Jessica Rodriguez-Montegna — Past Vice Chair Portland
Stephanie Swanson Portland
Stephanie Vardavas* — Past Chair Portland
Senator Laurie Monnes Anderson* Gresham
Representative Betty Komp Woodburn
Representative Sheri Malstrom* Beaverton

* current commissioner

Oregon Commission for Women

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Read OCFW’s full report at:

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