

Legislative & Regulatory Training January 2025

Oregon Association of
Conservation Districts



Legislative/Regulatory Training: Part 1

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**Overview of the
Legislative
Process**

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**The 2025
Legislative
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Your Role**

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Legislative
Session**



Overview of the Legislative Process



The Oregon Legislature: House of Representatives

- The House consists of **60** elected members serving two-year terms, currently: 35 Democrats, 24 Republicans and 1 Independent.
- Each House District represents about **141,000** people
- The Speaker of the House is elected by the members, currently **Julie Fahey** (D-Eugene)
- The majority political party is the party with the most members, led by the Majority Leader: currently **Ben Bowman** (D-Tigard)
- The minority party within the House is led by the Minority Leader: currently **Christine Drazan** (R-Canby)
- **Important! All revenue bills start in the House.**



The Oregon Legislature: The Senate

- The Senate consists of **30** elected members who serve four-year terms, currently **18 Democrats, 11 Republicans and 1 Independents**
- Each Senate district is made up of **2 House districts**
- The Senate President leads the Senate and is elected by the Senate members: currently **Rob Wagner** (D-Lake Oswego)
- The majority political party within the Senate is led by the Majority leader: currently **Kayse Jama** (D-Portland)
- The minority party within the Senate is led by the Minority Leader: currently **Daniel Bonham**, (R-The Dalles)



The Water Caucus

- The Oregon Legislature's Water Caucus is a bipartisan group with balance across the Legislature's House and Senate as well as political parties.
- Core functions of the Water Caucus include:
 - facilitating learning,
 - convening conversations,
 - promoting informed decision-making, and
 - elevating the priority of water-related policies and investments.
- For more information about the Caucus and related events, news, and resources: <https://www.oregonlegislature.gov/helm/Pages/Water-Caucus.aspx>

The Executive Branch

- **Governor Tina Kotek** (D-Portland), elected 2022
Speaker of the House 2013-2022
House Rep. 2007-2022
- **Agency Directors** serve at the Governor's pleasure and are generally appointed by the Governor and approved by the Senate
- The 13 **Natural Resource Agencies** work with **Geoff Huntington**, the **Natural Resources Advisor** to the Governor (he was formerly OWEB Director).
- **Department of Administrative Services (DAS)** provides finance and support services
- The budget is first prepared by the Governor and then submitted to the Legislature for their changes. In the 2025 "long session" the 2025-2027 budget will be determined.



The Oregon Legislature: More Information

- **Oregon House of Representatives**
 - Each party has its own “caucus” which meets regularly during the session.
 - More information at <https://www.oregonlegislature.gov/house>
- **Oregon Senate**
 - Each party has its own “caucus” which meets regularly during the session.
 - More information at <https://www.oregonlegislature.gov/senate>
 - More information on members, their websites and emails, district maps and their committee assignments at the links above

The Oregon Legislature: Timing

When is the Legislature in Session?



Odd Numbered Years

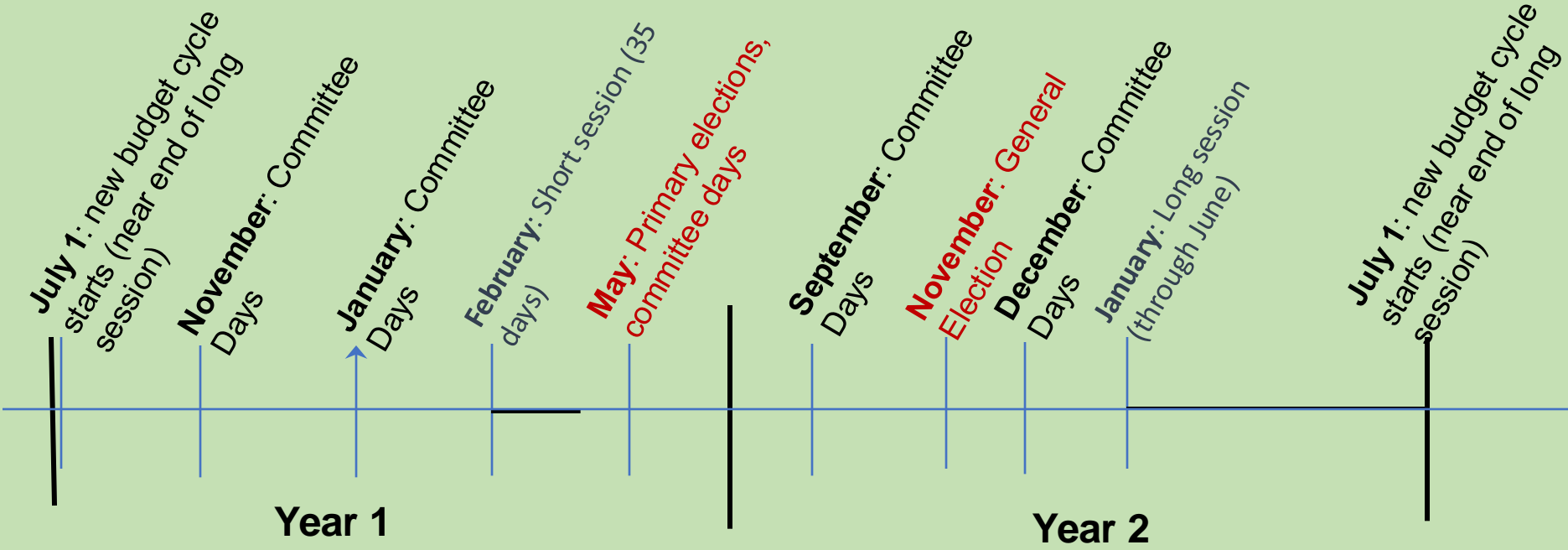
- “General Session”
- Legislators meet for organization in mid-January
- Restricted to **160** days by the state Constitution
- Session begins **January 21, 2025**
- **Session Ends June 28, 2025**

Even Numbered Years

- “Short Session”
- Restricted to **35** days
- Primarily focuses on budget issues
- Session begins **February 2026**
- Governor may call Special Sessions also.



Biennial Schedule



- Oregon operates on biennial (two-year) timeline.
- Everything revolves around the budget.

How an Idea Becomes a Law



- Idea or concept identified by a legislator, agency, or citizen
- Need legislative sponsor – a Senator or a Representative
- The Legislative Council (“LC”) drafts the idea into bill format
- Bill assigned a number
- Bill sent for “first reading” to its originating chamber



LEGISLATIVE COMMITTEES



The Oregon Legislature: Committees

- **Formation of Committees:** appointed by the leadership of each house
- **Committee Chairs:** appointed by each house leader, generally a member of the majority party; may be co-chairs and vice-chairs from both parties
- **Committee Hearings:** scheduled by leadership; purpose to take testimony on proposed bills and direct future action; agendas online; audio and video recordings available; archived recordings and testimony available at each committee's website
- **Committee Work Session:** After a bill has a hearing, the next step is a work session to move the bill to the floor for passage or to the Ways & Means Committee to determine funding before floor passage. Bills often held up in Ways & Means Joint Committee or Rules Committee until end of session.

COMMITTEES OACD WILL FOLLOW

SENATE COMMITTEES

- SENATE ENERGY & ENVIRONMENT
- SENATE NATURAL RESOURCES

JOINT COMMITTEES

- NATURAL RESOURCES SUBCOMMITTEE OF WAYS & MEANS
- Full WAYS & MEANS COMMITTEE

HOUSE COMMITTEES

- HOUSE AGRICULTURE, LAND USE, NATURAL RESOURCES & WATER
- HOUSE CLIMATE, ENERGY & ENVIRONMENT

These are the main committees we will follow, but occasionally bills are sent to other committees, such as Rules or Revenue after deadlines.

OACD will share dates and times of committee meetings once they are announced

The Oregon Legislature: Bills Turned Into Law

- **Floor Vote:** After the bill is passed out of the committee, it goes to the floor and a vote is held after 3 consecutive readings (each a day apart) and receives passage or dies.
- **Goes to the Other Chamber:** Bill is then introduced in the other chamber and referred to a committee. All of the same process occurs in that second chamber.
- **Conference Committee:** If there are changes to the bill in the 2nd chamber, those changes must be resolved by a joint conference committee before the bill can move forward and then has to be revoted on by the original chamber.
- **Signing the Bill:** After passing both Chambers (House and Senate) the bill is signed by the House Speaker and the Senate President
- **Governor Action:** Bill then goes to the Governor who can veto or sign the bill
 - **Veto Override:** A 2/3 vote of the House and Senate is required to override the veto.
 - **Effective Date:** When the Governor signs the bill, it comes law on **January 1** after passage unless it has an “**emergency clause**” for the bill to be enacted upon passage.

Legislative Tool



OLIS | Oregon Legislative
Information System

The Oregon Legislative Information System, or “**OLIS**” is an excellent place to learn more about the Oregon legislative process, bills that may affect your business and community, and to find out who your State Representative and State Senator is.

<https://www.olis.oregonlegislature.gov/>



*The Oregon Legislature – Legislative Tools

Quick links:

- **Committees** – committee membership and meeting schedules
<https://www.oregonlegislature.gov/committees>
- **Find a bill**
https://www.oregonlegislature.gov/bills_laws/listbills/CurrentSessionBills.html
- **Sign up to receive updates on bills, committees, legislator newsletters:**
https://www.oregonlegislature.gov/citizen_engagement/Pages/e-Subscribe.aspx

Your Role Before and During the Legislative Session



Get To Know Your Legislators

- [Find Your Legislator](#)

Go to this link and put in your address

- Attend Events

- Your Legislators' Townhalls

Sign up to receive [notices and newsletters](#) from Legislators



2023 LEGISLATIVE SESSION
JOINT TOWN HALL
MONDAY JANUARY 23RD AT 5:30PM


Rep. Khanh Pham
(HD 46)


Sen. Michael Dembrow
(SD 23)


Rep. Thuy Tran
(HD 45)

Join our virtual town hall to discuss
opportunities & priorities for our community in 2023.
Register at bit.ly/OrLegJointTownHall or contact Rep.KhanhPham@oregonlegislature.gov



Get To Know Your Legislators

☐ Attend Events (continued)

Host Legislative Tours

OACD and the Oregon Conservation Partnership hold annual tours, as well as the Oregon Agricultural Education Foundation

Invite Legislators to the District

Board Meetings

Annual Meeting

Workshop

Tour of District Projects

Send newsletters/annual reports to legislators



Identify Your Needs

- **Individual District Board Roles:**

- Identify desired changes in statutes
- Secure District Board approval (see advocacy agreement for boards in Part 2)

For legislative support, contact the OACD Executive Director or Advocacy Chair
(contact information at the end of this presentation)

- **OACD Advocacy Committee Assistance Role:**

- Make ask to Committee - What changes in statute would most benefit District needs?
- Identify a program that would be more effective or efficient with change
- Committee works with **YOU** and **your Board** to identify and advocate for changes through the Legislative process

Provide Legislative Testimony

Written Testimony

- Draft your message with input from your Board and/or staff
- Consult with OACD for support
- Submit your testimony to the legislative committee, your own/local Legislator, and to OACD
- Submit your written testimony and any materials through OLIS at least 24 hours before the hearing

Verbal Testimony

- Plan to speak for 3 minutes when your name is called; sign up when you arrive in person or in the virtual system; prepare for 1 minute if many testifying and chair directs
- Standard opening: “Chairman Smith and committee members, my name is Jane Doe from the ABC Conservation District in XYZ county...”
- Draw from your knowledge and experience, support with as many facts as possible; don’t just read.



Share Your Legislative Testimony



- Sharing and coordinating your testimony with OACD provides the opportunity to seek and obtain support from the membership as well as assistance from OACD in arranging legislative meetings and other functions.
- OACD is here to help you!



"Making a Difference - A Citizen's Guide on How to Testify"

- Testifying



TESTIFYING VIRTUALLY

Written testimony:

Provide written testimony by following the steps below at the appropriate Committee site (see sample in the following slide).

Testifying remotely:

You must register in advance to testify verbally remotely:

Look up the committee or subcommittee meeting agenda in the OLIS system [Oregon Legislative Information System \(OLIS\)](#) and follow the testimony registration link at the website. The system will send you an email with a registration meeting link and instructions for delivering your verbal/video testimony using the virtual platform.

Or call the listed toll-free number. The phone system will provide you with a phone number and access code to call into the meeting to deliver your verbal/audio testimony.





Session



Bills



Committees



More

2020 Regular Session

Senate Committee On Education

Follow: [Committee Materials](#) | [e-Subscribe Email](#) | [RSS](#)

Overview

Assigned Measures

Membership

Chair [Senator Rob Wagner](#)

Vice-Chair [Senator Chuck Thomsen](#)

Member [Senator Sara Gelser](#)

Member [Senator Mark Hass](#)

Member [Senator Dallas Heard](#)

Staff

LPRO Analyst [Lisa Gezelter](#) 503-986-1664

Committee Assistant [Isaacs Morano](#) 503-986-1562

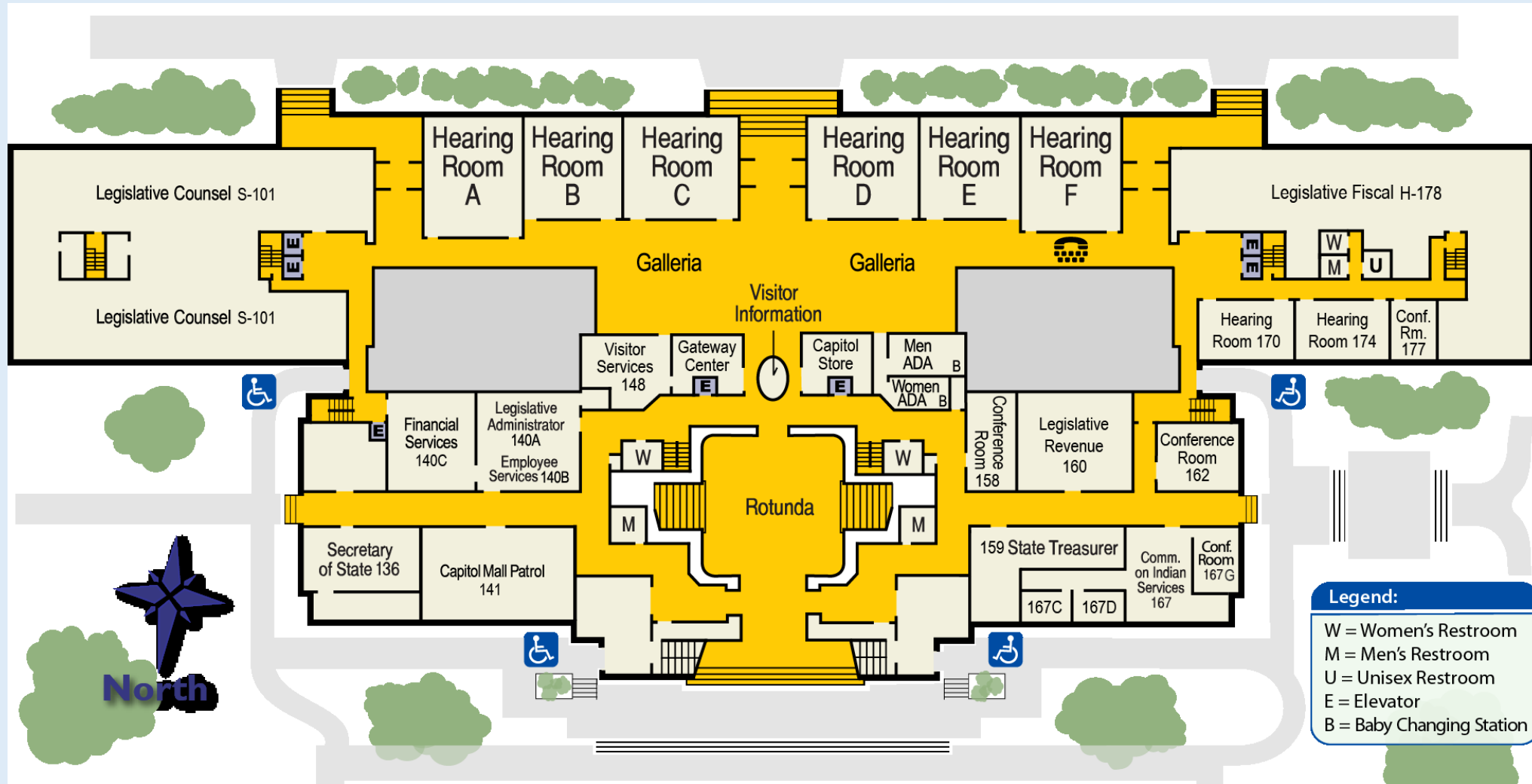
Submit Public Testimony [Click to Submit Testimony](#)

Regular Meeting Schedule

Legislative Testimony – As A Group

- Assign different topics to your group to cover to avoid repetition
- Coordinate testimony prior to the presentation; share with OACD
- Address the problem – and share possible solutions
- Answer questions from the Committee– When answering the question, say "Rep. Jones (the person who asked you the question) and Chair Smith" and then add your answer.
- If you cannot answer a question, advise them that you will get back to the Committee later with an answer. Coordinate with OACD to identify answers.

Finding your way around the Capitol: Capitol Hearing Rooms Hearing occur in A, B, C, D, E, F



After the Legislative Session



Follow Up



Following the session, after a committee meeting, or another time that your Legislator has assisted you, a thank you note or email would be very much appreciated. This also provides an opportunity to share a District newsletter or update.

It's important to maintain your relationship with your Legislator.



After Session: Rulemaking Process

- After the Legislative session and after a bill has been assigned a number within the Oregon Revised Statute or “ORS”, the work continues through **rulemaking**
- Rulemaking determines **how an agency will implement a law** that has been passed and can be used to adopt, amend, or repeal a rule
- Rules are assigned an Oregon Administrative Rule, or “OAR” number. **Rules** are located on oregonlegislature.gov (as are **Laws**).
- Offering to be on an agency **Rulemaking Advisory Committee (RAC)** provides you an opportunity to provide input in the outcome.

OACD's Role in Rulemaking

- **OACD develops relationships** with relevant agencies to be included in stakeholder meetings and agency actions
- **OACD registers for notifications** for each agency of interest
- **OACD advises District members** of pending rules and encourages District members to work with the Advocacy Committee on rule responses
- **OACD participates on RACs** and encourages District members to do so as well
- **OACD notifies District members** of rulemakings and solicits responses
- **OACD provides testimony** at rulemaking hearings and **submits written comments** for the record and encourages members to also submit comments on the record

Let's Work Together

Please contact OACD – before, during, and after the Legislative Session.

We can assist with coordination, arranging meetings, and other tasks.

We want to hear from you to know of contacts you have made with Legislators to be able to support your needs and coordinate other members' requests.

The OACD Advocacy Committee meets regularly throughout the year and we welcome your participation in legislative and rulemaking procedures.

Stay current by following advocacy on the Advocacy Committee page on www.OACD.org.

Thank you – Questions?



Contact us!

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Stan Dean, Advocacy Committee Chair
530.902.7415 (cell) stan.dean@jswcd.org