

# OSPIRG

— Standing Up  
To Powerful Interests

## 2017 Legislative Agenda

Oregon State Public Interest Research Group  
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### OUR MISSION

**Oregon State Public Interest Research Group (OSPIRG) is an advocate for the public interest.**

*When consumers are cheated or the voices of ordinary citizens are drowned out by special interest lobbyists, OSPIRG speaks up and takes action. We uncover threats to public health and well-being and fight to end them, using the time-tested tools of investigative research, media exposés, grassroots organizing, advocacy and litigation. OSPIRG's mission is to deliver persistent, result-oriented public interest activism that protects consumers, encourages a fair, sustainable economy, and fosters responsive, democratic government.*

### Making Health Care Work Better for Oregon

*While the future of national health reform is being debated in Washington, we all know that health care still costs too much and delivers too little. OSPIRG will focus on concrete reforms to address cost and quality at the state level here in Oregon. We will work to:*

- Put a check on rising prescription drug costs through requiring increased transparency and accountability for prescription drug manufacturers' pricing practices.
- Protect Oregon consumers from big surprise out-of-network bills for health care services. Today, these bills can happen when a patient receives services from an out-of-network doctor at a hospital that is in their health plan's network, often without the patient even knowing until she gets the bill.
- Continue to watchdog Oregon's health insurance industry and push for reforms to contain costs, increase insurers' accountability for their members' health, maintain a competitive market and preserve consumer choice.

*For more information about OSPIRG's 2017 Legislative Agenda, to request our support for a bill, or to ask questions about our position on a specific issue, please don't hesitate to reach out. We look forward to working with you in 2017 and throughout the entire legislative cycle.*

—Charlie Fisher, OSPIRG State Director  
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### Reclaim our Democracy

*The influence of wealthy special interests in the funding of elections has eroded public trust in our political system and has discouraged civic participation. OSPIRG supports policies that ensure that every citizen, regardless of wealth, has equal opportunity to influence the actions of our government, including policies that:*

- Amplify the power of small donors at the state and local level by creating a publicly-financed match system.
- Increase voter participation through youth pre-registration and free postage for mail-in ballots.

### Save Antibiotics

*At least 23,000 Americans die every year from antibiotic-resistant bacteria and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention warns that the widespread overuse of antibiotics on factory farms is unnecessary, inappropriate and makes everyone less safe. OSPIRG supports policies that protect the effectiveness of our medicine, including policies that:*

- Stop the routine low-dose use of antibiotics in livestock and poultry production.
- Require tracking and reporting on the use of antibiotics on factory farms.

*(Continue on reverse)*

## 21st Century Transportation

*Our transportation system should reflect and support the way we want to travel. Despite mounting evidence that Americans are seeking to shift away from driving, tax dollars continue to new and wider highways instead of fixing existing roads and bridges, or making it easier for people to travel by public transit, biking and walking. We support policies that will:*

- Increase investments in transportation infrastructure that create more transportation choices, including public transportation, walking and biking.
- Prioritize using road dollars on repair and maintenance of our current aging infrastructure.

## Protecting Consumers

*Oregonians deserve fair rules of the road and an even playing field in the marketplace, and Oregon consumers deserve protection from scams and the unbridled power of unscrupulous corporate interests. OSPIRG supports policies that will:*

- Stop the growth of anonymous shell corporations in Oregon, responsible for many consumer scams as well as tax evasion, by requiring greater disclosure and providing more tools for enforcing the law against bad actors.
- Provide more recourse for consumers in debt by requiring disclosure and accountability for debt buyers, who sometimes demand payment from consumers based on nonexistent, inaccurate or even fraudulent documentation.
- Require companies to follow their own documented privacy and user data policies. Amazingly, this common-sense protection does not already exist in Oregon law.

## Transparent and Accountable Government

*Oregonians have a right to know how government decisions are made and how taxpayer dollars are spent. Ensuring government transparency enables us to hold elected officials accountable and push back more effectively when powerful interests try to game the system. OSPIRG will push for measures to:*

- Reform Oregon's antiquated public records laws to create a better and more efficient process for disclosing critical information to the public.
- Create a new public records watchdog office so the public has greater recourse when government agencies are reluctant or slow to release information.

## Public Health

*Every day, our families are bombarded with toxic chemicals found in consumer products which are linked to cancer, asthma, learning disabilities, reproductive problems and other diseases. We support policies that:*

- Ban the use of the herbicide Roundup unless and until independent research can prove it's safe.
- Provide consumers with accessible health and safety information about the presence of toxic chemicals used in everyday products.

*Furthermore, lead is a potent neurotoxin of particular concern that affects how our children develop, learn, and behave. Yet across the country, thousands of tests are showing lead in the drinking water at schools, pre-schools, and/or child care centers. OSPIRG supports policies that get the lead out of water at school and in early childhood programs. Specifically, we support:*

- Removing lead service lines, the largest single source of lead in water and installing NSF-certified filters on faucets or fountains used for drinking or cooking at school.
- Testing water fully and properly, and giving the public access to all data and remediation steps.
- Immediate shut-off of outlets where water contains more lead than one part per billion.