

# CLACKAMAS COUNTY BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS

## Policy Session Worksheet

**Presentation Date:** December 9, 2025 **Approx. Start Time:** 2:00PM **Approx. Length:** 30 mins

**Presentation Title:** 2026 State and Federal Legislative Agendas

**Department:** Public and Government Affairs

**Presenters:** Tonia Holowetzki, Director; Trent Wilson, Government Affairs Manager

### **WHAT ACTION ARE YOU REQUESTING FROM THE BOARD?**

Board approval of the County's state and federal legislative priorities for 2026. Staff also requests the Board affirm the current legislative messaging protocols.

### **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:**

The 2026 state legislative session will convene on February 2, 2026, and adjourn no later than March 9, 2026. The 119th Congress convened on January 3, 2025, and is scheduled to continue until January 2, 2027.

Public and Government Affairs (PGA) is responsible for representing the county to state and federal policymakers. This work is guided by legislative agendas approved annually by the Board of County Commissioners (BCC). The materials provided were drafted following interviews with commissioners and departments, and in anticipation of legislative topics expected in 2026.

The draft agendas include key legislative initiatives and priorities of the county, including the Recovery Campus, and elevate the Board's goals from the recently adopted strategic plan. It supports continued state/county shared revenue agreements and other funding streams to continue programs and services for county residents, businesses, and visitors.

Staff will return at a later date to seek the BCC's direction on candidate projects for congressionally directed spending.

The Board is also asked to reaffirm the attached messaging protocols that guide PGA's engagement with state and federal officials on behalf of the Board during legislative sessions. While no changes have been made to the protocols, PGA does not wish to assume continued Board approval.

### **FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS (current year and ongoing):**

Is this item in your current budget? YES

What is the cost?  
N/A

What is the funding source?  
N/A

Approval of the state and federal agenda sets a policy direction on behalf of the county. It does not, in and of itself, require an expenditure. The county's state legislative agenda supports continued state/county shared revenue agreements and other funding streams that support major county programs and services. Loss of these revenues would result in potential cuts to county programs and services. The county's federal legislative agenda prioritizes key county programs and projects for potential federal funding and grant opportunities. Public and Government Affairs is tasked with advocating on behalf of the county and uses the Board approved agendas to guide their work.

**STRATEGIC PLAN ALIGNMENT:**

This item aligns with the Public and Government Affairs Strategic Business Plan goals to provide intergovernmental connections and relationship building, strategic policy development and messaging, legislative, advocacy, and outreach services to county elected officials and departments so they can build key partnerships to achieve policy goals important to Clackamas County, with special emphasis on the strategic results in the BCC Strategic Plan.

This item aligns with the County's Performance Clackamas goals by highlighting legislative principles that build a strong infrastructure; ensure safe, secure and livable communities; grow a vibrant economy; nurture healthy people; and build public trust through good government.

**LEGAL/POLICY REQUIREMENTS:**

N/A

**PUBLIC/GOVERNMENTAL PARTICIPATION:**

PGA continues to maintain close working relationships with the county's legislative delegation and staff at both the state and federal levels, all of whom are instrumental in advancing the county's legislative priorities.

**OPTIONS:**

1. Adopt the 2026 State & Federal Legislative Agendas and messaging protocols as presented.
2. Adopt the 2026 State and Federal Legislative Agendas and messaging protocols with amendments.
3. Provide alternative direction to staff regarding the agendas and/or messaging protocol.

**RECOMMENDATION:**

Option #1: Adopt the 2026 State & Federal Legislative Agendas and messaging protocols as presented.

**ATTACHMENTS:**

#A: Legislative Process and Messaging Protocols Memo

#B: Draft 2026 State Legislative Policy Agenda

#C: Draft 2026 Federal Legislative Policy Agenda

**SUBMITTED BY:**

Division Director/Head Approval \_\_\_\_\_

Department Director/Head Approval s/Tonia Holowetzki

County Administrator Approval \_\_\_\_\_

For information on this issue or copies of attachments, please contact Tonia Holowetzki @ 503-250-1381
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# Clackamas County Legislative Process and Messaging

## Legislative Process

For issues covered by the county's legislative agendas (initiatives/priorities/principles):

- PGA coordinates with departments and partners
- PGA updates the BCC weekly, if not more frequently, depending on legislative action

For issues not covered by the county's legislative agendas (initiatives/priorities/principles) and that require county action:

- If time allows, PGA brings to BCC at a weekly setting
- If time does not allow, PGA convenes a Special Operations Committee to assess issues and determine the county's position so that PGA staff can carry out lobbying activities quickly and effectively. This Committee will be comprised of the County Chair, County Vice-Chair, County Administrator, County Counsel, PGA staff, and the subject-matter department director
- PGA informs BCC of new county positions within the week

## Messaging

All legislative messaging (policy statements/letters/testimony) will adhere to the county's legislative agendas (initiatives/priorities/principles) or other BCC-approved positions. Any issue not covered by the county's legislative agendas must be vetted through the above legislative process prior to messaging on the topic.

Policy Statements/Letters:

- PGA typically communicates county positions through verbal communications and/or concise policy statements delivered by the county lobbyist. Policy statements will be vetted and approved by PGA, in consultation with appropriate county department directors or designees.
- PGA also may communicate county positions using formal letters signed by the Chair on behalf of the Board. Such letters do not require BCC approval, provided they adhere to the county's legislative agendas or other BCC-approved positions. PGA will consult with County Administration in cases where a different letter format is preferred.

Testimony:

- Testimony will be produced and/or reviewed by PGA in advance of legislative committee meetings, in consultation with appropriate county department directors or designees.
- Testimony may be given without the need for BCC approval, provided it adheres to the county's legislative agendas or other BCC-approved positions.
- Testimony will be available for review by the BCC.

## Legislative Letters/Testimony from an Individual Commissioner

- Individual commissioners may sign letters and/or provide testimony in support of or opposition to legislative issues on which the county has not taken a position.
- Individual commissioners should not write a dissenting letter or provide dissenting testimony that is in opposition to the county's legislative agenda or other BCC-approved positions.
- Letters/testimony will note the opinion is that of the individual commissioner, not the entire BCC.
- Letters/testimony does not need prior approval from all BCC.
- Signed letter/testimony will be shared with BCC and PGA.

## 2026 Clackamas County State Legislative Agenda

*Clackamas County is urban, suburban, rural, and wild. We are dedicated to welcoming new residents and businesses and committed to delivering community services that are dependable and accessible to the public.*

### COUNTY INITIATIVE

#### Recovery Campus

Support development and construction of the Clackamas County recovery campus. The recovery campus will offer person-centered support, treatment, and resources to help achieve and sustain long-term recovery for individuals overcoming substance use disorders. The county purchased property for the campus in 2024, and community engagement is underway.

### COUNTY PRIORITIES

Advocate for **full cost recovery, predictable revenue, and reasonable liability protection** for local government services. Oppose unfunded mandates.

Support state investment in **behavioral health resources** and clarify the implementation of civil commitment and Aid and Assist statutes.

Support **rent assistance and eviction prevention resources** for low-income populations, senior populations, and underserved parts of the County.

Advance policies and funding to **address the housing and homelessness crisis** and to meet housing and employment growth goals, including the preservation of existing affordable housing. Ensure a **balanced approach to land use planning** and oppose legislation that limits or erodes local land use authority. Prioritize infrastructure investments that **rapidly advance housing production goals**.

Advocate for **business-friendly solutions**, including childcare access, employment land readiness, liability protection for recreational providers, and rural business opportunities.

Highlight ongoing public engagement and best practices in the development of the **Sunrise Gateway Corridor**.

## **STATE LEGISLATIVE PRINCIPLES**

### **Safe, Secure, and Livable Communities**

Support access to community resources and the production of affordable housing for low-income populations, senior populations, and underserved parts of the county. Legislation should also help to reduce crime and recidivism, promote best practices for justice-involved individuals, improve disaster preparedness, and protect survivors of domestic violence and child abuse.

### **Strong Infrastructure**

Support investments in major infrastructure projects to enhance the quality of life for county residents. Successful legislation will ease congestion, expand travel options, enhance seismic and disaster resiliency, spur economic growth, stimulate employment opportunities, increase housing inventory, broaden telecommunication access, and promote science-based and ratepayer-minded water quality protections.

### **Vibrant Economy**

Support business growth and countywide prosperity, ensuring the county has adequate resources to attract and retain industries, workforce, and childcare opportunities, as well as sufficient shovel-ready employment lands to capture economic development opportunities.

### **Healthy People**

Support a Recovery Oriented System of Care, enhancing access to shelter, social services, behavioral health and substance use treatment for all who need it. Legislation should also support and fund community access to high-quality health services and resources.

### **Public Trust in Good Government**

Support the county's financial sustainability, allocating sufficient resources to mandated services, preserving shared revenue agreements, and ensuring adequate community engagement. Successful legislation will enhance the county's ability to deliver dependable and accessible public services. Legislation should not impose unfunded or underfunded mandates, preempt local tax sources, or restrict local government authority.

# 2026 Clackamas County Federal Legislative Agenda

*Clackamas County is urban, suburban, rural, and wild. We are dedicated to welcoming new residents and businesses and committed to delivering community services that are dependable and accessible to the public.*

## COUNTY INITIATIVES

### Support Surface Transportation Reauthorization

Advocate for federal infrastructure funding to meaningfully address maintenance and capital projects, enhance the safety and reliability of our transportation system, and meet the needs of residents and businesses. Successful legislation will:

- Support infrastructure investments like the Sunrise Corridor to promote housing and job growth.
- Maintain grants to address major projects, like the I-205 Corridor, as well as medium and small projects such as culverts, bridges, and access to federal forest lands.
- Maintain transit funding to improve ridership and access to jobs, education, and healthcare.
- Advance safety improvements in urban, suburban, and rural communities, including Mt. Hood.

### Support Predictable Forest Revenue

Support legislation for the responsible and sustainable management of federal forestlands, including Oregon and California Rail Trust (O&C) Lands, for wildfire risk reduction and predictable revenue to counties from shared timber receipts.

- Support legislation to permanently reauthorize or extend the Secure Rural Schools and Community Self-Determination Act.
- Preserve revenue-sharing agreements between counties and timber management agencies.

## COUNTY PRIORITIES

- Advocate for funding to advance the **Clackamas County Recovery Campus**.
- Support funding for **health, behavioral health, housing and human services programs** and other county operations that are reliant on federal resources.
- Support reauthorization of the Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention Act.
- Support funding for **water infrastructure programs**, such as the Clean Water State Revolving Fund and Water Infrastructure Finance and Innovation Act Program. Support legislation and funding to **reduce PFAS\* in the environment and water systems and protect the county from undue liability from pass-through chemicals**.

\*Per- and Polyfluoroalkyl Substances (PFAS)

- Support the Protecting Community Television Act to **modernize cable franchise fees** to include streaming services and increased funding for local governments and schools.
- Support funding for **wildfire prevention, mitigation, and disaster management activities**.
- Support programs and funding to support **Mt. Hood** recreation, access, and protection.
- Advocate for and support **the Willamette Falls & Landings area designation as a National Heritage Area (NHA)** and improvements to **the Willamette Falls Locks**.

## FEDERAL LEGISLATIVE PRINCIPLES

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