

## 81<sup>st</sup> Legislative Assembly 2021

### State budget

The co-chairs of the legislature's budget-writing committee [announced](#) their [2021-23 Budget Framework](#) on March 24. There are some similarities and some differences between co-chairs Sen. Betsy Johnson (D-Scappoose), Sen. Elizabeth Steiner Hayward (D-Beaverton), and Rep. Dan Rayfield (D-Corvallis) budget proposal and Governor Brown's [recommended budget](#), but overall, both proposals have similar values. Perhaps the biggest difference is the lawmakers' proposal incorporates new sources of funds from the recently passed federal American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA).

**The gap.** There are many nuances to the state's budget-writing process and this is not a final budget by any means. The difference between the most recent revenue forecast and the cost of funding the current service level is \$1.7 billion. In order to overcome this, the co-chairs pointed to additional revenue from the tobacco tax and federal funds, as well as statewide reductions for state agencies. The May Economic & Revenue Forecast will be crucial in understanding how big the gap is and how that will affect the next biennial budget. Even though this framework is not final, there are still important priorities that are expressed through the co-chairs' framework.

**1% reductions.** The co-chairs set the goal of achieving 1% cuts across all program area budgets, but made a couple exceptions: the State School Fund (which is funded slightly above what the legislature is considering current service level) and the **Oregon Health Plan** (which is fully funded).

**ARPA funds.** Of the \$2.6 billion heading to Oregon from the ARPA, the co-chairs' budget framework holds back \$520 million for the 2023-25 biennium. The rest of the balance will go to both ongoing and new services and programs. However, we do not know yet what the stipulations will be on all those funds, so the budget stops short of laying out exactly where that roughly \$2.1 billion will go.

### Policy committees face looming deadline

Tuesday, April 13 marks the deadline for committees to hold work sessions on first chamber measures. This is the last day for policy committees to move measures introduced in their chamber (i.e. Senate bills in the Senate, House bills in the House) out of committee. The deadline does not apply to Ways & Means, Revenue, Rules, and other joint committees. Many of the bills OPCA supports remain in committee. The unprecedented volume of bills introduced and the complexities of a largely remote legislative session are two factors that have contributed to the backlog.

## White House

### Biden Administration announces infrastructure plan

[On March 31, 2021](#), President Biden announced a \$2.25 trillion infrastructure plan to upgrade transportation, power, water, manufacturing, housing, and digital infrastructure. Biden's proposal calls for a \$100 billion investment to expand high-speed broadband while reducing the cost of internet service and increasing the adoption of broadband. Biden also introduced the "Made in America Tax Plan" to pay for his proposals by changing the corporate tax code. A second infrastructure bill, focused on "human infrastructure" proposals, is expected to be released in the coming weeks. OPCA continues to support the [LIFT America Act](#) introduced by Energy and Commerce Committee Democrats, which includes \$10 billion for CHC capital project grants and \$500 million for qualified teaching health centers and behavioral health centers.

## Capitol Hill

### LIFT America Act introduced in House Energy and Commerce Committee

The Leading Infrastructure for Tomorrow's America Act, or [LIFT America Act](#), was introduced by Democratic members of the House Energy and Commerce Committee. In addition to provisions to modernize the nation's infrastructure, combat climate change, and invest in public health, the \$312 billion infrastructure package includes **\$10 billion in funding for CHC capital project grants** as part of a \$30 billion investment in health infrastructure and \$80 billion for the deployment of secure and resilient high-speed broadband to expand access nationwide. The Energy and Commerce Committee held a hearing on the legislation on March 22, 2021.

### Appropriations season

We continue to push for \$2.2 billion in discretionary health center funding in FY22. The **urgency of this funding is heightened by PCAs and CHCs submitting appropriations requests and encouraging Members of Congress to sign onto the FY22 CHC Appropriation Letter**. We ask that as you fill out appropriation request forms to your Members of Congress, please fill out this [spreadsheet](#) letting NACHC know which offices you have contacted. You can find detailed instructions on how to fill out the appropriations forms [here](#). Please email any questions to OPCA's Policy Team at [policyteam@orpca.org](mailto:policyteam@orpca.org)

### House and Senate recess

The [House](#) and [Senate](#) have been in recess **since March 29** for District and State Work Periods. The chambers will reconvene on April 12 to begin discussing appropriations bills and President Biden's infrastructure plan.