XIII. PUBLIC AFFAIRS

Agriculture Policy for Oregon 13.005

An agricultural policy for the State of Oregon needs to be adopted that would:
1. Acknowledge the importance of agriculture to the state’s economy and to the wellbeing of all of its residents;
2. Promote agriculture in positive actions that result in a vibrant and healthy agriculture in Oregon; and
3. Provide that any and all proposed rules and regulations or legislation affecting agriculture should enhance the importance of and the operation of agricultural enterprises in Oregon. (00)

Policy No. 12.010, Voice of Agriculture, was deleted in 2005.

Communication with other Organizations 13.015

We encourage greater communication and cooperation with other agricultural and natural resource organizations at the national, state and county levels. (07)

Action by Farmers 13.020

Farmers and agricultural organizations must become more aggressive and involved in community, state, and national affairs.

Freedom to Farm 13.030

Increasing demand for agricultural lands and increasing concerns about agricultural practices, have created severe restrictions on the freedom of farmers. It is important, therefore, that farmers take an active role in securing reasonable laws and regulations, in areas such as:
1. Land use;
2. Agricultural chemicals;
3. Food processing;
4. Packaging;
5. Marketing;
6. Noise, dust, air pollution;
7. Water use; and
8. Biotechnology. (14)

Farmers should retain the right to use accepted agricultural practices. We oppose any legislation or regulations that restrict or mandate farm practices. Accepted farming practices should be exempt from state laws and regulations, local ordinances and suits related to dust, odor, noise, etc. and other conditions not appreciated by the public. The right to farm laws should be strengthened to require that a plaintiff has the burden of proving that the farming practice endangers public health or safety.
Unsuccessful plaintiffs should be responsible for the attorney fees, court costs and compensation for other expenses of the defendant. (07)

**Beginning Farmer Assistance 13.040**
1 We oppose the concept of the state acquiring farm land in a beginning farmer program. The State of Oregon should encourage retiring farmers through tax incentives to rent or sell their land to beginning farmers. Farm Credit Services should be encouraged to work with beginning farmers.

**Encouragement of New Industry 13.050**
1 We propose that the state encourage new industries to locate in Oregon which have the ability to use the abundance of raw agricultural products that are produced here.

**Policy No. 12.060, Exposition Center, was deleted in 2005**

**Policy No. 12.100, Citizenship, was deleted in 2008**

**Jury Duty 13.110**
1 We support adequate juror compensation that would enable all adults to participate in this very important service to their fellow citizens.
2 Key personnel should have the option to delay jury duty until the next available session.

**Publications of Government Proceedings 13.115**
1 We favor maintenance of the statutes which require county courts and boards of county commissioners to publish monthly proceedings and expenditures.

**Government Surplus Properties 13.117**
1 We propose altering the existing practice of disposal of federal real property that has been declared surplus to federal needs. There should be no hierarchy providing preference to any entity when disposing of excess or surplus federal real property. (20)

**Policy No. 12.120, Federal State and County Projects, was deleted in 2005**

**Qualifications for Public Office 13.125**
5 We believe the voters should decide whether or not a candidate is qualified for public office. We oppose establishment of any new qualifications not already prescribed by law.
6 Any salary increases for an elected official should not become effective until after the next general election. (05)
7 Elected officials should receive the same retirement and health benefits that the general population is eligible for. (17)
Policy No. 12.127, Judicial Elections was deleted in 2005

Voters Pamphlet Information 13.126
1The state should develop a system that enables persons to submit
2voter pamphlet information at each county clerk’s office or online instead
3of in Salem at the Secretary of State’s Office. (04), (05)

Oregon Constitution 13.130
1Article II, Section 16 of the Oregon Constitution should be amended
2to require a majority vote for the election of all public officials.

Initiative Process 13.135
1We support the initiative and referendum process that has been part
2of the Oregon Constitution since the turn of the century. We are concerned
3that this historic citizen check and balance of state government in recent
4times is being misused.
5The initiative and referendum process should require:
61. The prohibition of signature gatherers being paid for each
7signature obtained;
82. That qualifying signatures be required to be gathered equally from
9each congressional district or similar regions of the state; and
103. Constitutional amendments not referred to the voters by the
11legislature should require a 2/3 majority vote of the voters for
12adoption. (07)

Oregon Public Employees in Legislature 13.140
1We support action to repeal Section 8 of Article XV of the Oregon
2Constitution which allows public employees to serve in the legislature.
3Because it is the responsibility of government agencies to implement
4public policy, not to formulate public policy, no state or federal agency
5should publicly take sides on any issue or policy concerning the general
6public.
7We oppose any effort of any government agency in attempting to
8formulate farm thinking for presentation in support of any legislative farm
9programs. (05)

Public Employee Strikes 13.141
1We are opposed to strikes by public employees. We recommend that
2all public employee contracts contain a no-strike clause or where union
3contracts do not exist, the public employees should sign an agreement
4waiving a strike action as a condition of employment. When binding
5arbitration is imposed, both parties should submit their final offer to a three-
6member arbitration board which would accept one final offer from the
7disputing parties.
More attention needs to be given to providing efficient delivery of government services including education. Productivity and performance need to be considerations for salary increases. (04)

**Voter Registration**

1. We support the state election laws which require voters to be registered at least thirty days prior to election. (05)

**Religious Life**

1. Our national life is founded on spiritual faith and belief in God. We favor leaving "In God We Trust" on coins and "Under God" in the Pledge of Allegiance. We believe it to be an inalienable right to worship God, to offer prayers, to read the Bible in private or public places, including schoolrooms. This perpetuates the principles on which this nation was founded.
2. Solutions to problems arising from social and economic change involve recognition of spiritual and moral values. The proper role of churches and organizations of churches in this field is to provide guidance on the moral and spiritual aspects of social and economic problems, rather than to lobby for or otherwise promote specific governmental actions. If churches or church organizations continue to intrude into political action programs, that portion of their resources used for such activities should not be given preferential property tax treatment. (05)

**Rural Health**

1. We urge continued interest and education of our membership in health and disease control programs.
2. We support incentives to encourage rural hospitals, emergency medical services and clinics.
3. We oppose employer mandated health insurance. (09)

**Policy No. 12.410, Aids Testing, was deleted in 2004**

**Foods and Nutrition**

1. We recommend continued nutritional improvement of school lunch programs.
2. We recommend that county Farm Bureaus promote the use of domestic and locally produced farm products on school premises.
3. Dietary goals should be based upon documented scientific proof.
4. We oppose any committee, agency or persons dictating the foods that should or should not be eaten. We deplore the spending of the taxpayers' money for controlling or attempting to control the diets of the American people in any way. (04), (08)
Social Services

The present Social Services program tends to perpetuate rather than
cure the problem. The program should be redesigned to make it more
attractive to work than be a recipient of social services. Acceptance of
work training should be mandatory for able bodied persons. Incentives
should be provided for those taking jobs or work training. Primary
emphasis should be placed on the problems and needs of families with
children. Aid to the blind, elderly and the totally or permanently disabled
individuals must be adequate. We support requiring proof of legal
residency and testing for illegal substances for social service recipients.
(20)
We support community representation on public social service boards.
(08)

Emergency Medical Service

We support state-wide emergency medical and trauma services.

Volunteer Emergency Personnel

We support modifications of OSHA rules and Oregon State
regulations to recognize and give credit for the expertise of an emergency
volunteer's occupation.

Volunteer Fire Fighters

Oregon should adopt training standards appropriate to the needs of
rural fire districts and their volunteers. (03)

Confidential Financial Records

Any information exchanged between borrower and lender should be
considered confidential and privileged. The release of any information
should occur only upon the mutual agreement of both parties.
We support legislation to make the unauthorized release of
confidential and privileged information between borrower and lender a
criminal offense.

Personal Property Rights

Before the State of Oregon adopts laws, rules, and/or regulations,
agencies should first take into account the economic and non-economic
impact they would have on private property rights.
We urge legislation protecting the private property interests of farmers
and ranchers, for their livestock, including those who choose to raise
nontraditional species. (03), (06)
Trespassing 13.505
1 We recognize that the vast majority of citizens are responsible people
2 who recognize and respect rights of others and the need for protection of
3 their property.
4 We urge cooperation with organizations of sportsmen and other
5 interested citizens who wish to gain understanding of the trespass
6 problems.
7 Heavy penalties for acts of vandalism are encouraged.
8 Violation of the hunting with permission statute in the game laws
9 should be subject to the penalty for trespassing in the criminal code.
10 A landowner is subject to loss of time and considerable cost when a
11 suit or injury is initiated by a trespasser. We support legislation to require
12 the plaintiff to pay legal and other costs incurred by the landowner.
13 We support legislation relieving property owners of liability for injury or
14 death sustained by a trespasser regardless of age.
15 We recognize the need for property owners to have a cost efficient
16 and long-lasting way to post property for no trespassing.
17 We support the statewide use of painting the tops of fence posts as a
18 legal means of posting ones’ property for “No Trespassing.” (00), (05),
19 (07), (08)

Drone Technology 13.506
1 We embrace drone technology for production agriculture. We support
2 laws that protect private property owners from the trespass of drones. (15)

Right to Farm 13.508
3 Accepted farming practices utilized in the production of food and fiber
4 should be protected by “Right to Farm” provisions in the Oregon statutes.
5 (See also policy 3.030) (06)

Nuisances 13.510
1 Persons or jurisdictions initiating an unsuccessful nuisance suit should
2 be liable for the loss of any economic value pre-existing business and
3 facilities of the defendant.

Legal Action 13.515
1 We must use the courts to test unreasonable laws or regulations. This
2 should be the last resort after all other approaches have been explored
3 and exhausted.
4 We support a policy that requires any filing party of a government suit
5 to post a bond to cover the legal costs of the prevailing party.

Probate Fee 13.520
1 Special priority should be given to the revision of probate fees so they
2 are commensurate with the amount of legal work required.
**Small Claims Court Judgments** 13.525

1. We support forcing the payment of judgments won in small claims courts.

**Judicial Reform** 13.530

1. We support the maintenance of Justice of Peace Courts. The present system for election of judges should be retained. A maximum limit should be retained for each class of lawsuit. When a defendant prevails, the plaintiff should be liable for all attorney fees and the court costs. (07)

**Liability Suits** 13.535

1. We support legislation to limit excessive liability judgments. Judgments should be based more closely on the actual economic loss incurred.

   We support legislation to:

   1. Strengthen the legal concept of "fault" as a basis to determine damages. "Strict liability" concepts that hold parties liable for losses when no fault exists are unfair,

   2. Control expert testimony,

   3. Eliminate "joint and several liability,"

   4. Allow for the recovery of medical expenses, property damage and lost wages, pain and punitive damages should be commensurate to company size and financial status,

   5. Allow the payment of large awards for future damages to be made in installments rather than a lump sum,

   6. Eliminate double recovery. Court awards should be reduced by the amount of other financial sources such as medical insurance and wage continuation plans, and

   7. Encourage alternatives to lawsuits such as binding arbitration and mediation. (08)

**SLAPP Strategic Lawsuit Against Public Participation** 13.536

1. Citizens currently are granted immunity in testifying during the legislative process. We support legislation which would grant citizens similar immunity when testifying at the state or local level. (00)

**Third Party Lawsuits-Harassment** 13.537

1. When a citizen accuses a landowner of violating agency rules and the agency pursues the accusation, the accusing person should have to testify at any hearing or court proceeding so that the accused may face their accuser. (00)

**Liability at County or State Fair** 13.538

1. We support the state providing immunity to state and county government, county fair boards, the state fair board, the livestock/poultry
owners from liability in contract or tort for any personal injury, death, or property damage resulting from the display or exhibition of livestock or poultry at the county or state fair provided that the immune parties exercised reasonable care in exhibiting animals. (17)

Policy No. 12.540, Enforcement-Rules and Regulations, was deleted in 2005

Truth in Real Estate Sales 13.550
1 We support the concept that all mineral, water and timber rights, easements, zoning constraints and deed restrictions be included in a land sale contract.

Takings of Property 13.560
1 We believe that any action by government that restricts or diminishes an owner/operator’s right to conduct farming or forest practices on the property constitutes a taking of property.
2 Therefore, government should provide due process and compensation to the exact degree that an owner/operator’s right to use the property has been diminished by government action. All claims for loss of value should be filed within two years on new actions. Partial takings of property should be prohibited unless compensation is made for reduction in the value of the total property.
3 We are opposed to removing the applicability of land use laws as an alternative to financial compensation for loss of property value due to any action by government.
4 Further, government should acquire property or easements through negotiated mutual agreement. The loss of undeveloped property value should be calculated by comparing the value of the property one year before the zoning law was enacted compared to the value one year after the new zoning law was put into effect and the lost value should be indexed for inflation. (00), (04), (07)

Compensation 13.570
1 When a governmental action results in an economic decrease to the owner because it restricts or adversely affects a farming or forest practice and upon providing proof of the economic decrease, the owner shall be compensated by the public entity both for the amount of the economic decrease and the cost of professional assistance paid by the owner to establish the economic decrease including attorney fees and court costs. (04)

Compensation for Losses 13.575
1 When an action by government results in an economic loss to the agriculture producer, by limiting or prohibiting the use of real and personal property, including but not limited to, chemicals, water or equipment, the
producer should be able to file a claim and be compensated by the
regulating government entity.
We are opposed to any government action that results in an economic
loss that does not provide appropriate compensation. (06)

**Compensation Revenue Sources** 13.577

When Measure 37 or Measure 49 claims are approved for the loss of
property value the appropriate method of compensation from the following
list of options should be employed:

1. State income tax credit for state actions;
2. County or city property tax credit for local government actions.

A county compensation fund should be established for future
compensation claims and revenue continuously appropriated from the
following list of options:

1. Farm and forest use assessment tax penalties when land use is
   changed to a non-farm or non-forest use;
2. A real estate transfer tax on Measure 37 or Measure 49 claims
   when the land is sold.

Installment payments for the loss of property value should be made when
the state or local government entity has adequate funding. (07), (08)

**Condemnation** 13.580

Any government or utility with condemnation authority should be
prohibited from exercising that authority on land zoned for farm or forest
use without the approval of the county governing body.

If condemnation authority is exercised on land zoned for farm or forest
use, the land should be valued as though it were inside an urban growth
boundary and zoned for the intended use.

Any public agency or utility that has condemnation powers should be
required to pay all legal costs to the private property owner whose property
the agency has plans to take for a public use. The agency’s or utility’s
liability should begin with the first notice to the property owner and
continue until the final conclusion. (01), (08)

**Historic Preservation of the Oregon Trail** 13.585

Historic preservation should not conflict with existing and or accepted
farming practices. (07)

**Parole Eligibility** 13.600

We urge that parole requirements for repeat offenders be
strengthened to a degree which will insure more protection of lives and
property from the depredations of habitual criminals.
Policy No. 13.610, Juvenile Delinquency, was deleted in 2005

Capital Punishment 13.620
4 We support capital punishment for specified crimes.

Illegal Drugs 13.625
1 Greatly increased penalties should be imposed on those convicted of 2 producing, transporting, or selling illegal drugs or recruiting others to do 3 the same. Bail requirements should be maximized. (14) 4 Additional funds should be appropriated for the education and 5 treatment of our youth. A reward program for informants should be 6 instituted.
7 We support the right of private employers and government agencies 8 to test employees for drug use. Prospective employees should be 9 informed that drug tests will be given.
10 We support Law enforcement shall be notified right to know that a 11 marijuana operation is legally sanctioned a mechanism to determine if a 12 marijuana growing operation is actually sanctioned as a medical grow. 13 Necessary information should be subject to the public disclosure laws 14 available seven days a week, 24 hours a day, to local police agencies so 15 they can determine if a grow operation is legal. (06), (10)

Crime Prevention 13.630
1 We support legislation that will declare the removal or alteration of 2 serial numbers from personal property and owner identification numbers 3 an illegal act.
4 We support the establishment and continuation of crime prevention 5 programs throughout the state.

Policy No. 12.635, Insanity Plea, was deleted in 2005

REDDI Program 13.640
1 We support the "Report Every Drunk Driver Immediately" (REDDI) 2 program.

Policy No. 13.700, Racing Funds for County Fairs was deleted in 2004.

State Board of Agriculture 13.705
1 We support maintaining the advisory role of the State Board of 2 Agriculture. (03), (04)

Government Agency Lobbying 13.710
1 We support legislation prohibiting state and local agencies financed 2 by tax money from engaging a lobbyist for hire. The agency's involvement 3 should be limited to only testimony invited by or information requested by 4 a legislator.
State agencies should be limited to one representative. Their testimony should be limited to the factual effects of the proposed legislation. Additionally, all lobbyists working for organizations receiving taxpayer money should be clearly identified by a name tag which discloses their name and organization when they are within the Capitol building. These requirements should not be considered to apply in any way to elected officials of any jurisdiction of the state.

**Administrative Agencies 13.720**

1. The legislature should not delegate legislative authority to administrative agencies, or in cases of emergencies, the appropriate interim committee.
2. At least a majority of the regulatory body committee members should be present throughout the legislative hearings.
3. Administrative agencies should not be allowed to impose fines without action by a court. Right of appeal by agencies should be denied after a court decision.
4. Any state agency charged with enforcing federal laws should not adopt rules more restrictive than the federal rules or apply the rules in a more restrictive manner than the rules are when enforced by the federal government.
5. Statutory language should be adopted which defines the purpose of each current agency and any new agency when it is created.
6. State agencies should be permitted to enact administrative rules only to the extent that such rules are necessary to accomplish the purpose for which the agency was formed and only to the extent that such rules do not diminish or detract from the vested private property rights of citizens.
7. All previously enacted administrative rules which exceed the legislatively defined purpose of the agency should be declared null and void.
8. Any person or persons attempting to enforce rules which exceed the purpose for which the agency was formed should be subject to criminal penalties for abuse of authority.
9. Any proposed rule should require legislative approval prior to implementation.
10. All government agencies or their employees, while working in their professional capacity, should be held to the same standard as individuals or businesses in complying with the laws of the land.
11. Government regulatory agencies should not be allowed to levy fines upon issuance of a citation for noncompliance of regulations.
12. Civil penalties collected by any regulatory agency should go into the general fund.

**Agency Liability 13.725**

1. When an agency charges a landowner with a violation of an agency regulation, and forces the landowner to stop an activity, and in an ensuing
investigation and/or court proceeding the land owner is found to be
innocent of the charge, the agency should be held responsible for
reimbursing any revenue losses and legal fees suffered by the landowner
due to the cessation of the activity. (00)

Government Growth 13.730
1 We oppose the establishment of additional departments and divisions
2 in state government unless it can be proven that such an addition will
3 reduce the cost of goals or services to the public and the new department
4 or division will be subject to the "Sunset Law."
5 We encourage the Oregon Legislature to find a way to update the
6 PERS formulas and eligibility without increasing fees, taxes, and licenses.
7 (17)

Service Fees 13.740
1 We support legislation to change service fees charged by public
2 agencies so they are commensurate with the cost of providing the service.

Required Local Government Programs 13.750
1 We support legislation to require the State of Oregon to appropriate
2 funds for local governments to finance programs required by new
3 legislation or administrative orders.

Funding for Enacted Legislation 13.760
1 No law or legislation should be passed by Congress or the State
2 Legislature unless it is also funded by that body.

State Boards and Commissions 13.770
1 We request that the Governor appoint at least two farmers or ranchers
2 to state boards or commissions which have authority over land, water and
3 other natural resources.
4 A majority of persons who are appointed to state boards and
5 commissions should have practical production experience or use of the
6 resource that the board or commission oversees.
7 We support a uniform system for state agency (commission and
8 director) appointments.
9 All state agency commission members not elected should be
10 appointed by the Governor in a timely manner, approved by the Senate,
11 and should not be changed by the Governor.
12 Any director of an agency governed by a state agency commission
13 should be appointed by that state agency commission.
14 All agency directors should be governed by a state agency
15 commission. We support that any forms needed by a state agency and/or
16 commission or board are also offered hard copy and may be faxed, mailed
17 or scanned and emailed to the appropriate agency/commission, etc. (16)
Publishing Legal Notices 13.771
1  We support continuation, by public agencies, of the existing practice
2  of publishing legal notices in newspapers. (10)

Limiting Legislative Sessions 13.780
1  We support limiting regular sessions of the legislature to a maximum
2  120-day session every other year. The Oregon legislature should pass a
3  budget in 75 days after the opening of session. If this is not accomplished,
4  the session should close, the Governor should call a special session and
5  only budget bills should be allowed to be introduced.
6  We support making the short biennial legislative session for
7  funding/budgets and the long biennial legislative session for policy issues.
8  (19)
9  We support requiring the names of the legislative sponsor(s) of bill(s)
10  be printed on the bill(s). (19)
11  We oppose providing free postage for voters. The voter should be
12  responsible to put a stamp on the return envelope for mailing their ballot
13  in to the County Clerk for any election held in Oregon. (19)

Legislative Emergency Clause 13.785
1  Any legislation with emergency clauses should be approved by a
2  super majority of both houses and shall not disallow a referral by the
3  people in the form of an Initiative. (15)
4  The Legislative Emergency Clause shall be used exclusively during
5  Special sessions of the Legislature for the purpose of balancing the budget
6  or for responding to natural disasters. (16)
7  Any emergency declaration or executive order by the governor should
8  have a time limit of not greater than 45 days. After 45 days an extension
9  of the emergency declaration or executive order would require approval
10  by a super majority of both houses. The extension by the legislature shall
11  not exceed 6 months at which time continuation of the extension would
12  again require a super majority in both houses. (20)

Internet Access 13.800
13  Access to high speed internet should be available statewide, similar
14  to telephone service. (08)

Single Subjects for Congressional Legislation 13.900
1  Be it resolved that just like the Oregon ballot initiative, all bills must be
2  limited to one issue.

Election Integrity 13.905
1  We support security protocols that ensure only one vote per legal
2  voter. (20)