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BEYOND RESISTANCE: An agenda to make us safer, healthier, and more economically secure.



Dear Neighbor,

The beginning of this year, the GOP assumed control of all three branches of government. Since then, I, along with hundreds of thousands of people in Oregon and millions across America, have been fighting to protect our country's values and ideals. This resistance is critical as we face assaults on health care, the environment, and vulnerable communities – and continue to get to the bottom of serious questions that remain unanswered about Russia. Inside, you can see some of the ways I'm standing up for our values.

But resistance isn't enough. If we are to move our nation forward, those of us who are appalled by the direction our country is going have an obligation to offer a positive alternative. Inside this mailing is a list of 37 specific ideas that can make our nation and our world safer, healthier, more economically just, and more humane. It is by no means an exhaustive list, but it shows that America can have a concrete, progressive agenda that does more than just say no.

It's a lot to read, but I've always been grateful to represent a thoughtful community that values substance over style. Let me know your ideas and priorities for the future. There are multiple ways to reach me – you can see them below.



“OUTRAGE isn't enough.”

– Congressman Earl Blumenauer

*37 Specific Ideas
to Move America
Forward*



PORTLAND OFFICE

WASHINGTON D.C. OFFICE

Standing up for Our Values



Defending Health Care

Since the passage of the *Affordable Care Act* (ACA), there have been 70 attempts to repeal or substantially gut the law that has, among other things, delivered the lowest uninsured rate in American history, ended the exclusions of people with pre-existing conditions, allowed children up to the age of 26 to remain on their parents' policies, created better standards of care and coverage, and resulted in the slowest increase in health care costs in 50 years, according to the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS). That threat is now far more serious with what I believe is a terrible plan passing in the House and a president who would sign it. Those of us in Congress standing against that plan blocked it and other proposals in the Senate that were even worse and would have been devastating to Oregon. While continuing to oppose bills and executive actions that, in my view, attack the ACA and women's reproductive health care, we also need to work to build support for strengthening the ACA in the short term and moving to a single-payer system in the long term.



Immigration

Opposing the Travel Ban – I believe the executive orders banning travel and immigration from seven predominantly Muslim countries are cruel and unjustified. Muslims also deserve an apology for even a hint at plans for government registration based on a person's religion. It's shameful and un-American.

The Wall – It's a bad, ineffective, and expensive policy, and just another example of what I believe is the administration's hateful anti-immigrant agenda.

DACA and Deporting Undocumented Immigrants – In the face of the administration's termination of DACA, which stops the deportation of undocumented people who were brought to this country as children, we must restore their protection and keep our promise to them. Here in Oregon, we're working to help a number of these individuals. Additionally, we should stand up for the thousands of hardworking and otherwise law-abiding families that now call America home. We need comprehensive immigration reform and will continue to fight for a compassionate approach in Congress.

Protecting Our Environment and Public Lands

We are seeing the worst and most sustained attack on our environment and natural heritage in memory. Here are some of the ways we are resisting.

Climate Change – I strongly opposed withdrawing the United States from the Paris Climate Accord and am actively working to build a "Green Wall" on the West Coast and in other cities and states, continuing to abide by the agreement. I am fighting the administration's decision to rewrite the Clean Power Plan and opposed his executive orders on the construction of the Dakota Access Pipeline and the Keystone XL Pipeline.

Clean Water – I opposed both the executive order to withdraw and rewrite the Clean Water Rule and his executive order to rewrite President Obama's plan to keep the Arctic and Atlantic oceans off limits from new offshore oil and gas drilling.

Public Lands – I am fighting efforts to strip protections from our public lands, including the executive order "reviewing" National Monuments' designations over the last 21 years – and also working to defend Oregon's own Cascade Siskiyou National Monument from industrial logging and border shrinkage.



Defending Our Democracy

There is no question that Russia directly attacked our democracy and election process during the 2016 presidential election. What we must find out is if anyone helped from within, either directly or indirectly. In addition to strongly supporting Special Counsel Robert Mueller's investigation of Russian interference and the Trump campaign, Congress should pass H.R. 356, which calls for a bipartisan, independent commission to investigate Russian interference in our election. Congress should also support legislation to force the release and review of 45's tax returns and extend the current federal conflict of interest law to the president and vice president (including their spouses, children, and business partners). Finally, I've introduced legislation to clarify and strengthen the 25th Amendment, which defines conditions under which a president is removed from office.



But resistance isn't enough: we need a positive, progressive vision for moving America forward.

Look inside for **37** ideas to do just that.

#1: Establishing a single-payer health care system

The *Affordable Care Act* (ACA) was the most important health care accomplishment since Medicare. We beat back the multiple efforts to repeal it and should work to improve it. But the ACA alone will not resolve inequality in our health care system or guarantee access to care. The United States needs a truly universal, single-payer health care system – similar to the less costly and more effective systems in Western Europe, Australia, and Canada. We must recognize health care as a right, not a privilege. That is why Congress should support H.R. 676, the *Expanded and Improved Medicare for All Act*, which establishes a single-payer health care system.

#2: Making prescription drugs more affordable

Drug companies have been taking advantage of Americans for too long. Since drug prices have risen at an alarming rate, we need to protect the affordability of necessary medical treatments. New drugs for cancer and rare diseases can cost more than \$100,000 a year, forcing many to choose between their health or their family’s financial security. Even generic medicines for chronic conditions, such as insulin, have seen prices triple or more between 2002-2013. The U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs is currently the only agency allowed to use the power of the federal government to negotiate with pharmaceutical companies. Congress should pass the *Medicare Prescription Drug Price Negotiation Act*, which would lower drug prices for Medicare and Medicaid patients.

#3: Improving and expanding Medicaid

The ACA provided health care to millions of people across the country. In Oregon, the ACA helped drop the state’s uninsured rate by 59 percent, granting new access to affordable health care to nearly half a million people, according to the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. As significantly, the expansion of Medicaid was coupled with efforts to better coordinate health care and cover social services. As a result, Oregon covered more people while spending less. We need to allow more states to follow Oregon’s lead and invest in reforms that expand coverage to aid more children, women, seniors, and people with disabilities.

#4: Protecting women’s reproductive rights

Government should not interfere in health care decisions made between women, their families, and medical care providers. Yet, we’re seeing numerous attacks on coverage for contraception and other reproductive health services. We repeatedly voted against attempts to undermine a woman’s right to a safe and legal abortion and strongly oppose efforts to limit access to reproductive health services and defund Planned Parenthood. Oregon recently passed legislation to protect a woman’s right to abortion care. Oregon insurers are also required to cover contraception, prenatal and postpartum care, screenings for reproductive cancers and STIs, and counseling for survivors of domestic violence. These comprehensive services should be available and affordable for all women and families in the United States, without burdensome costs and requirements or arbitrary waiting periods. The Pro-Choice Caucus introduced the *Equal Access to Abortion Coverage in Health Insurance (EACh) Woman Act* and the *Women’s Health Protection Act*. Together, these bills would repeal the Hyde Amendment, which currently prohibits the use of federal funds for abortion and prohibits states from imposing strict and costly barriers on abortion providers and the people they serve. We also support the *Global Health, Empowerment, and Rights (HERA) Act*, which would permanently block the “Mexico City policy.” This current misguided policy, recently reinstated, bans federal funds for foreign non-governmental organizations that provide abortion services or that merely *give* information about abortion as part of comprehensive family planning services.

#5: Improving mental health care

Emergency rooms and jails, sadly, are becoming primary sites of care for individuals in the midst of a mental health crisis. We must find better, more compassionate ways to help our most vulnerable who suffer from severe and persistent mental illness. Last year, Congress passed the *Helping Families in Mental Health Crisis Act*, which expands federal resources and removes barriers to mental health treatment. But more must be done. Oftentimes patients who seek help are placed on waiting lists or turned away due to lack of space or providers. To address this, we need the *Mental Health and Substance Abuse Treatment Accessibility Act*, which would create new mental health and substance abuse treatment clinics. The *Medicare Mental Health Access Act* would also expand the types of mental health providers who can treat Medicare beneficiaries. Finally, there are many advocates for the *Medicaid Bump Act of 2017*, which would increase funding for state Medicaid programs in order to provide more mental and behavioral health services. Together, these bills will increase the number of clinics, providers, and incentives for states to provide mental health services.

#6: Improving end-of-life care

Oregon’s Death with Dignity law helps ensure that patients and their doctors have the ability to make personal and private end-of-life decisions consistent with their values. During the passage of the ACA, we saw an opportunity to apply lessons learned in Oregon to give patients across the country more of a say about the medical treatment they want at the end-of-life. After years of advocacy, Medicare finally allows doctors to receive reimbursement for voluntary advance care planning conversations with their patients. This year, we’re working to pass my bipartisan *Patient Choice and Quality Care Act of 2017*. This legislation builds on our successes and will provide high-quality care for individuals with advanced illnesses and enhance training, resources, and tools for providers, patients, and their families.

#7: Advancing a thoughtful & compassionate approach to immigration reform

We need a more rational, compassionate approach to immigration, including comprehensive reform of our immigration system to address the 11.3 million people currently living in the United States without documentation, providing them a clear path to citizenship. This is something that three-quarters of Americans support for undocumented residents who are law-abiding, tax-paying, and already part of the fabric of American life. We need to keep our commitment to DREAMers. According to PEW Research Center, because of the Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA), nearly 790,000 undocumented immigrants who came to the United States as children were protected from deportation and able to work. In the face of Trump’s cancellation of DACA, Congress must immediately act to restore the promise made to these young people. The diversity, character, and economic vitality immigrants bring is what makes our country great. A compassionate and thoughtful approach to immigration reform is long overdue.

#8: Encouraging innovation in health care

As we debate changes to our overall health care system, there are things that we can do now to bring costs down and improve care. One example is how we deliver care to patients with kidney disease – specifically end-stage renal disease (ESRD). Most patients suffering from kidney failure visit dialysis clinics three times a week. These visits are time-consuming and typically not the only medical services dialysis patients require on a weekly basis. My bipartisan legislation allows kidney disease patients to receive primary care and other health services while they’re at dialysis clinics – improving their care while saving valuable time and money for patients and providers. Another example is my bipartisan legislation to implement Value-Based Insurance Design (V-BID) in our health care system. This legislation would lower or remove out-of-pocket costs for prescription drugs and services for patients with chronic conditions, helping to reduce long-term costs and improve health overall. Congress needs to develop innovative, cost-effective, and compassionate policies that make a real difference for patients. Kidney care and Value-Based Insurance Design are just two examples and a good start.

#9: Addressing income inequality & ensuring a living wage

The richest 400 Americans have more money than the combined wealth of the bottom 61 percent of the country, more than 194 million people. It’s clear that we need to create a more equitable society, where every American earns a living wage for their honest work. In 2016, nearly 48 million people earned an annual income of \$15,000 or less. That’s barely enough to live on and certainly not enough to support a family. Today’s \$7.25 federal minimum wage is out of date, and it’s not keeping up with inflation. Raising the minimum wage would help lift American families out of poverty and encourage spending, investment, and economic growth. It’s promising to see individual cities and states – including Oregon – take steps to help workers, but Congress must act as well. That’s why I joined Reps. Keith Ellison and Bobby Scott to introduce the *Raise the Wage Act*, which would increase the federal minimum wage to \$15 an hour by 2024. People also need to be compensated fairly for overtime work. We need to reduce the exceptions to overtime pay requirements in the *Fair Labor and Standards Act (FLSA)*. Another way to lift living standards and worker’s pay is to increase and expand the earned income tax credit (EITC). This tax credit increases the wages of the lowest income workers, particularly those with children. It is simple, effective, and has bipartisan support. It’s time to raise and expand the EITC to help people who deserve it most. In addition to these steps, we must once and for all fix our broken tax code to ensure the wealthiest Americans pay their fair share of taxes.

#10: Ensuring paid family leave

Americans should not be forced to choose between taking care of a sick family member and earning an income. We are the only industrialized country to not have paid family leave on the national level, and that is wrong. The *FAMILY Act* would ensure that workers can take up to 12 weeks of paid leave for a pregnancy, the birth or adoption of a child, to recover from a serious illness, or to care for a seriously ill family member. Having a family member who requires extra assistance is a heavy responsibility on its own. With the added stress of balancing a job, it can be overwhelming. We should not require employees to choose between their familial responsibilities and their paycheck.

#11: Holding Wall Street accountable

The 2008 crisis was among the greatest challenges that our country has ever faced. Eight million jobs were lost. Housing values crashed, leaving millions of families faced with foreclosure, bankruptcy, and homelessness. Billions of dollars of retiree savings were wiped out, while massive taxpayer-financed bailouts were implemented. The crisis also ushered in an anxiety that threatened the entire world’s financial system. To make sure that a crisis like this doesn’t happen again, we should regulate, prosecute, and defend. We need to reinstate Glass-Steagall, the Depression-era bank regulation that helped promote stability in the financial industry. Not only would this remove unnecessary complexity from the financial markets, but it would also limit some of the risky bets that contributed to the Great Recession. The *Dodd-Frank Wall Street Reform and Consumer Protection Act* (Dodd-Frank) was created to rein in Wall Street, end taxpayer bailouts of big banks, and protect consumers. Among the most important provisions of this legislation is the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau (CFPB). Just as American consumers are protected from products that can cause serious physical harm, they should also be protected from products that can cause financial ruin. Extending homeowners the same financial stability in bankruptcy that speculators receive is another simple protection we should put in place. People who speculate in multiple real estate properties can use bankruptcy laws to alter their loan balances and interest rates. If homeowners were treated similarly, we could have kept hundreds of thousands of people in their homes and forced banks to be more responsible lenders. We should prosecute wrongdoers. Sending people to jail will send a message. Every time someone illegally profits from a financial transaction, someone else loses. Crooks, whatever the color of their collars, should be held accountable. Finally, we must defend the progress we made during the Obama administration and block the concerted efforts by some in the finance industry to hijack consumer protections and rebuild them in their favor. Regulations like Dodd-Frank and regulatory agencies like the CFPB protect people from irresponsible business practices and ensure that they do not pay the price for others’ illegal actions.

#12: Accelerating to a clean energy future

Climate disruption is a threat, and the United States is a major contributor to this problem. We have an obligation to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and lead in clean energy development. Oregon, along with other states and cities, is committed to acting on climate and upholding the goals of the Paris Climate Agreement. Congress should heed these examples and keep America on the path toward a clean energy future. Our ultimate goal should be a 100% renewable energy economy. There is strong legislation that

lays the groundwork for this transition, as well as bills that invest in energy efficiency upgrades for schools and public buildings. Many of us support taxes on carbon emissions to ensure that polluters pay their fair share and that renewable energy industries can thrive on a level playing field. The renewable energy sector is growing faster than ever, but we have no time to waste. We must invest in these technologies and complementary initiatives to move our economy toward 100% clean, renewable power. America should lead the world in conservation and clean energy production.

#13: Putting a price on carbon emissions

As a nation, and as a world, we are far too reliant on burning carbon-emitting fossil fuels for energy. The scientific evidence and consensus behind the impact of these emissions is clear – climate change is bringing record temperatures, erratic and dangerous weather patterns, social disruption, more severe ocean acidification, drought, disease, and wildfires. We have a moral responsibility to drastically limit the carbon pollution from our energy sector. It’s past time for the federal government to put a price on carbon emissions. I’ve introduced legislation that would impose a fee on America’s biggest polluters. Making fossil fuel companies pay their fair share helps level the playing field by pricing dirty energy accurately – so clean energy can better compete. To ensure that the American people aren’t hurt by a price on carbon, part of the fee would be returned to the public every year as a refundable tax credit. Additional funds would be used to help vulnerable communities who might be impacted by higher heating and electricity bills. Another portion of the revenue would be used to help us avoid the looming Social Security crisis. When paired with investments in public transit, affordable housing, and clean energy jobs, particularly in those communities most impacted by climate change, this bill can kick-start much-needed climate action. According to the Congressional Budget Office, a carbon tax could generate an estimated \$1 trillion, replacing expensive, and often conflicting, energy subsidies. This is a non-partisan, non-ideological, widely-supported, and critical step forward. Instead of debating policies of division and denial, it’s time for us to come together and support a carbon tax that can solve multiple problems and meet our obligations to future generations.

#14: Protecting our public lands

America’s public lands are national treasures, and we all share responsibility for their conservation. Millions of acres have been set aside to protect cultural resources, wildlife habitat, water quality, outdoor recreation opportunities, and more. These public lands – mountains, rivers, forests, deserts, and cultural sites – belong to all Americans and should be preserved for the use and enjoyment of future generations. From defending our National Monuments to supporting the Land and Water Conservation Fund to advocating for more Wild and Scenic Rivers and other conservation designations, the federal government should protect special and wild places. Our public lands should be kept in public hands, and Congress should expand designations to protect wildlife habitat, water quality, outdoor recreation, and cultural resources.

#15: Banning offshore drilling

The United States must protect fragile and vulnerable areas from offshore drilling. We need to preserve natural ecosystems across the Arctic, Atlantic, and Pacific oceans, which is why Congress must permanently protect these waters from drilling that could irreversibly damage habitat, impact water quality, and affect natural processes in our oceans and on our shores. We’ve developed legislation to ban offshore drilling in the Arctic and Atlantic oceans and off the West Coast. The federal government should protect our oceans. Our legacy should be one of conservation, careful investment in preservation of precious natural resources, and protection of human health and our fragile climate.

37 Specific Ideas to Move America Forward

#16: Making housing affordable for everyone
America has enjoyed a resurgence of urban centers and increased demand for walkable and livable neighborhoods. But, many communities, including Portland, have struggled to keep pace with building and preserving affordable housing as market forces drive up prices and fuel redevelopment. This hits seniors, low-income people, and even middle-income families especially hard. This requires a swift, decisive, and comprehensive response. We need to give communities the tools to create incentives for affordable housing and protect, or even expand, Section 8 housing vouchers. Congress must continue supporting programs like the Community Development Block Grant and HOME Investment Partnership Program. These investments are particularly important for the Portland metropolitan area. Housing, just like highways and schools, is critical infrastructure. It requires maintenance and development. One effort that we have spearheaded is working with the Federal Transit Administration to make it easier to build affordable housing along transit routes so that livable communities are accessible to people of all income levels. There is also legislation to improve the Low Income Housing Tax Credit to better leverage private investment and spur affordable housing development. With the right combination of ingenuity and resources, we can solve this problem.

#17: Making college affordable

With rapid changes in technology and the relentless pace of automation, now more than ever, Americans want a college degree to compete in the global economy. But, the skyrocketing cost of tuition puts college out of reach for too many people. Nationally, the average student attending a four-year college leaves with over \$30,000 in student debt. This crisis is why we need the *College for All Act*, which eliminates tuition and fees at public colleges and universities for families making under \$125,000 and the *Bank on Students Emergency Loan Refinancing Act* to allow students to take advantage of lower interest rates and save money. The *Employer Participation in Student Loan Assistance Act* encourages employers to provide educational assistance, including loan repayment, for employees. This way, individuals can both make a living and pay off their debt in a reasonable time. We must also rein in for-profit colleges, which often leave students with mountains of debt, worthless degrees, and little to no transferable skills to get a job. Every American should have the opportunity to get an education, regardless of socioeconomic status.

#18: Establishing more rational nuclear policies

For the sake of the planet, we must reduce the threat of nuclear weapons. Nuclear weapons are dangerous, costly, and don’t help us deal with the strategic challenges we face today. For our safety, global stability, fiscal sanity, and for future generations, we need a more rational approach. The decision to use a nuclear weapon should never be made by one person alone. Earlier this year, we introduced H.R. 669, legislation prohibiting any president—including the present one—from conducting a first-use nuclear strike without prior authorization from Congress. Our defense budget is already bloated, yet we’re going to spend over \$1 trillion over the next 30 years on upgrading our entire nuclear arsenal. The United States already has enough of these weapons to destroy the earth multiple times. We need the *Smarter Approach to Nuclear Expenditures (SANE) Act* to reduce or eliminate redundant nuclear weapons programs, which, according to the Congressional Budget Office, would save the United States more than \$100 billion over the next 10 years. This money would be better spent on helping veterans and supporting our troops, not to mention on roads, bridges, schools, and education. The United States should also lead efforts to prevent the spread of nuclear weapons. We must support key international treaties that hold countries accountable and lead by example. Establishing more rational nuclear policies is the best expression of American leadership for a more peaceful future.

#19: Keeping dark money out of politics

“Dark” special interest money is a direct threat to our democracy. The Supreme Court’s 2010 decision in *Citizens United v. FEC* was a radical step toward unraveling the modest campaign finance controls that were in place and escalated the campaign spending arms race. Citizens and their issues are drowned out by hundreds of millions of dollars that have been spent on political campaigns, with no limits, transparency, or accountability. The numbers don’t lie. The Center for Responsive Politics found that in the 2008 election cycle, before the *Citizens United* ruling, outside spending accounted for a 338 million. In 2016, six years post-decision, it also found that outside spending was \$1.4 billion. That’s a 300 percent increase. Corporations are not people. We must keep dark money out of politics and make elections and campaigns about the people’s issues. That is why Congress must pass the following three critical bills. H.J.Res. 48 amends the U.S. Constitution to provide that the rights extended by the Constitution are the rights of natural persons only, not corporations. H.J.Res. 31, the *Democracy for All Amendment*, amends the U.S. Constitution to reverse high controversial Supreme Court decisions, like *Citizens United v. FEC* and *McCutcheon v. FEC*, which have given corporations and America’s wealthiest donors the right to buy unlimited influence in our elections. H.R. 1134, the *DISCLOSE Act*, requires all corporations, unions, and Super PACs to report to the FEC within 24 hours of making a \$10,000 campaign expenditure and requires that corporations paying for public communications and advertisements are publicly disclosed. We need to make sure that people have faith that their government works for them. Without rolling back *Citizens United* and enacting broader campaign finance reform, this will be difficult to achieve.

#20: Expanding access to the ballot

The individual right to vote, the cornerstone of our representative democracy, is under threat across America. In 2016, 14 states had new restrictions on voting in place for the first time in a presidential election – disproportionately targeting minority and low-income voters. I’m working to remove barriers to voting by promoting Oregon’s successful automatic voter registration and vote-by-mail systems at the national level. Our *Vote By Mail Act* expands automatic voter registration and vote-by-mail to all. We’ve also introduced the *Automatic Voter Registration Act*. Automatic voter registration and vote-by-mail are commonsense solutions that are highly effective, reduce opportunities for cheating and mistakes, cost less, and provide more reliable voting results. Oregon voters are given almost 400 hours to examine the issues and return the ballot either by mail or in person, leading to some of the highest voter turnout in the nation. With the implementation of automatic voter registration in Oregon in 2016, voter turnout among eligible voters (age 18-29) voters increased by 7 percent since the 2012 election according to the Oregon Secretary of State – evidence that this reform is important in increasing access to the ballot for highly mobile new voters. More and more states are following Oregon’s lead. It’s time to expand these efforts nationally.

#21: Publicly funding campaigns

One way to reduce special interest influence is to publicly finance campaigns. We’ve introduced the *Government By the People Act*. This legislation would substantially reduce the influence of dark money, diversify the pool of political candidates, and encourage campaigns to build bases of small donors and real people. By publicly funding campaigns, along with other reforms, we can ensure that money does not act as a barrier to democracy. Everyone should have an equal chance, regardless of support of special interests.

#22: Rebuilding and renewing America

America is literally falling apart while we are falling behind our international competitors. One of the major problems is that we are trying to address the challenges of infrastructure in 2017 with 1993 funding. The gas tax has not been increased in 24 years, and the federal partnership is not being maintained with state and local communities and the private sector. Congress should raise the gas tax, index the gas tax to inflation, and then replace it with a more sustainable and equitable funding system for the future. Our needs are not just roads, bridges, transit, and bikeways – what’s under the surface is in worse condition than what’s on the surface. Our inland waterways, electrical grid, schools, and other public buildings are also in need of serious attention, funding, and a vision for planning and constructing more effectively. There is a broad coalition of supporters who understand that the quickest way to create millions of family wage jobs for a wide range of skill sets is to deal with the funding and the vision. It is a priority we can all support.

#23: Bringing our infrastructure into the 21st century

Urbanization, changing travel trends, new modes of transportation, and the rapidly approaching revolution of autonomous vehicles (AVs) will lead to a radically different mobility landscape. Since the last century, the American way of life was designed around the automobile—a huge part of our economy—and culture will change. We have a rare opportunity to use these changes to solve problems rather than create new ones. Whether we have market-ready AVs in five years or 25 years, there is no question they will have a large impact on communities of all sizes. AVs will affect the employment of more than 4 million drivers, the largest source of jobs in more than half of the states. They will also change the car repair and car insurance industries. Integrating AVs with ridesharing and carsharing services will only further disrupt employment trends. Driverless cars will also affect the built environment by making many parking garages and wide traffic lanes obsolete, opening spaces for affordable housing, businesses, bike lanes, and parks. Without proper planning and



policies, our infrastructure will fall into further disrepair, and we will squander an opportunity to have smarter, more sustainable cities. Fleets of AVs will be largely electric, contributing little in traditional transportation user fees, like gas taxes, parking fees, and traffic fines. We need to develop forward-thinking legislation to provide for more stable, equitable transportation funding alternatives. This funding can be invested into rebuilding and renewing America to create jobs and build smarter cities.

#24: Making sure everyone has access to safe drinking water

From Flint, Michigan to schools in Portland, access to safe water is increasingly one of the most pressing challenges we face today. Too often out of sight, our water systems are literally falling apart while we ignore the problem. While there is no single solution to this problem, the *Water Infrastructure Trust Fund Act* would create a dedicated source of revenue for the replacement, repair, and rehabilitation of wastewater and drinking water systems. The fund would support investments in aging sewer systems and water treatment plants, as well as addressing the systemic challenges affecting access to safe water for low-income populations. In addition to funding, we need regular, rigorous, and transparent testing for lead and other contaminants – especially as our water infrastructure continues to age. Last year, after Portland was shocked to learn of widespread lead contamination in drinking water at our schools, we introduced the *No Lead in School Water Act*, legislation that would help schools test for lead contamination and then fund remediation to get rid of it. It’s past time we take action.

#25: Establishing more visionary, equitable, and cost effective food & farm policies

The Farm Bill is the most important, yet under-appreciated, piece of federal legislation that impacts every American. Hopelessly complex and needlessly expensive, it sets priorities for federal investment in our food and agricultural system and impacts many sectors of our economy. Unfortunately, the bill gives too much to the wrong people to grow the wrong food in the wrong places. These misguided investments benefit large agribusiness, while undermining human health, nutrition, carbon reduction, economic development, land conservation, and animal welfare. Reforming this costly yet inefficient bill is a top priority. I’m proposing comprehensive food and farm legislation to refocus federal resources on the people who are most, fostering innovation, encourage investments in people and the planet, and ensure access to healthy foods. Also, my report, *Growing Opportunities*, outlines these recommendations and is available on my website. In a time of deep partisan division and rancor, this is an area where people can unite with common interests to ensure a sustainable future for our nation’s food and agricultural system.

#26: Reforming outdated cannabis laws

Federal cannabis laws need to be changed. More than 95 percent of Americans now live in states or territories that permit, to varying degrees, legal access to medical marijuana and/or cannabis derivatives. Marijuana, however, is still treated the same as heroin at the federal level. This makes no sense. Earlier this year, I established the Congressional Cannabis Caucus, a bipartisan forum for members to discuss, learn, and work together to establish a better and more rational approach to federal cannabis policy. This caucus is the first of its kind, and another sign of progress being made on Capitol Hill. We introduced comprehensive marijuana legislation that would bring the federal government in line with the will of the American people. These bills would protect state marijuana laws and offer a responsible pathway for the legalization and regulation of marijuana. Without congressional action, the discrepancy between local, state, and federal laws will continue to create a confusing patchwork of rules and regulations that trap businesses, patients, and state regulators in the middle. It’s time to reform our cannabis laws.

#27: Ending the failed War on Drugs

It’s past time to end the failed War on Drugs. Our country has spent more than a trillion dollars at home and abroad to stem the tide of drugs coming into our country, according to the Associated Press. What did we get? The world’s largest prison population, a broken criminal justice system, and rampant opioid addiction in communities large and small. The drug war has been used as a tool to militarize the U.S. border, fuel racial profiling, and increase detentions and deportations. We need to reform our current drug laws, starting with the legalization of marijuana. We don’t need more punitive measures but instead greater access to drug rehabilitation to help people struggling with addiction. While the United States is home to less than 5 percent of the world’s population, we have nearly 25 percent of its prisoners, due in large measure to the convictions of non-violent drug offenders and mandatory minimum sentences. The consequences of any drug conviction are life-long, severe, and disproportionately affect African Americans and Latinos. We need to end the failed practice of mandatory minimums and reform sentencing laws. We must also end the unconstitutional practice of civil asset forfeiture, which allows law enforcement to seize private possessions without due process. It was sold as a way to attack drug kingpins, but it has been abused. Even before a guilty conviction, government agencies can legally confiscate property and then keep it. In fact, under federal law (as well as many state laws) property can be seized and forfeited even when criminal charges are never filed against a property owner. Congress should pass H.R. 1551, the *Fifth Amendment Integrity Restoration Act*, which reforms civil forfeiture laws and holds agencies accountable for the property they seize.

#28: Closing the wage gap

Pay equity has been the law since 1963, yet, according to a recent study of college graduates conducted by the American Association of University Women (AAUW), women graduates earn only 80 percent of their male peers. Pay disparity continues to be discriminatory and only worsens over time. The numbers are more disturbing for women of color. According to the same study by AAUW, African American women, on average, earn 63 percent of the salary of a white man – and Latina women make only 54 percent of their white male counterparts, losing more than a million dollars over a 40-year career. We must address the lost income over a lifetime and its devastating impact on the lives of women and their families. Under President Obama, the nation was proud when we passed the *Lily Ledbetter Fair Pay Act* to make it easier for women who have been discriminated against to make their case for equal pay in court. This was a small but impactful step in the battle for gender equality. Now, we’re fighting for the *Paycheck Fairness Act* to further address the unfair and unjust wage gap that persists.

#29: Ending the use of private prisons

The United States—with more than 2.2 million people behind bars—incarcerates more people than any other country. Mass incarceration destroys lives, families, and communities. We need a criminal justice system that is fair and humane. We need reform. We can start by eliminating the use of private prisons—which are driven by increasing their profit margin, and where humane treatment of inmates is seldom a priority. Studies show that private prisons have higher recidivism rates and can be more expensive than public prisons despite their shortcomings. That’s why we need the *Justice Is Not for Sale Act*, which would prohibit federal, state, and local governments from contracting with private prison companies. This legislation is an important step to reforming our criminal justice system.

#30: Protecting animals

The way we treat animals reflects the values that we hold as a society and has a tremendous impact on the livability and vitality of our communities. As co-chair of the Congressional Animal Protection Caucus, I’m working on a bipartisan basis to advance a strong, pro-animal legislative agenda. We need to crack down on animal abuse and cruelty, protect endangered species, defend farm animals and require they receive compassionate and humane treatment, and ensure responsible research and testing. Our legislative agenda has wide support and could be passed in this Congress, including legislation to: prohibit the domestic slaughter, trade, and import of dogs and cats for human consumption; strengthen laws against shark finning; prohibit the manufacturing or sale of cosmetics that have been tested on animals; and animal cruelty and torture; end horse sourcing; and more. Protection of animals is one of our core values. Congress should accelerate our efforts to protect their welfare.

#31: Improving road safety through Vision Zero

More than 40,000 Americans were killed last year in crashes on our roadways. Our most vulnerable road users—bicyclists and pedestrians—make up a disproportionate share of these deaths, with pedestrian fatalities increasing by 16 percent from 2009 to 2014 and another 9 percent from 2015 to 2016. Cities from Portland to Fort Lauderdale are implementing Vision Zero plans connecting engineering, education, and enforcement to end transportation deaths and serious injuries. Despite horrific national statistics, Vision Zero is already making a difference. Congress should encourage this innovative approach to transportation safety by passing my *Vision Zero Act of 2017*. This bill creates two competitive grant programs to plan and implement a Vision Zero framework, giving local communities access to funding and best practices to set and reach safety goals. Passage of the *Vision Zero Act* would help communities of all sizes develop and implement innovative, effective strategies to end the carnage on our roadways and reverse the disturbing trend of rising traffic deaths.

#32: Putting an end to gun violence

From Roseburg, OR to Sandy Hook, CT, to Orlando, FL, to Las Vegas, NV, we have seen too many horrible acts of violence across the country. Gun violence in the United States is not inevitable, nor should Americans accept it as the status quo. We need to address this issue for what it is: a public health crisis that threatens the well-being and peace of mind of communities across the country. It’s past time we take action. There are commonsense steps we can and should take to keep our communities safe, including: 1) Keeping guns from the most dangerous users by closing the “private sale loophole” and implementing comprehensive and uniform background checks; 2) Having law enforcement follow up with each person who fails the background check; 3) Restricting assault weapons and high capacity magazines that are unsafe in any public space; 4) Removing barriers to research on gun violence to allow us to fully understand the impact and implications of current policies; 5) Making sure guns are tested and regulated to ensure consistency and that they operate as intended; 6) Empowering health care professionals to discuss all matters that affect their patients’ health, including gun ownership; 7) Ensuring better regulation for gun dealers and focusing compliance on the few unscrupulous gun dealers; 8) Enforcing existing gun laws by not letting the gun lobby undermine enforcement agencies; 9) Requiring that people purchasing a gun have liability insurance; 10) Improving our mental health system to make it more accessible and available, enhancing our capacity to help individuals with mental illness; and 11) Providing resources for first responders, schools, and public facilities personnel to deal with active-shooter situations.

#33: Strengthening disaster preparedness and mitigation

The scenes of destruction from this season’s hurricanes and wildfires are heartbreaking, and the damage is severe. In our own backyard, wildfires – a normal, natural occurrence made worse by climate disruption – set Oregon ablaze this summer, forcing people to evacuate their homes and impacting air quality across the state. Natural disasters like these, unfortunately, are only increasing in frequency and severity due to climate disruption. As we continue to provide much-needed resources to rebuild, the federal government should also be a better partner in helping communities plan for, and mitigate, these events. Whether for wildfires, flooding, or earthquakes, advanced planning and investing in resilience is critical to withstanding disasters, saving lives, and recovering more quickly. American infrastructure is already falling apart, which is why disaster readiness must be a priority. The *BUILD Resilience Act of 2017* would establish a grant program to help communities invest in resilient infrastructure and prepare for natural disasters. Additionally, now more than ever, we need to protect and strengthen the federal standards for resiliency that we already have in place. We need to continue providing resources for response and relief after a disaster, and we must also invest in prevention and mitigation. Not only will this approach help keep people out of harm’s way, but also can save money—according to FEMA, \$1 spent on mitigation can prevent \$4 on future disaster relief costs. Legislation like the *Repeatedly Flooded Communities Act*, for example, would proactively reduce flood risk by focusing federal investment on prevention and mitigation. Wildfires are becoming more destructive due to climate disruption, sprawling development that has pushed people into forested areas, and changing forestry practices. However, while most of the floodplains in the United States are already developed, most of the wildland urban interface in the 11 Western states is not. This gives us an opportunity to ensure that the development that does take place is safe. And for help in the short term, we need the *Wildfire Prevention Act of 2017*, legislation that would provide hazard mitigation assistance in areas affected by wildfire, and the *Wildfire Disaster Funding Act of 2017*, which would fix the way we budget for wildfire suppression and prevent the devastating practice of “fire borrowing.” On the West Coast and in Oregon, seismic preparedness is a chief concern. We must continue to fund institutions like the U.S. Geological Survey (USGS), which does critical research regarding natural disasters through the Earthquake Hazards Program. This program provides funds to transition the Earthquake Early Warning Demonstration Project into a regional network on the West Coast, ensuring that communities have a brief window of time to prepare for an incoming earthquake. Early alerts will save lives, giving people the crucial time to take cover, trigger automated systems to slow down trains and manage the power grid, so generators can be turned on and everyone can be better prepared. Congress has a responsibility to ensure that all communities are ready for these natural hazards, now and in the future. It should advance these efforts.

#34: Advocating for LGBTQ equality

The Supreme Court stood on the right side of history in 2015 with its decision to extend marriage rights to same-sex couples in all 50 states. This was a critical milestone in helping secure freedoms to which all Americans are entitled, regardless of who they love. But, as we see through the attempts to roll back protections for LGBTQ people in our military, schools, and communities, the fight for equal rights is far from over. LGBTQ youth report higher levels of bullying and substance abuse and are at an increased risk for suicidal thoughts and behaviors. As adults, transgender individuals face higher rates of poverty as well as housing, health care, and workplace discrimination. Members of the LGBTQ community are still forced to navigate a patchwork system of civil rights law, where they can be subject to discrimination in federal education funding, employment protection, and jury service, to name just a few. Congress should pass the *Equality Act* now. It would extend anti-discrimination protections to LGBTQ Americans by amending existing civil rights law to protect sexual orientation and gender identity. No one should lose their housing, job, health care – or be denied the opportunity to serve our country – for expressing who they are.

#35: Ensuring access to water and sanitation for all

I’ve long worked in Congress to ensure sustainable, equitable access to clean water and sanitation for people throughout the world. The need is clear, and the facts are staggering. 2.1 billion people are without safe drinking water, and 2.3 billion people still do not have basic sanitation facilities, leading to disease and premature death. These threats include water-related diseases such as Ebola and cholera, and droughts that lead to famines displacing millions of people. One example is in the Gaza Strip. Home to nearly two million people, Gaza is one of the most water-stressed areas on the planet. The water supply, largely groundwater, is being rapidly depleted and polluted. It will soon be unfit for human consumption, as it’s contaminated with sewage from above and salt-water encroachment into the aquifer from the Mediterranean Sea below. The lack of clean water poses a security threat to Israelis and Palestinians alike. There are bipartisan efforts in Congress to encourage the Israeli administration to prioritize the impending crisis in Gaza. In part because of U.S. involvement, the Israelis and Palestinians recently reached two water-sharing agreements. By making progress on water, we can bring people together, build the trust needed for future negotiations, and create better conditions for peace.

#36: Protecting refugees and individuals fleeing violence

The United States has a proud tradition of offering protection and a new life to those fleeing persecution and war. This is not only important for humanitarian reasons, but also for national security. The United States should step up and increase refugee resettlement here at home. Asylum-seekers who are working to start a new life free from violence for themselves and their families are thoroughly vetted with exhaustive background checks involving multiple agencies. We also need full funding of critical international assistance programs that provide humanitarian aid to refugees and other vulnerable populations. There is no more fertile ground for terrorist recruits than refugee camps devoid of basic services and educational and economic opportunities. The very least we can do is ensure that these individuals’ needs are met when they are displaced from their own country. The United States should support and protect the world’s refugees and work to reaffirm our country’s international leadership.

#37: Protecting net neutrality

Net neutrality and the right to a free and open Internet is absolutely critical. The 2015 Federal Communications Commission’s (FCC) decision to end broadband Internet access as a common carrier service was spot on. That determination would ensure that the Internet remained an open platform where sites are equally accessible to everyone. Without these protections, consumers could face a world where Internet service providers act as gatekeepers, slowing or blocking legal content and picking winners and losers among applications and services. I joined Rep. Keith Ellison and dozens of other colleagues in demanding FCC Chairman Ajit Pai preserve net neutrality, as this new administration works to put Internet service providers back in charge. Americans deserve an open Internet where individuals, small businesses, and large companies are able to equally compete.

You can find much more information on these and other issues at **blumenauer.house.gov**

Congressman

Earl Blumenauer

Representing Oregon’s 3rd District