

THE FOLDED CRANE

Oregon Physicians for Social Responsibility | Spring 2017

Oregon's Congressional Delegation Takes on Nuclear Weapons Threat

Kelly Campbell, Oregon PSR Executive Director

In this new political era of a Trump presidency, the need for a world without nuclear weapons has never been more urgent. That is why we've been so pleased to see many members of Oregon's congressional delegation stepping up to lead on nuclear weapons issues over the past few months. We've been in communication with their offices, and we know that many of you have also contacted them on these issues. The good news is that it's working, and here are a couple of examples:

Oregon Congressman Earl Blumenauer, along with Senator Jeff Merkley, were among the initial co-sponsors of Congressman Ted Lieu (CA) and Senator Edward Markey's (MA) Restricting First Use of Nuclear Weapons Act, which would prohibit the President

from launching a nuclear first strike without a declaration of war by Congress. Oregon's 4th District Congressman Peter DeFazio also co-sponsored this important legislation.

Both Oregon Senators Merkley and Wyden were among eight senators to join Senator Markey in introducing legislation that would limit funding for a new nuclear-armed air-launched missile called the Long-Range Standoff Weapon. This cruise missile could be launched without warning, putting pressure on other nuclear-armed states to keep their arsenals on high alert and increasing the risk of nuclear war. Cruise missiles come in both nuclear and non-nuclear varieties, so the use of a non-nuclear missile against a nuclear-armed state could be mistaken for a



Kelly Campbell speaks about nuclear weapons abolition during our 2016 Hiroshima & Nagasaki memorial.

nuclear strike, leading to unintended nuclear war. The missile and its refurbished warhead will reportedly cost between \$20-30 billion over the next twenty years to build, and this legislation would cap funding at 2017 levels until the administration submits a Nuclear Posture Review to Congress.

(continued on page 3)

Oregon PSR Supports Clean Diesel Legislation, SB 1008

Susan Katz, MD, Oregon PSR Board Vice-President and Environmental Health Working Group Chair

State Senator Michael Dembrow has proposed an important bill, SB 1008, designed to regulate and encourage the transition from dirty diesel engines in both on-road and off-road vehicles and heavy duty construction equipment in Oregon. Farming and logging equipment would be exempt under this legislation.

Diesel particulate matter in ambient air is acknowledged by the World Health Organization to negatively affect the health of more people than any other pollutant. In urban areas, diesel exhaust is the source of up to 60% of small particulate matter measured, and much of the Portland area is

out of compliance with federal clean air standards for PM_{2.5}.

Supporting the impetus for this effort to reduce nitrogen oxides and small particulate matter from diesel pollution is the expected availability of the Volkswagen Settlement Fund. \$68 million should be allocated to Oregon as our share of the legal action against pollution control failures in VW vehicles.

Diesel particulate is now measurable as black carbon by a new photometric method which largely distinguishes it from particulates from other sources. Large prospective epidemiological



studies increasingly link black carbon to health effects in the brain, the immune system, and the reproductive system, as well as the long-acknowledged cardiovascular and pulmonary effects. To learn more, visit our website to read our new fact sheet "Diesel, Small Particle Emissions and Public Health."

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Dear Oregon PSR Supporter:

Despite the daily parade of anti-science, anti-environmental, anti-peace, and other outrages issuing from the Trump administration and Congress these days, Oregon PSR continues to make substantial progress in our work for a healthier and more peaceful world. We envision a world that is conducive to good mental, physical, and emotional health for all, and our work locally and regionally is making tremendous strides in that direction.

As you can read more about in this edition of our newsletter, our local efforts to defend the health of Pacific Northwest communities and our climate against the short-sighted avarice of the fossil fuel industries have thus far been a rousing success. Working in collaboration with a diverse group of environmental, public health, Native American, community advocacy, and environmental justice organizations, we have helped to block new fossil fuel infrastructure projects, promoted a number of successful health-protective clean energy resolutions, and educated decision makers and the public on the health effects of climate change and diesel, “natural” gas, and other fossil fuel pollution.

In our meetings with Oregon’s elected representatives, we have pushed for cutting funding for new nuclear weapon systems, advocating for a world free from the existential threat of nuclear annihilation and the tremendous costs to human health, safety, and economic security that this morally unacceptable technology represents. In part because of our consistent encouragement, and because they have heard from constituents like you, several of Oregon’s elected representatives are among the strongest voices in our government working for a nuclear weapons-free world.

We also continue to confront the incredibly expensive, increasingly obsolete, and potentially disastrous nuclear power industry. Having made the safety and security argument to decision makers cogently over



Pat O'Herron (center) and Oregon PSR members rally for clean air.

the past few years, we are now focused on making strong economic arguments against the continued operation of the Columbia Generating Station nuclear power plant at Hanford. Read more about how Northwest ratepayers could save millions if our regional electricity providers replaced dirty, dangerous nuclear power with cleaner renewable energy sources in this edition of our newsletter.

Finally, we hope that you will join us in celebrating a new generation of activists at our 2017 Greenfield Peace Writing Scholarship on Friday, April 28th. This is an opportunity to hear what young Oregonians think about the public health crisis of gun violence, as well as to hear from our keynote speaker, Dr. Alisha Moreland-Capuia, Executive Director of the OHSU Avel Gordly Center for Healing and OHSU/PSU Gun Violence as a Public Health Issue Advisory Committee member.

None of this great local work could be accomplished without the continued support, engagement, and diligence of members like you. With your help, we are pushing back against greed, ignorance, bigotry, and a willingness to use or threaten to use violence as a substitute for thoughtful public policy and international diplomacy. Visit our website, Facebook, and Twitter pages to stay informed on the latest developments in our work and to find opportunities to take meaningful action.

In peace and health,

Pat O'Herron, MD, Board President

Oregon's Congressional Delegation Takes on Nuclear Weapons Threat *(continued from page 1)*

Both Oregon Senators also signed a recent letter by Senator Feinstein (CA) to the Secretary of Defense in opposition to two nuclear weapons-related recommendations outlined in the Defense Science Board's most recent report, *Seven Defense Priorities for the New Administration*. The report encourages the Departments of Defense and Energy

to build new nuclear weapons and questioned their ability to maintain our nuclear warheads in the absence of testing, which the senators reject.

Take Action! It's important that our elected officials in Washington, DC hear that we, their constituents, want more of this leadership for a nuclear

weapons free world. Please call both Senators and your Representative to encourage them to continue to step up for nuclear sanity. If you live in Reps. Bonamici, Schrader or Walden's district, it's even more important that they hear from you. They can all be reached through the Congressional switchboard at 202-224-3121.

Resisting Fracked Gas, Promoting Clean Energy

Damon Motz-Storey, Oregon PSR Program Assistant

Oregonians are largely succeeding in efforts to protect our climate's health from the interests of the fossil fuel industries. Huge crowds continually flood into public hearings and meetings and make their voices heard. Time after time we have declared the urgent need to curb greenhouse gas emissions and prevent misguided projects that hasten the effects of climate change.

The time has come again: we must reject plans by Portland General Electric (PGE) to expand gas-fired power infrastructure at the Carty Generating Station in Boardman, OR. Their latest proposal for the Carty Generating Station includes 1,310 megawatts generated by fracked gas power plants but only 50 megawatts of solar energy.

Gas-fired power has benefited from deceitful but effective branding: by using the term "natural" gas and claiming that gas is a bridge from coal to renewable energy, industries attempt to profit by locking ratepayers into decades-long commitments to expensive climate-busting projects. We need to call gas what it is: a dirty fuel that has no place in the transition to a 100% renewable energy economy.

So-called "natural" gas is mostly methane, which is extremely dangerous to human health and to our climate.

Throughout every stage of its extraction, transportation, and combustion, methane leaks into the atmosphere and traps heat 86 times more effectively than carbon dioxide during the first 20 years of its lifespan. Additionally, PGE's new gas-fired power plants would emit roughly 2 million tons of CO₂ emissions every year. This alone is cause for concern, but the process of extracting gas is harmful to human health, as well.

Currently, over 50% of gas brought into Oregon to be burned in power plants comes from hydraulic fracturing, also known as fracking. According to PGE's 2016 Integrated Resource Plan, the Gas Transmission Northwest pipeline supplies gas from Alberta, Canada to the Carty Generating Station. A majority of Canada's gas resources comes from shale plays in the Western Canadian Sedimentary Basin, where shale gas is extracted via the dangerous process of fracking.

Wastewater from fracking has been known to contain chemicals such as benzene, formaldehyde, and petroleum distillate. From extraction to delivery, fracking also releases volatile organic compounds into the air including benzene, toluene, ethylbenzene, and xylene. These chemicals can cause various cancers, blood disorders, lung



Carty Generating Station. Photo courtesy of The Oregonian.

disease, and more. In June 2016, the EPA confirmed hundreds of cases in which fracking wastewater contaminated local drinking water. Another study found over 40 harmful chemicals polluting the air near fracking sites in Colorado. Low income communities and communities of color tend to be disproportionately impacted.

A broad campaign has been formed to resist PGE's proposal to expand gas-fired power in Boardman. Oregon PSR, along with our coalition partners, advocates for clean, renewable solar and wind energy instead of fracked gas. We are working to protect the health of Oregonians and our neighbors who live along gas pipelines extending north.

Visit our website to learn more, to sign a petition in opposition to PGE's proposal, and to get involved in the campaign to keep fracked gas out of Oregon. For more information on the health and environmental impacts of methane, see National PSR's new report entitled *Too Dirty, Too Dangerous: Why Health Professionals Reject Natural Gas*.

Oregon PSR Supports Clean Diesel Legislation, SB 1008 *(continued from page 1)*

SB 1008 would mandate funding to speed up the transition from older diesel engines to a newer technology, available since 2007, that can reduce an engine's diesel pollution by up to 95%. This transition has thus far been deemed too expensive by the Oregon legislature.

This legislation would set a deadline to replace older diesel-burning

technology, and it requires off-road engines to register for the first time. It would also place a moratorium on the purchase of dirty diesel vehicles from states like California, which have made them illegal. Under the bill, priority would be given to older school buses, diesel pollution from which poses serious threats to our children's health.

Oregon PSR strongly supports SB 1008, which would lead to significant health benefits, especially to the most vulnerable populations, and decrease health costs associated with diesel pollution (estimated to be up to \$3.5 billion per year). We encourage you to contact your state senators and tell them that you support this important health-protective legislation.

Local Progress in Our Work for a Healthy Climate

Regna Merritt, Oregon PSR Healthy Climate Program Director and Power Past Coal Co-Director

While disaster unfolds in Washington, DC, we're resisting destructive actions there and engaging deeply in local work to protect our health and our climate.

Over 4,000 health professionals and public health advocates have taken action to halt dirty and dangerous fossil fuel projects in Oregon and SW Washington. Our Healthy Climate Action Team has rapidly grown to 60 members. We thank you!

Here's a sampling of Oregon PSR's local work to keep fossil fuels in the ground:



Climate activists celebrate the passage of the City of Portland's historic fossil fuel resolution late last year.

Coal

If the Millennium Bulk Terminal project, the largest coal export proposal in the US, is approved, uncovered coal trains would travel through the Columbia Gorge along both sides of the river en route to Longview, WA. Oregon PSR is fully engaged in the Health Impact Assessment process, which is currently focused too narrowly on impacts within parts of Cowlitz County.

We had great news in January when the Commissioner of the WA Department of Natural Resources (DNR) denied a critical permit. This action was followed by an appeal by Millennium, and our coalition partners seek to intervene to

defend DNR's decision. The first of two Final Environmental Impact Statements will be coming out in late April, to be followed by public hearings on permits. We're planning an April 29th event on the Columbia along with a teach-in, so stay tuned.

I recently stepped up to co-lead the Power Past Coal coalition and happily share that responsibility with Jasmine Zimmer-Stuckey of Columbia Riverkeeper. As you may know, PPC is a highly effective regional coalition stretching from Montana mines and ranches to port communities in Oregon, Washington and British Columbia. We're so very grateful

to former co-directors Beth Doglio of Climate Solutions and Cesia Kearns of the Sierra Club. With their leadership, we halted five out of seven terrible coal export projects. Early in 2017, Morrow Pacific proponents finally withdrew their application to ship coal through Boardman and Port Westward. Thank you all for your work in helping to secure that victory!

Oil

If the Tesoro-Savage (Vancouver Energy) project, the largest oil-by-rail proposal in the US, is approved, more oil trains will travel through the Columbia Gorge along both sides of the river.

(continued on next page)

Local Progress In Our Work for a Healthy Climate *(continued from previous page)*

There will be an important air quality hearing in Clark County this spring. Oregon PSR and our partners in the Stand Up to Oil coalition will be there and we hope to see you there, as well.

In Oregon, we're working with Native American groups and Friends of the Columbia Gorge to resist Union Pacific's plans to expand tracks. This would allow UP to increase the number and speed of oil and coal trains near Mosier, site of a fiery derailment last June. In March, Union Pacific lost its case in Judge Ann Aiken's court, so arguments will be now taken to the Ninth Circuit Court of Appeals.

We're also pushing for protections from new oil and coal terminals and dangerous oil trains in the 2017 Oregon legislative session. Sign up for our email alerts or connect with us on Facebook or Twitter to receive time-sensitive information on this and other priorities.

Methanol

Through a NW Innovation Works project (the largest methanol export proposal in the US), fracked methane gas would be converted to methanol in Kalama, WA and exported from this small port on the Columbia River to China. If approved by the WA Department of Ecology, this facility would become one the largest sources of climate pollution in Washington State. A similarly misguided project is proposed for Clatskanie, OR, and we will be resisting that one, as well.

Fracked Gas

Portland General Electric proposes to greatly expand the use of methane gas at its power plant near Boardman, OR. Please see page #3 to learn more, and visit our website to sign the petition to the Public Utilities Commission in opposition to this proposal.

Clean Energy and Climate Work

Did you know that the transportation sector is the largest single contributor to climate change in Oregon? That's why Oregon PSR is supporting a climate and equity friendly package of transportation measures in this legislative session.

We're also pushing hard for strong legislation to protect our health by putting a price on climate pollution and investing in a just and equitable transition to clean energy. Sign up for our email alerts to stay up to date on these and other fast-moving legislative campaigns.

We must further support and encourage climate leadership in Oregon, so please contact us today to join our Climate Action Team and learn how you can contribute to these and other critical local efforts. Thank you!

Hear From Young Oregonians on the Health Crisis of Gun Violence

Damon Motz-Storey, Oregon PSR Program Assistant

We hope that you will join us in celebrating the Oregon high school student winners of our 2017 Greenfield Peace Writing Scholarship on Friday, April 28th from 6:00 until 8:00 PM at Portland's First Unitarian Church Elliot Center (1211 SW Main Street). Now in its ninth consecutive year, the scholarship is an opportunity to hear from young Oregonians on some of the most pressing issues of our time.

This year, we asked students to respond to the following question: *"How would you solve the public health crisis of gun violence?"*

We received more than 150 entries, including essays, poems and narrative works, from communities throughout



Keynote Speaker Alisha Moreland-Capua, MD

the state. We greatly appreciate all of the students who took the time to share their ideas with us.

We are thrilled to announce that Alisha Moreland-Capua, MD will be

the keynote speaker for our April 28th awards ceremony. Born and raised in Northeast Portland, Dr. Moreland-Capua is the co-founder of The Capua Foundation, Executive Director of the OHSU Avel Gordly Center for Healing, and an Assistant Professor of Public Psychiatry at OHSU. She also serves on the Portland Development Commission and the OHSU/PSU Gun Violence as a Public Health Issue Advisory Committee.

We look forward to hearing from Dr. Moreland-Capua and sharing the thoughts of Oregon's youth on the issue of gun violence as a public health crisis with you at our 2017 Greenfield Peace Writing Scholarship awards ceremony. See you on April 28th!

Replace Nuclear Plant at Hanford With Renewables to Save Millions

Chuck Johnson, Oregon PSR Nuclear Power Program Director

A new study released in mid-February by utility economist Robert McCullough and commissioned by our Joint Nuclear Power Task Force indicates that Northwest ratepayers would save an estimated \$261.2 million to \$530.7 million over the next ten years if the Bonneville Power Administration and public power consortium Energy Northwest agree to close the Columbia Generating Station (CGS) nuclear power plant — the Northwest's only commercial nuclear power facility — and replace it with renewable energy electricity sources.

“The rapid drop in renewable energy costs in recent years has been shocking to everyone,” McCullough observes, “and it is now possible to affordably replace aging facilities, like the 32-year old CGS nuclear plant at Hanford, without increasing the region's carbon footprint.”

McCullough Research's new report, *Replacing the Columbia Generating Station with Renewable Energy*, builds upon the firm's extensive December 2013 cost-comparison study of the Hanford-based CGS nuclear plant, which accurately predicted the potential savings of replacing the CGS with market-purchased power for the past three years. To read the full report, please visit the Nuclear Power section of our website.

Cleanup operations at the Hanford Nuclear Reservation where the Columbia Generating Station is sited, already the most contaminated site in the Western Hemisphere, are further complicated by new radioactive waste generated by the nuclear power plant.

“PSR believe that it is our duty to reduce the global risk of climate change and the regional risk to public health



*The Columbia Generating Station nuclear plant
(photo courtesy of Associated Press)*

and the Columbia River posed by continued operation of an aging Fukushima-style GE boiling water reactor,” says John Pearson, MD, co-chair of Oregon and Washington PSR's Joint Nuclear Power Task Force.

For more information and to get involved in closing the Columbia Generating Station and moving our region beyond nuclear, contact Chuck Johnson at chuck@oregonpsr.org or 503-777-2794.

Meet Isabelle Cetas, Environmental Health Working Group Member

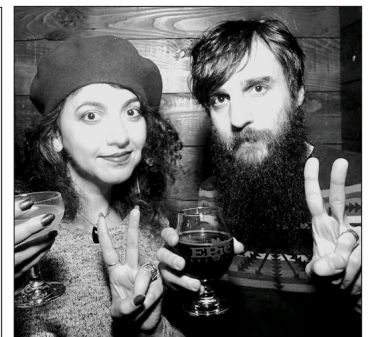


Isabelle has been doing an internship with Oregon PSR funded through Portland State University, where she takes post-baccalaureate classes. She worked with Oregon PSR's Environmental Health working group recently to write a fact sheet on the health effects of airborne diesel particulate matter. She also helped organize Oregon PSR's delegation to the Clean Air Rally in Salem on February 15th.

Isabelle graduated with distinction from Whitman College in May of last year with a Bachelor's degree in Environmental Humanities. Isabelle “believes that Oregon PSR is unceasing in our advocacy, and values our organization's ability to collaborate with other organizations and community members to effect meaningful and lasting change in both urban and rural settings all throughout Oregon.”

Support Oregon PSR With Monthly Giving

“My wife and I were happy to become regular contributors because it helps the organization plan and operate more effectively, knowing that there is a steady flow of donations that can be relied on. Many of the causes Oregon PSR advocates for are long-term in nature, so setting up a recurring donation gives us peace of mind that the devoted staff members can focus more of their energy on fighting to protect our health, rights, and the environment for years to come.” — David Johnston and Maree Bento, monthly donors since 2016



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