# Earl Blumenauer: 28 Years in Congress

#### THE OREGONIAN, TUESDAY, OCTOBER 11, 1977 Cherry Point oil port plans proceeding despite Congress

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Blumenauer announces

his company is concerned "it's business as usual." "If the council gets into the business of speculating about all bills passed by Congress all schedules would be thrown off," said Anthony Paul, ARCO attor-

By STAN FEDERMAN of The Oregonian staff Rep. Earl Blumenauer, D. Portland, a three-term legislator and chairman of the 1977 House Finance and School Fi-nance Committee, announced Monday he is a candidate for the Multnomah County Commission.

county race

REP. EARL BLUMENAUER

attve seat. Among potential candidates, he said, would be Moshe Lenske, chairman of the Multonnah County Democratic Central Committee, Bryon Douglas and Jim Sheridan of the Errol Heights Com-munity Association: Jans Rhodes of the Powell-Foster Neighborhood Associa-tion, and House Speaker Phil Lang.

Congress all Schedules would be thrown off," said Anthony Paul, ARCO attor-ney. ARCO officials in Los Angeles in-dicated last week they would ask Car-ter to veto the Marine Mammal Protoc-tion Act, the measure that Sen. Warren G. Magnuson amended to block estab-lishment of an Ioland water oil port. Under the Trans-Mountain proposal. At ARCO dock at Cherry Point and them moved to the Midwest by revers-ing the existing Canadian pipeline that interconnects with other lines serving the United States. In the prehearing conference, the council will decide how it will go about getting information to use in a hearing it expects to hold on the Trans-Mount-tain proposal. After the hearing, the council must decide whether to recom-mend agnoval or rejection of the ap-phication filed by the Northern Tier

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groups. On Oct. 22, Ray leaves for Japan, accepting an invitation from Prime Min-ister Takeo Fukuda. She will meet with various government officials and with representatives of trading, mining, au-tomobile and chemical industries, in-cluding some which already have oper-ations in Washington state. The Ray party will return Nov. 1 or 2, a spokesman said.



Pipeline C lish an oil

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 Gov. Dixy Loc Ray, who has voiced how warm toward the Northerm Tier pro-construct a trans-state pipeline to ahip Alakkan crude to the Midwest. The amendment, has given her usofficial Magauson amendment does not affect blessing to the Trans-Mountain proofs establishment of an oil port at Kitimat





**RANDALL'S STEREO** 

FURNISHINGS



Oregon's newest congressman gets ready for a new phase as his political career takes him to the national stage

#### HERE'S A LOOK

at where he's been and where he's going and at what advice some friends and former colleagues have for him.



The Oregonian asked several people familiar with both Oregon and Washington, D.C., to offer their advice to Earl Blumenauer as he moves from City Hall to Capitol Hill Their processes





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What is the search of the sear

#### Bud Clark, former mayor

441 think I'll give him a copy of 'They Never Go Back to Pocatello,' (a collection of writings by the late Sen. Richard Neuberger, -

Richard Neuberger, D-Ore.) When peo-ple go to Washington, D.C., they never come back. I'll give it back to him to remind him to come back and see us. ... Remember the district, Earl. Remember the district.

> Sen. Mark O. Hatfield, R-Ore. **Stick with the**

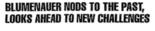
City Commis Contchen Ka



of wages between rich and poor. You'll have a lot of opportunity to vote on those issues. **99** 

Dick Feeney, lobbyist for Tri-Met whose first job was as a staff member for former Rep. Edith Green of the 3rd Congressional District.

44 You can always tell the difference between a dog and a lobbyist, because when you finally relent and open the door and let them in, the dog will stop whining. **77** 



NEWSFOCUS

By DEE LANE

The boy wonder of Oregon politics has grown up, goten middle- aged and gone national: Earl Blu-merican is going to Congress. Elected Toesday to fill the remainder of Rom Vyder's House term, Blumenauer makes a huge transi-tion. After spending 24 of his 48 years as an elected off-cial in Oregon, he moves to Washington, D. C. a city where buses do not carry bicycle racks and curbside everycling is more joke than reality. In the move from City Hall to Capitol Hill, Blume-nauer will go from rain to humidity, from a balanced budget to a deficit budget, from citizen calls about speed budget to a deficit budget, from citizen calls about speed budget to a deficit budget, from citizen calls about speed budget to a deficit budget, from citizen calls about speed budget to a deficit budget, from citizen calls about speed budget to a deficit budget, from citizen calls about speed budget to a deficit budget, from citizen calls about speed budget to a deficit budget, from citizen calls about speed budget to a deficit budget, from citizen calls about speed budget to a deficit budget, from citizen calls about speed budget to a deficit budget. Tom citizen calls about speed budget to a deficit budget. Tom citizen calls about speed budget to a deficit budget. Tom citizen calls about speed budget to a deficit budget. Tom citizen calls about speed budget to a deficit budget. Tom citizen calls about speed budget to a deficit budget. Tom citizen calls about speed budget to a deficit budget. Tom citizen calls about speed budget to a deficit budget. Tom citizen calls about speed budget to a deficit budget to about speed to about speed budget to a deficit budget. Tom citizen calls about speed budget to about speed to about speed to about speed to about speed budget to about speed to a

budget to a deficit budget, from citizen calls about speed bumps to the high pressure actics of Beliway Jobbyiss. The watershed nature of the moment is not lost on Blumenaue. "I'm choked up with nostalgia," he said in a rare admission of feeling. "Leaving the city I knew would be hard, but i didn't realize it would be this hard." For a few minutes, he remninisces about the projects he has worked on, the legislation passed, the connections forged, and he sounds like the usual brainy and focused Blumenauer. But he knows that doesn't explain it all. "There are hundreds of people here.", he starts, ite-tion was month actually, Blumenauer has seen his political past stream by like the Willameter River flood. It came first in the campaign, where his years of politi-cal work brought endorsments from a who's who of Oregon politicians including Sen. Mark O. Hatfleld, an uncommon instance in who's the doesn't explain it all stream by like doesn't explain its outcoment of the stream by like the stream bits political past brought endors means from an who's who of Oregon politicians including Sen. Mark O. Hatfleld, an uncommon instance in who's may of oregon you demories keep walking through the doors. Former Com-missioner Book Koch's map of Israel, Commissioner Mike Lindberg's photo of Blumenauer's campaign agente outflt, the news clippings, the campaign to lower Oregon's voing age that Blumenauer chaired while still in college, and ranged to "Vote Earl, Vote Often, 'The chant for this year's marathon of special and regular elections. For two sears right after college, Blumenauer's campaign but the rest of his professional like has been able to calisiture at 23, but the rest of his professional like has been able to calisiture at 23, but the rest of his professional like has been able to calisiture at 24, but was the the divide of the oregon Legislature at 24, but was the the divide of cy and county usersity. But the rest of his professional like has been able to calism influence on specient being elected to three terms

Council. In those years, he has been able to claim influence on legislation of profound effect: Oregon's land-use law, the agreement that divided city and county services, Port-land's recycling system, the regional development of

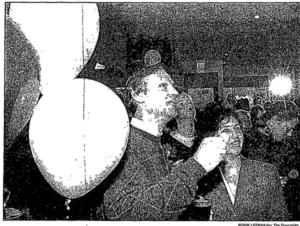
MOUNT HOOD FREEWAY **FIGHT LEADS TO FOCUS ON TRANSPORTATION** 

arl Blumenauer became interest-more than two decades ago, when he fought against the proposed both the fought against the proposed both the prime provide the these both the prime provide the these other urban issues, and he developed a passion for the subject that has never faded.

faded. During his 25 years in public life, Blu-menauer emerged as the area's most visi-ble advocate for alternative transporta-tion. He has pitched tirelessly for light rail and mass transit, for bike paths and pedestrian improvements, for traffic-

By GORDON OLIVER

passio faded.



Earl Blumenauer watches the voting results come in Tuesday night with Melissa Litin at the Doris Cafe on Northeast Russell Street, Blumenauer was an early winner in the election to fill out Ron Wyden's House te

Hight rall.
As of Tuesday's election, when he easily won both the spaced algeneral election and the regular primary. Blum names'n name is an pared a 20 times on the bald in the stard or an environmental policies he supports.
The amost a quarter century of continuous election of the capital policies he supports.
The work office, Blumenauer had been called arrogating and argumenauer har been called arrogating and argumenative but never distonest. The strathet be the sorty was the one blot on his squeaky-clean reputation, and it moves to washington, said. "Its or bobdy else around who understands either the history or the complexity of these systems."
But he lifelong politician isn't thinking short term. The sin ot something that you can do overlight." He sort was the one blot on his squeaky-clean reputation, and its hopes of being mayor in the round of his leasy. Robert E. Stacey, A Portland, but he fair the initial wanter and now is chairman of the offer Congress.
Robert E. Stacey, a Portland, and the he initial wanter and now is chairman of the offer Congress.
And then," he said, "somebody else needs to do the owner of our congress. And i'm prepared to put the time and energy and commitment into it for some for on 12 years.
The work of Blumenauer os tay in Portland, but he now encourages what he calls "working from the other end of the some for the compress.

calming speed bumps and skinny strets hat protect neighborhoods from automo "He has gone where very few govern porting bicycling and valking and chai forting the domination of the car, "said Grave Crunican, director-porting bicycling and valking and chai for and resident Ress Barkholder, a lead er in the Bicycle Transportation Alliance for and wants and that the success of Port-land depends on the success of the whole designed of the Oregon Department of Transportation and a former Portland deferait Transportation Milence for downtown while imposing to downtown while imposing to downtown while imposing to downtown while imposing to downtown whate a to ever too a composed by a city Council majority. Task nown than Bumeaver's stand idea opposed by a city Council majority. Task nown than Bumeaver's stand inghighting that has prounded Seattlean and the large to the state and the large to state a the strensportation as an organizing tool for quality of life-issues. The Regional Bustmut, which met last weekend for manyorial to consective year. Is one of Biumeo subcretities. "The very, very easy just to be opposed

In recent years, Blumenauer's national and international travels have helped' build Portland's image as a leader in pro-ducing creative transportation solutions. Still, his assertive style has alienated some people who don't share his vision. Rep. Elleen Qutub, R-Beaverton, who opposes light rail, said she was irritated when Blumenauer became a pinch-hilter for Tri-Me at a forum about light rail in her district last year. "He talked about the emotions and the vision of Portland of being a world-class city," Qutub said. "Yet none of the facts -the hard, cold facts – were talked about." A frequent jogger and regular biker.

-the hard, cold facts - were talked about." A frequent logger and regular biker, Blumenauer says he'll take a bicycle but no car when he heads back to Washing-ton, D.C. He is convinced that Portland and the nation will conthue to look for a balance between the automobile and other forms of travel. "No place in the country is paving their way out of congestion." he said. "Every-body is going back to the future, one way or another."







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## A Note from Earl

Friends,

Wrapping up 28 years in Congress, as well as 54 years as an elected official, is a surreal but rewarding experience.

When I made the decision that it was time to transition out of elected office, I wanted to document a snapshot of the work that has been my life for the last three decades.

You are holding in your hand a compendium of some of that work. It is thrilling to go through this and remember how we got started as well as some of the achievements and even stumbling blocks. What kept coming back to me was all of the incredible people that we have worked with to advance this agenda. It is one of the things that kept me excited all these years: the thousands of people that have worked with me, given me ideas, and were not afraid to push back and act on our "save the world" agenda.

I'm also thankful for the people of Oregon for allowing me to be their voice and to do this work.

While not all of our accomplishments were on the front page of the New York Times (although some were) all of them saved lives and improved communities. They had a common theme of making people and the places they live safer, healthier, and more economically secure. I could not be more grateful for our partnership, and I hope this document will remind you of some of our work together.

Thank you to all who have been part of this journey.

Onward,

Have Blumin

# AFGHAN AND IRAQIALLIES

Congressman Earl Blumenauer came to Congress determined to reverse the narrow, destructive foreign policy focus of Congress, as demonstrated especially by the Bush and Trump Administrations. Earl opposed from the beginning the greatest disaster in American foreign policy: the misguided Afghanistan War and the tragic invasion of Iraq. The treatment of our Afghan and Iraqi allies is a symbol of the most painful failure in American policy in a century. The U.S. turned the Middle East upside down, and we lost lives in the process.

In 2002, as a member of the then-House Committee on International Relations, Earl voted against the Bush Administration and House leadership's resolution authorizing the use of military force against Iraq. The resolution effectively authorized President Bush to use military force against Iraq at any time.

In committee, Earl argued in favor of amendments to require the Administration to pursue inspections and other actions under the auspices of the United Nations rather than use unilateral, pre-emptive military force against Iraq. He called pre-emptive U.S. use of force "dangerous" and "a terrible precedent." Earl strongly urged the Bush Administration to continue its current efforts at the United Nations. The Administration was considering a more aggressive process of inspection for weapons of mass destruction within Iraq. Earl supported that approach as an alternative to war. His statement opposing unilateral force in Iraq underscores the values and strategy in his defense policy work: "If we can't live up to our principles, how can we expect other countries to obey the rule of law?"

The U.S. wars in Afghan and Iraq relied on support from Afghan nationals who risked their lives and the lives of their families to serve as interpreters, embassy and NGO employees, and advocates in service to the U.S. mission. Earl quickly became aware of the threat to foreign nationals who played a critical role, helping the United States military and diplomatic efforts from retribution from bad actors with long memories like the Taliban and Al-Qaeda. These individuals and their families are targeted by the Taliban and are subject to disappearances, torture, and murder when they are caught. Prior to the U.S. invasions, and for many years of the operations, there was no path to safety in the U.S., even for those who directly served the U.S. armed forces in Afghanistan.

As stories of the violence inflicted on interpreters reached the U.S. through the advocacy of veterans, service members, Afghans, and Afghan Americans, the 109th Congress enacted the first in a series of legislative provisions to enable certain Iraqi and Afghan nationals to become U.S. lawful permanent residents (LPRs) based on their service to the U.S. government. Section 1059 of the Fiscal Year (FY) 2006 National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA) made certain Iraqi and Afghan nationals who had worked directly with U.S. Armed Forces as translators eligible for special immigrant visas (SIVs). This is how we started to pick up the pieces.

For Earl, the process started with a local high school working with the American legion to protect a young woman who was a translator with an Oregon National Guard Troop. This led to the development and enactment of bipartisan legislation and leadership with Senators John McCain and Ted Kennedy to provide a process to safeguard people. Earl led the effort to uphold our responsibility to people whose lives were at risk for having helped and having put confidence in the American government. Earl has been a tireless champion of keeping our commitment to these brave men and women and fighting the bureaucratic and political roadblocks to keep this program alive, funded, and active. Kirk W. Johnson's book, "To Be a Friend Is Fatal: The Fight to Save the Iraqis America Left Behind" captured the essence of that commitment and Earl continues to provide leadership to finish the job.

Earl's bill, the Responsibility to Iraqi Refugees Act, was signed into law in December of 2007 (as an amendment to the FY 2008 National Defense Authorization Act (Section 1244)) – establishing the Iraqi SIV program.

From this point on, Earl focused on expanding and protecting the program, to make sure that it kept up with need and provided resources throughout the course of both the Afghanistan and Iraq wars and US occupation. Earl mobilized veterans' groups, foreign affairs specialists, and human rights activists to extend the program until 2013, then implemented a series of reforms at the end of that year. Earl expanded the SIV program, required speedy processing of applications in order to reduce the danger that applicants faced, and provided legal representation to Iraq and Afghan applicants to support them during their review process.

Earl continued to work with stakeholders and the State Department to advocate for the program and ensure that it was meeting the statutory requirements and was sufficiently funded. Earl kept the issue bipartisan with an evolving coalition of Republican veterans serving in Congress, knowing that the United States had both a moral obligation and a strategic obligation to keep their promises to the Afghan allies who had served the US military.

The COVID-19 pandemic presented obstacles to the program. Embassies were closed for interviews so the pipeline slowed significantly and there was also concern that those who had been issued visas wouldn't make it to the US within the six-month window. Earl provided oversight for the Secretary of State to develop a plan to prioritize the processing of Afghan applicants for special immigrant visas and to develop procedures to ensure that applicants could seek safety in the United States as the pandemic continued.

In 2021, the U.S. military withdrawal from Afghanistan dramatically increased the urgency of SIV processing and threw relocation efforts into chaos. Ahead of the original deadline of September 30, 2021, President Biden ultimately accelerated the

withdrawal, and it was completed on August 30, 2021 as the Taliban rapidly took control of Afghanistan, and Kabul fell. Many members reached out to Earl, expressing interest how to help the anticipated surge of Afghan refugees. In response to this, Earl worked with Representative Jason Crow to set complicated, because the asylum system is up the Honoring our Promises Working Group, a bipartisan group looking at ways to strength the SIV program and other programs intended to get Afghan refugees out of Afghanistan. While we've had success, the need continues to be great.

While he continues to advocate for improving the program itself, Earl has also become the go-to member of Congress for SIV applicants who need assistance monitoring and/or expediting their visa processing. Because of his role as a co-creator of the Afghan SIV program, he also frequently works with organizations like No One Left Behind, who refer applicants to his office. To date, his casework team has opened 55 SIV inquiries. For several of the most critical cases, Earl has personally been involved in bringing awareness to the urgency of these situations. At least a dozen families have been relocated to the U.S. or are being manifested onto transportation due to these efforts.

While Earl continues to advocate on behalf of interpreters and their families eligible to come to the US, he also works to support the SIV applicants and allies who are not SIV-eligible who have made it to the United States. Individuals who came to the US as part of the U.S. coordinated evacuation process were

given humanitarian parole status, which is a form of temporary status in specific or emergency situations. This status only lasts for up to two years, and then people admitted through parole on an individual basis usually apply for asylum. This transition is already overwhelmed and there is not a clear application of asylum eligibility for many Afghan allies. If the asylum process doesn't work, the applicants may be forced to return to their original country of residence, an unreasonable situation given the Taliban's continued control of Afghanistan.

To address this issue, in 2022, Earl introduced the Afghanistan Adjustment Act (AAA), which would establish a pathway to legal permanent status for Afghan allies relocated to the United States under temporary humanitarian parole. Earl worked with legislators across the aisle and in both chambers of Congress to move this bill forward. This legislation is endorsed by a broad coalition and has received extensive press attention including pieces from impacted Afghans, veterans, and public figures like Jack McCain.

### Legislative Accomplishments

- Earl partnered with the late Senators John McCain and Ted Kennedy to establish the Iraqi and Afghan SIV Programs, creating a pathway to legal permanent status in the United States for Iraqi and Afghan nationals who directly supported the U.S. military mission in their country.
- For more than fifteen years, Earl has worked to make sure that the SIV program is continuously authorized and does not run out of visas, as the wars continued well beyond their intended and expected timelines. He has worked with multiple Administrations to promote accountability to SIV processing timelines and expectations.
- Afghan Adjustment Act Earl is the leader in the House working to create a pathway to legal permanent status for the more than 80,000 Afghans the U.S. government evacuated at the end of the U.S. military mission in Afghanistan. Without his efforts, these Afghans will be left vulnerable to the whims of administrations as well as gaps in their employment, health, and other programs as they renew their status every one to two years under parole or TPS.



## U.S. CONGRESSMAN EARL BLUMENAUER REPRESENTING THE 3RD DISTRICT OF OREGON

# Special Immigrant Visa Legacy Report



#### THE GENESIS OF A PROMISE

"This issue goes beyond legislative accomplishments or the leadership of any one person: It's not just our moral obligation; the United States relies on foreign nationals to serve our nation around the world for diplomatic, military, and international assistance missions. These allies put their lives at risk to serve as guides, interpreters, and numerous other support roles. Our failure to keep our promises in exchange would not only do a disservice to people who put their trust in us, it would undermine future success because we rely so heavily on these people." U.S. Congressman Earl Blumenauer

Congressman Blumenauer believes that the treatment of our Iraqi and Afghan allies is a symbol of the most painful American policy failure in a century. As the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan dragged on, he quickly became aware of the threat to foreign nationals who played a critical role for the United States, risking their lives and the lives of their families to serve as interpreters, embassy and NGO employees, and advocates in service to the U.S. mission. Prior to the U.S. invasions, and for many years during the operations, there was no path to safety in the U.S. for these allies.

Congressman Blumenauer's legislation to create a Special Immigrant Visa (SIV) program for these allies came out of a deep concern for the lives and welfare of the families who served this country. The impact these visas have on thousands of lives is a shining example of what can happen when a congressional office engages its constituents, listens to their concerns, and finds solutions that amplify our shared humanity.

#### MAKING GOOD

The seeds of Iraqi and Afghan Special Immigrant Visas were sown in Oregon's 3rd District in 2007, after Congressman Blumenauer was contacted by a social studies class and their teacher from a local high school. The students learned about and embraced the cause of a young Iraqi woman who was an interpreter for the U.S. at the height of Operation Iragi Freedom and feared reprisal as a result of her service to our troops. An Oregon National Guardsman who relied on her in battle was committed to helping her emigrate to safety in the United States. Meeting her in person and hearing her story made the gravity of the situation much more personal for Congressman Blumenauer. He was inspired to take action to help her and people in similar situations.

This experience led to the development and enactment of bipartisan legislation with Senators John McCain (R-AZ) and Ted Kennedy (D-MA) to



provide an immigration process for Iraqis whose lives were at risk for helping the American government. The law upheld our responsibility and promise to individuals who put themselves in harm's way to protect Americans.

The Responsibility to Iraqi Refugees Act was signed into law in December of 2007 as an amendment to the FY 2008 National Defense Authorization Act, Section 1244, which established the Iraqi Special Immigrant Visa program. The following year, a similar program was created for Afghanistan.



#### STAYING THE COURSE

Congressman Blumenauer has been a tireless champion of keeping our commitment to these brave men and women and fighting the bureaucratic and political roadblocks to keep this program alive, funded, and active.

Throughout the years, he has continued to work with stakeholders and the State Department to advocate for the program and ensure it meets statutory requirements and ongoing needs.



He remained dedicated to bipartisanship, working with an evolving coalition of Republican veterans serving in Congress who understood the United States has both a moral obligation and a strategic obligation to keep their promises to our Iraqi and Afghan allies.

The COVID-19 pandemic presented many obstacles to the program. U.S. Embassies were closed for interviews, causing the pipeline to slow significantly and jeopardizing the visas of individuals who may not have been able to make it to the U.S. within the required six-month window.

Congressman Blumenauer pushed the Secretary of State to develop a plan to prioritize the processing of Afghan applicants for SIVS and procedures to ensure that applicants could seek safety in the United States as the pandemic continued.

In 2021, the U.S. military withdrawal from Afghanistan dramatically increased the urgency of SIV processing and further strained relocation efforts. The withdrawal was completed on August 30, 2021, and the Taliban rapidly took control of Afghanistan, leaving SIV-eligible Afghans in even greater danger *than* before.

While he continues to advocate for improving the program itself, Congressman Blumenauer's office has developed a strong reputation among SIV applicants needing assistance and navigating complex cases. Because of his role as a co-creator of the Afghan SIV program, he frequently works with nonprofit organizations like No One Left Behind, who often refer applicants to his office.

For several of the most critical cases, Congressman Blumenauer has personally been involved in bringing awareness to the urgency and complexities of these situations. His office's advocacy has resulted in dozens of families being safely relocated to the United States.

"I welcome the long overdue withdrawal from Afghanistan, but time is running out to ensure safety for the brave Afghan men and women who risked their lives in service to our nation. Back in 2013, it was powerful to be there when Janis Shinwari, who worked as an Afghan interpreter with our military, and his family reached safety in America, greeted by the Army captain whose life he saved. Today, we're back together on Capitol Hill advocating for the many other heroes, like Janis, who can't be left behind. We must act now to keep our promises and provide a new life in the U.S. for our Afghan friends and allies." -U.S. Congressman Earl Blumenauer, June 23, 2021



## U.S. CONGRESSMAN EARL BLUMENAUER REPRESENTING THE 3RD DISTRICT OF OREGON

#### SAVING LIVES

Many of the cases Congressman Blumenauer and his constituent services team have worked on for more than a decade were extremely complicated and required extra support and coordination between multiple federal offices.

The following highlights three stories that illustrate how legislation and congressional casework can ensure safety for the people who put their lives on the line to help Americans and offer a new chapter to families who have had to leave everything behind.

#### Arzoo and Family:

In July 2021, Congressman Blumenauer was asked by an organization working to support Special Immigrant Visa recipients to assist an SIV applicant who was in an urgent situation in Afghanistan. Arzoo was a former interpreter and finance specialist who worked for the United States during the occupation of Afghanistan.

In her initial email, she stated that she feared for her life because of the work she did for the U.S. As the situation in Afghanistan became increasingly dire, Congressman Blumenauer's office opened a casework inquiry in order to serve as an intermediary between the State Department and Arzoo. As the months passed, the Taliban continued actively searching for Arzoo. Congressman Blumenauer's office kept in close communication with her during this time and continued to advocate on her behalf.

In an email to Congressman Blumenauer's office, Arzoo said: "The U.S. government said they want to help women at risk and I am a woman at risk and also an SIV applicant. I hope someone can help me to get out of this country."

Congressman Blumenauer and his constituent services team continued to work with liaisons at the State Department to ensure the correct documentation was received and to communicate on behalf of the family. Congressman Blumenauer's office received good news in February 2022—the visa processing was complete and Arzoo and her family resettled in the United States.

This resilient family has embraced this new chapter with perseverance and strength and are now thriving members of their community. Arzoo has a job working as a contract specialist, her husband is taking English classes and working two jobs, and all three children are now fluent in English, excelling in school, and making friends.

A true American success story.



"There *are no* words for *me* to *say thank* you to Congressman *Blumenauer*. *He saved* our lives so we could start a new life. As a mother, I appreciate and thank him for everything he did for us. My husband and I and our three children will never forget his kindness and help." - Arzoo

#### The Sayed Family

A widow and mother of six reached out to Congressman Blumenauer's office for assistance. Her husband, a Special Immigrant Visa applicant who owned a construction company that did contract work for the U.S., was executed by the Taliban and she and her children were in grave danger as they waited for their visas to be issued.

Obtaining visas for eligible family members of a deceased principal applicant is complex. After the U.S. Embassy in Kabul closed, visa cases were no longer able to be handled in Afghanistan, so the State Department had to develop a new process for issuing immigrant visas for widows and children of the principal applicant. Legal review and the creation of a new immigrant visa category can be lengthy. However, considering the real and present danger these families were in, the Biden Administration fast-tracked the process and created a new procedure to get them out of Afghanistan. Their situation was further



complicated by the ban on air travel imposed by the Taliban

Congressman Blumenauer's office worked through the provisions of the Child Status Protection Act to ensure the entire family's eligibility and help them obtain the correct evidence required for the visa (a complex task for a threegeneration family). The office also maintained regular communication with the family while the State Department waited for the air travel ban to be lifted and arranged for their departure from Afghanistan to a third country where the visas could be issued.

The case was completed after Congressman Blumenauer called the head of the Coordinator for Afghan Relocation Efforts team to brainstorm solutions and ask for her assistance to navigate this complicated scenario.

The family settled in the U.S. in December 2023 and are slowly adjusting to their new lives. They are learning English, attending school, and have made connections with the local Afghan community.

This collaborative effort between Congressman Blumenauer, his constituent services team, and the State Department resulted in this very at-risk family getting safely out of Afghanistan and resettling in the United States.

#### Hamida and Family

When Congressman Blumenauer's office was working on the previous case for the Sayed Family, a Department of State liaison said: "Due to Congressman Blumenauer's office's efforts ensuring that the Department received accurate and timely information about the case and engaging the Department of State for regular updates, we moved the ball on Afghan SIVs for widows faster than we might have done, particularly on some specific cases."

The case outlined below is one that potentially benefitted from these efforts.

In May 2023, Congressman Blumenauer's office received the following email from Hamida, a widow with four children: "Dear Congressman Blumenauer,

As each day passes, our lives in Afghanistan become increasingly dangerous.

The Taliban's return to power has made it even more perilous for people like me who have worked with Americans or NATO forces. My children and I have been living in fear and secrecy with limited access to basic necessities. I have been unemployed during this time and it has been more than two years since we've had any semblance of a normal life. I am not seeking luxury; I am seeking security, employment, and education for my children."

A congressional casework inquiry was immediately opened on her behalf to assist with communication between her and the Coordinator for Afghan Relocation Efforts (CARE) team to ensure they had all of the necessary paperwork. The urgency of her situation as a widow and sole provider for her family was also emphasized.

Congressman Blumenauer's office corresponded with her regularly to check in with her, make sure she was safe, and ensure her that her case was being worked on and monitored.

She responded to one of these emails with the following: "There is a proverb in Afghanistan that says, 'There is a way between the heart and the heart,' which means that there is a deep connection between us. I want to express my gratitude for your previous email. It was heartwarming to know that you are concerned about me and my children. We are doing well and feeling grateful for your support. It truly means a lot to us. We are holding onto hope and remaining positive despite the challenges we face. I appreciate your support and look forward to coming to the U.S. soon. It has been a long and difficult journey for all of us and I am grateful for your continued support."

In December, the family resettled in the United States. "For the very first time, I am experiencing an overwhelming sense of freedom, unburdened by constraints or limitations. This newfound liberty empowers me to chart my own path, make choices without hesitation, and embrace a world of endless possibilities. In this moment the weight of the past is lifted and I can soar with a heart full of hope and boundless potential. I want to extend my heartfelt appreciation for all your cooperation and assistance throughout this process. Your guidance has been instrumental and I am genuinely grateful for your ongoing support."

#### **ONWARD**

While Congressman Blumenauer continues to advocate on behalf of Iraqi and Afghan allies and their families who are eligible to come to the U.S., he is also the leading voice in the House working to create a pathway to legal permanent status for the more than 80,000 Afghans the U.S. government evacuated at the end of the U.S. military mission in Afghanistan.



In 2022, Congressman Blumenauer, along with Representative Meijer (R-MI) and Senators Klobuchar (D-MN) and Graham (R-SC), introduced the Afghan Adjustment Act to establish a pathway to legal permanent resident status for Afghan nationals admitted into the United States with temporary humanitarian parole status following the U.S. military withdrawal from Afghanistan.

Without this legislation, these Afghans will be left vulnerable to the whims of future administrations as well as experience gaps in their employment, health coverage, and access to other programs as they renew their status every one to two years under Humanitarian Parole or Temporary Protected Status.

In 2024, the legislation continues to gain momentum and receive growing support in the House and Senate. Together with Representative Miller-Meeks (R-IA) and Senators Klobuchar (D-MN) and Moran (R-KS), Congressman Blumenauer is leading the charge to include this common sense solution in upcoming comprehensive legislation.

Congressman Blumenauer continues to lead the appropriations work to authorize additional visas for the Afghan Special Immigrant Visa program to meet the needs of eligible Afghans still in the pipeline.



In March 2024, the Congressman announced that he secured a record 12,000 Afghan SIVs in the Fiscal Year 2024 State, Foreign Operations, and Related Agencies Appropriations Bill. This is the highest number of SIVs ever authorized in a single year and will dramatically increase the safety and security of our allies abroad.

For Afghan allies not yet resettled to the United States or elsewhere, Congressman Blumenauer is co-leading the Afghan Allies Protection Act with Senator Shaheen (D-NH) and Representatives Crow (D-CO) and Wenstrup (R-OH). This legislation improves and extends authorization for the Afghan SIV program and helps the program better support Afghan allies who served the U.S. mission.

Rebuilding trust with Afghan allies is paramount. Actions speak louder than words-honoring commitments, being transparent and accountable, offering tangible support, and providing resources for resettlement and a pathway to citizenship are essential to keeping the promises we made to these brave allies.

Congressional offices serve as a vital link between constituents and the legislative process, working to enact meaningful change through legislation and casework. The SIV accomplishments in Congressman Blumenauer's office exemplify how the congressional process is designed to function. Congressman Blumenauer listened to input from his constituents, turned it into legislation, and used that legislation to provide casework which saved many lives.

"Your office has one of the most effective congressional casework teams I have ever worked with. Thanks for your hard work on behalf of the nation (and your constituents). I know it may be a bit corny to say these days, but it is patriotic to be persistent and work through difficult cases. I hope you know how much that is appreciated." - Jeffrey Vick

"Over the past two decades, tens of thousands of Afghan allies have put their own lives, and the lives of their families, on the line to help our country. In return, we promised them safety and a new life in the United States because being a friend should not be fatal.

It's critical to the lives of these translators and contractors, the safety of American troops abroad, and our country's international standing that we keep our promise to our allies." – U.S. Congressman Earl Blumenauer (OR-03)

# THE HUFFINGTON POST The Great Cost

# of Breaking Our Promises

No matter what your opinion is of these wars, no one can dispute the U.S. has a very real moral and practical obligation to the people who were truck drivers, interpreters, and guides for our servicemen and woman.

#### By Rep. Earl Blumenauer, Contributor July 10, 2013

After hearing last Saturday's episode of This American Life about the struggles of Kirk Johnson, founder and Executive Director of The List Project, to have the United States honor its commitments to Iraqis who risked their lives for our troops under the most difficult circumstances, some of the remaining challenges of these conflicts have become even more poignant to me.

No matter what your opinion is of these wars (in the name of full disclosure, I strongly opposed the Iraq War and had grave reservations about Obama's surge in Afghanistan), no one can dispute the U.S. has a very real moral and practical obligation to the people who were truck drivers, interpreters, and guides for our servicemen and woman. Without their assistance, these activities would've been hopelessly more complex and dangerous, if not impossible.

My involvement with this issue began many years ago after being contacted by a Social Studies class and their teacher at a local high school who embraced the cause of a young Afghan woman who had been an interpreter for the U.S at the height of Operation Iraqi Freedom but feared reprisal as a result of her service to our troops. An Oregon National Guardsman who had become acquainted with her, who'd relied on her in battle, was absolutely committed to her safety and was relentless in helping her immigrate to safety here in the United States. Meeting her in person, after many months of navigating endless bureaucracy and seeing that there was almost no means by which others in her situation could

escape to the U.S., made the gravity of the situation much less theoretical and much more personal for me.

Shortly thereafter, I introduced the Responsibility to Iraqi Refugees Act of 2007 that would provide a means by which those Iraqis, whose lives were in danger as a result of their service to the U.S., could escape to safety in America. Adopted in the FY2008 National Defense Authorization, and working with the late Senator Ted Kennedy, we were able to create the Iraq Special Immigrant Visa program. The following year, a similar program was created for Afghanistan.

These programs, at least on paper, were to provide that road to safety that was missing. We thought that we now had an answer for these young people, those desperate Iraqis and Afghanis, the Guard and the high school students, about what the U.S. was doing to help those that helped us. While some minimal progress has been made thanks to the SIV programs, they too have been beset with new bureaucratic hurdles, a lack of transparency, endless paperwork.

The SIV programs have always been bipartisan issues, which has made it an even greater honor to work with Senator McCain to include reform and extension language in the Senate immigration reform legislation. In March, a bipartisan group of 19 members of the House, including six veterans of the Iraq and Afghanistan conflicts, sent a letter to President Obama urging him to extend the SIV programs. In June, I offered a bipartisan amendment on the House floor with two of my colleagues that served in the field in Iraq and Afghanistan which reformed the SIV programs. That

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amendment passed 420 to 3.

In working with colleagues and giving numerous interviews on the importance of the SIV programs and their continued dysfunction, it continues to be shocking just how irresponsible the United States has been with the fate of thousands of people by failing to effectively implement and manage the SIV programs. While some minimal progress has been made by State to improve their management of the SIV programs, the legislation we crafted has been sabotaged by bureaucratic inefficiency, a lack of resources, a lack of commitment, and the sad choice to not prioritize this critical issue. There's no way to put a happy face on this.

Johnson's story of one individual trapped in this bureaucratic hell which ultimately led to his death and decapitation after senseless runarounds made my heart ache, and made me want to scream. One hopes Kirk Johnson's forthcoming book will help us punch through the bureaucratic indifference of the administration, and of Congress, frankly. If Congress truly made this a priority, lives would be saved.

The irony, of course, is that this is not just a moral issue, which ought to be enough to compel action. These brave men and women who put their trust in the United States are left to twist in the bureaucratic winds while being slowly hunted down, terrorized or killed by people in the Middle East with long memories. Worse, their loved ones -- children, siblings, spouse, parents -- often pay the price with their lives as well. Our indifference will have a profound effect on future operations. While I sincerely hope the lessons of Iraq will not have to be repeated to be learned, it's hard to envision a world where American military, diplomats, and aid workers are not going to be relying on foreign nationals to help with future operations around the world.

If it seems that the United States is callous and untrustworthy, it's going to make it harder to recruit the individuals to make our activities successful. Indeed it will be more likely that the people who will work with us are those who are not fully committed to our interests and safety. The notion that we could not take people in, in whom we entrusted the lives of American soldiers, diplomats and contractors when they could easily have led us into harm's way, is shameful. Why can't we evacuate them to a secure location in Guam or some other country while we complete the bureaucratic process and at least keep them and their families from being hurt, tortured or killed while we dither?

Last week, we celebrated American independence. What if this week we reflect on the interpreters, the guides and others in Iraq and Afghanistan to whom we owe a tremendous debt for keeping our service members safe, and to whom we have an obligation to treat fairly? We should spare no effort to meet our commitments because, after all, these are commitments to ourselves.

# **Delta Bill** Blumenauer Introduces Special Visa Bill For Afghan Translators Who Help US Troops

By Meerah Powell Portland, Ore. May 16, 2019

U.S. Rep. Earl Blumenauer, D-Ore., Thursday introduced a bill that would provide 4,000 additional special visas to translators who have helped American troops during the Afghanistan War.

This new legislation is based on a program that began in 2008.

Although the U.S. has authorized thousands of visas over the years, Blumenauer said there's still a backlog of about 20,000 people who have applied.

"Two interpreters die every three days in Afghanistan now," he said. "Their families are at risk. The pipeline to the United States has been slowed — too much bureaucracy and red tape."

Along with providing those additional visas, the bill would also require the State Department to provide suggestions to Congress for improving the program and report on the obstacles that have resulted in so many people still waiting.

"There are all sorts of hoops that [the translators] have to jump through to verify what they did, where they did it, who they worked with," Blumenauer said. "It's a cumbersome, tedious and long drawn out process."

Blumenauer called the bill an "important bipartisan effort."

"We developed this special immigrant visa with John McCain, with Teddy Kennedy, this was over 10 years ago," he said. "And we continue to fight to have them authorized every year."

# **PortlandTribune** Blumenauer honored for helping interpreters and others in wars

Peter Wong Jul 4, 2024

Retiring U.S. Rep. Earl Blumenauer has been recognized for his efforts on behalf of Afghan and Iraqi nationals who helped the U.S. armed forces during the wars in those countries.

The Democrat from Portland received a lifetime achievement award from No One Left Behind, an organization co-founded in 2014 by Janis Shinwari, an Afghan interpreter who saved the lives of five U.S. soldiers in combat, and Army Capt. Matt Zeller. Shinwari helped create the organization with \$35,000 that donors raised for his own resettlement.

"Rep. Blumenauer was one of the first Americans to welcome me to the United States when I arrived at Dulles Airport through the Special Immigrant Visa (SIV) program in 2013," Shinwari said.

"From his role in my journey to the United States to advocating for hundreds of critical SIV cases and his leadership securing numerous legislative victories for the SIV programs, he has been a true champion in keeping the promises made to our allies," he added. "We are proud to honor Rep. Blumenauer's leadership on the Iraqi and Afghan SIV programs."

Blumenauer said his involvement goes back to 2007, after he met with a social studies class at Portland's Lincoln High School. Students told him about the plight of an Afghan interpreter who served alongside an Oregon National Guard member and was trying to relocate to safety in the United States.

The encounter led to Blumenauer's sponsorship of a new visa program for Afghan and Iraqi nationals who helped the U.S. military missions. The Afghan Allies Protection Act that Congress passed a few years later — Blumenauer worked with Arizona Sen. John McCain and Massachusetts Sen. Ted Kennedy — opened the way for them to obtain legal permanent status through a special immigrant visa.

Blumenauer has worked since to expand the program. Earlier this year, his provision to add 12,000 special immigrant visas was included in federal spending legislation that became law.



U.S. Rep. Earl Blumenauer at a press event April 3 in Portland. The Portland Democrat, who is retiring after 28 years in the House, was honored for his work on behalf of Afghan and Iraqi interpreters and others who worked with the U.S. armed forces in those conflicts.

Blumenauer is retiring after having served Oregon's 3rd District since mid-1996.

Blumenauer opposed the 2002 congressional resolution that gave the go-ahead to President George W. Bush to use military force in Iraq. But he said the United States should stand by the Afghans and Iraqis who helped.

"Fighting to fulfill our moral and legal obligation to our Afghan and Iraqi allies is a highlight of my time in Congress. This award is a symbol of our progress since that transformative meeting at Lincoln High and a promise of the work to come," he said.

"We cannot let up now. Congress must continue to authorize Special Immigrant Visas and enact my legislation to establish a pathway to legal permanent

# PortlandTribune

status for our Afghan allies relocated to the United States. To be a friend should not be fatal."

Blumenauer has proposed legislation to revamp the entry process for any Afghan who has sought refuge in the United States since August 2021, when the Taliban reclaimed power in Afghanistan after the final U.S. troops were withdrawn. Afghans who worked with the United States are considered in danger.

Currently, Afghan refugees who are admitted on temporary humanitarian status can gain permanent status only through the asylum system or the Special Immigrant Visa process, which both face backlogs and long processing times.

No One Left Behind says that 5,500 people — and 1,300 families — have benefited so far from the special immigrant visa. But an estimated 75,000 applications are backlogged at the State Department, and processing times are double the nine months envisioned by Congress.

Blumenauer has done more than champion legislation.

His office has developed a strong reputation among SIV applicants needing assistance and navigating complex cases. For several of the most critical cases, Blumenauer has personally been involved in bringing awareness to the urgency and complexities of these situations. His advocacy has resulted in dozens of families being safely relocated to the United States.

## **PRESS RELEASE:** House Passes Legislation to Protect Afghan Allies

July 22, 2021

Students at Portland's Lincoln High School inspired Blumenauer to help create Iraqi and Afghan Special Immigrant Visa programs

**WASHINGTON, D.C.** – As the United States prepares to wind down its presence in Afghanistan, the U.S. House of Representatives today passed bipartisan legislation supported by U.S. Rep. Earl Blumenauer (D-OR) to protect thousands of brave Afghan allies who have served alongside U.S. military forces since 2002.

Blumenauer first became involved in the cause of Afghan allies after being contacted by a social studies class from Portland's Lincoln High School nearly 15 years ago. It prompted him to work with former Senators John McCain and Teddy Kennedy to create the Iraqi and Afghan Special Immigrant Visa (SIV) programs. Over the years, he has remained a leader in efforts to strengthen these critical programs to bring safety to the brave men and women who risked their lives to help the United States. Today's bill was a product of months of work by Blumenauer's Honoring Our Promises Working Group.

"For too long, there has not been a sense of urgency that is necessary to ensure safety for the people who put their lives on the line to help Americans in these difficult circumstances," **Blumenauer said today on the House floor**. "I admire what President Biden is doing in terms of winding down our presence in Afghanistan. I hope he brings that same sense of urgency to deal with the people we can't afford to leave behind. I call upon the administration to expedite the transition. And I call on all of us in Congress to continue providing the resources, the attention, and the urgency to make the program successful. Make no mistake, we have a lot of work to do to protect people who helped us. Because being a friend should not be fatal."

The Averting Loss of Life and Injury by Expediting SIVs (ALLIES) Act passed by the House today makes important changes to the Afghan SIV program to improve visa processing. It also adds an additional 8,000 visas to the SIV program, strengthens protections for surviving spouses and children of deceased SIV applicants, and streamlines SIV processing without compromising the strict background check and national security vetting procedures, or other processes to confirm visa eligibility.

## Appendix

- 2004 Earl introduces the first legislation to establish a visa program for Iraqi and Afghan interpreters who served the U.S. military missions.
- 2006 Section 1059 of the FY2006 NDAA made certain Iraqi and Afghan nationals eligible for SIVs after working directly with the US Armed Forces for at least one year as translators.
- 2007 Expanded SIV eligibility to certain Iraqi and Afghan nationals who had worked directly with US Armed Forces (or under COM authority) for at least one year as translators or interpreters.
- **2008** FY2008 NDAA (for Iraqis) and Omnibus Appropriations Act of 2009 (for Afghans) established SIV pathway for certain Iraqi and Afghan nationals who have been employed by, or on behalf of, the U.S. government in Iraq or Afghanistan (requires COM approval).
- **2008-Present** Earl led the work to authorize additional visas for the Iraqi and Afghan SIV Programs. Following the end of the U.S. mission in Iraq, the Iraqi SIV Program ended in 2018.
- 2009 Earl's Afghan Allies Protection Act of 2009 created a new category in the Afghan SIV Program for Afghan nationals who worked for or on behalf of the U.S. government.
- 2013 In the NDAA, Congress extended the Iraqi SIV program for nine months and reformed the Iraqi and Afghan SIV programs.
- 2013 Earl worked with American Legion members and local Portland students to help Matt Zeller bring Janis Shinwari and his family to the United States through the Afghan SIV Program, and Earl was at National Airport when Zeller and Janis were reunited.
- 2014 Emergency Afghan Allies Extension Act of 2014 (Blumenauer, Kinzinger) secured 1,000 additional, emergency SIVs for the Afghan SIV program.
- 2014 Senators Shaheen and McCain and Representatives Blumenauer and Kinzinger introduce the Afghan Allies Protection Act to extend and reform the Afghan SIV program.
- 2019 Afghan Allies Protection Act of 2019 (Blumenauer, Omar) to authorize 4,000 additional visas for the Afghan SIV program.
- August 2021 President Biden ordered the U.S. military withdrawal from Afghanistan. The withdrawal remains regarded as one of the largest stains on the Biden Administration and led to the deaths of Afghan civilians and U.S. servicemembers as the Taliban retook Kabul and the Afghan government within a week of withdrawal. The withdrawal took place without a permanent path forward for Afghan evacuees who were not SIV-eligible or had been instructed by the U.S. government to destroy identifying documents that were dangerous with Taliban checkpoints but are required for SIV approval. This was the start of the Afghan Adjustment Act work to create a pathway to legal permanent resident status for the Afghans who were relocated to the United States with temporary humanitarian parole status.

## Appendix

- 2022 Senators Klobuchar and Graham and Representatives Blumenauer and Meijer introduce the Afghan Adjustment Act to establish a pathway to legal permanent resident status for Afghan nationals paroled into the United States following the U.S. military withdrawal from Afghanistan.
  - AAA was nearly included in the 2022 omnibus package, but was ultimately excluded at the direction of Senator Grassley.

# ANIMAL WELFARE

Protecting animal welfare has been a priority for Congressman Earl Blumenauer throughout his years in Congress. Perhaps no area of Earl's legislative career has provided more satisfaction and interesting opportunities than animal welfare. Earl believes that a livable community requires the humane treatment of animals, whether in our households, the community at large, or in the wild. He believes that the health of all animals, including wildlife, farm animals, and urban animals, is directly linked to the health of the ecosystem for human inhabitants. How we treat animals has broad consequences for human health and behavior. His goal is to make animal welfare part of the broader concept of a truly livable community.

The role of animals in the lives of so many Americans is profound. Having a puppy or a kitten can lower blood pressure, provide a sense of companionship, and fight off loneliness at a time when many Americans feel isolated. When people are concerned about lack of connection, the animal gives tremendous opportunities for balancing family, the broader community, the environment, and self-maintenance. The power of the pet is such that for many Americans, their dog or cat is like a member of the family, indeed this devotion can even stop people from leaving their homes when it is necessary to seek safety. Earl was struck by stories of people literally risking their lives to protect their pet following storm events in

Houston and Hurricane Katrina. Mindful that women sometimes stay with an abusive partner rather than leave their pet, Earl supported legislation, the Pet and Women Safety Act, to enable animals to have access to emergency shelters.

As Co-Chair of the bipartisan Congressional Animal Protection Caucus since 2009, Earl knows that animal welfare is a rare nonpartisan issue that can be uniquely collaborative in a polarized congressional environment. Since his early days in Congress, Earl has recognized the potential for animal welfare policy to be a simple but profound indicator of good governance, proving that the federal government can take steps to protect the most vulnerable among us. Working on animal welfare in Congress creates a better world for animals and communities and builds trust and relationships among members who may not normally work together. It is an excellent illustration of how government should function, and a respite from the breakdown of issues among familiar partisan lines. As Earl will tell you, there are millions of Americans who care deeply about animals but may not follow politics closely. Animal welfare policy is a chance to connect with them and demonstrate that responsive, responsible, and compassionate legislating is possible at the highest levels of government.

Throughout his congressional career, Earl has been a leader on efforts to crack down on

animal cruelty and abuse, protect endangered species and ensure conscientious wildlife management, defend farm animals, and require responsible research and testing. His support for animal welfare has earned him a 100 or 100+% favorable rating from the Humane Society Legislative Fund for more than a decade as well as a reputation as one of the foremost advocates of animal welfare in Congress today. He has authored two law review articles on the topic, one in 2001 and another in 2016. While working on this issue, Earl has watched with pride as the field of animal studies became better established, including at his alma mater law school, Lewis and Clark College, which had one of the first and best regarded animal studies programs in the country. The explosion of interest from animal studies to animal advocates to creative state and local strategies are signals that the playing field has changed, and the momentum is definitely in support of this important issue.



Despite real progress, struggles remain not just because of entrenched interests that would exploit animals for agriculture, zoos, breeding, and sales. The biggest impediment is indifference. Luckily, the appeal of animal welfare can overcome these differences. Many issues continue to be extraordinarily controversial from the soring in Tennessee walking horses to animal slaughter to the biggest area of controversy: farm animals. Earl has been involved with state level initiatives that have enabled progress to bypass the powerful special interest in Congress. The good news is that animal welfare advocates are more numerous and better organized than the opposition, and there continues to be an opportunity to leverage state and local policy to define better outcomes.

Most encouraging for Earl is the power of animal welfare to bring together people to solve problems. He firmly believes that given the opportunity to focus public attention on issues from animal fighting and puppy mills to fighting extreme cruelty of industrial animal production, the public is on the side of animal welfare. The key is being able to define and present an issue that can both capture the public attention and be focused on a specific outcome in an area to narrow the playing field.

Earl has sponsored or co-sponsored dozens of bills and leveraged the annual appropriations process to improve the lives of animals around the world.

A few highlights include:

### **Animal Fighting**

Earl's keen interest in ending animal fighting has spanned nearly three decades in Congress. Ending this cruel practice was one of Earl's earliest legislative projects. Earl's efforts began in 2002 and ultimately culminated in success with the 2019 Farm Bill provision making dogfighting and cockfighting illegal in all 50 states and territories. He has often used the Farm Bill, which authorizes and funds the vast majority of programs at USDA, the department entrusted with oversight and enforcement of the Animal Welfare Act, as an opportunity to make progress on this issue. During the 2018 Farm Bill, Earl championed the Parity in Animal Cruelty Enforcement Act, legislation ultimately included in the final Farm Bill to extend the prohibition on animal fighting to U.S. territories.

The barbaric sport of forcing dogs and gamecocks to fight is often part of a whole host of inappropriate, dangerous, and illegal activities such as gambling, drug trafficking, and organized crime. The brutality in the animal fighting ring is often complemented by extreme violence amongst the humans who stage and watch the animal fighting. While Congress had taken some steps to limit animal fighting when Earl first arrived in Washington, the early laws contained too many loopholes and were not easily enforceable. Recognizing this, Earl successfully championed a Farm Bill provision in 2002 to close a loophole that allowed cockfighting to persist. While the practice was illegal in 47 states, it remained legal in three states (New Mexico, Oklahoma, and Louisiana). These three states undermined widespread efforts to ban animal fighting because illegal cockfighters had an easy excuse if confronted by law enforcement: they were merely raising the birds for shipment.

Earl's new law made it a misdemeanor to ship a bird in interstate commerce for fighting purposes or to sponsor or exhibit any bird in a fight with the knowledge that the bird was so shipped even in fights within a state where cockfighting was permitted. The law also increased the maximum financial penalty from \$5,000 to \$15,000 for violations of the Animal Welfare Act's (AWA) anti-fighting provisions. Despite being in the minority party at the time, Earl was able to achieved the win by working in a bipartisan manner and making the case to his colleagues that this was commonsense policy that would have many positive ripple effects beyond the world of animal fighting. After failing in an initial voice vote, Earl fought for a second vote to take place when more members were present and secured the amendment's passage. Even the Chairman and Ranking Member of the Committee on Agriculture - the top House leaders on the issue – ended up supporting Earl's amendment.

At the same time, even though dogfighting and cockfighting were banned in almost every state, the USDA still did not have the resources to pursue tips from informants and requests for assistance from local police on illegal trafficking of fighting dogs and birds. As is so often the case with animal welfare policy, the laws on the books made animal fighting illegal, but the laws were underenforced. In response, the next year, Earl strengthened enforcement of animal fighting bans under the federal Animal Welfare Act by successfully securing increased funding for the USDA Inspector General's Office.

In addition to animal fighting, Earl has advocated for Congress to make progress against the horrific practice of "animal crush" videos, which show the intentional crushing, burning, drowning, suffocating, and impaling of live animals. In 2010, Earl helped enact the Animal Crush Video Prohibition Act, legislation that outlawed the production and interstate distribution of inhumane animal crush content.

## **Protecting Wild Animals** and Endangered Species

Earl believes that our obligation to wild animals is just as strong as our obligation to domestic or companion animals. He has helped lawmakers connect the dots between the health of wildlife, including those in urban settings, and the health of the ecosystem. By managing growth and supporting livable communities, we can better protect precious habitats, threatened species and wildlife, while respecting that wild animals should remain wild.

Some of Earl's earliest work on this issue was through the Polar Bear Protection Act, legislation to outlaw the use of polar bears in traveling shows and circuses. The legislation was spurred by the importation of 6 polar bears by the Suarez Brothers' Circus in Puerto Rico. During their stay in Puerto Rico, the bears were subjected to temperatures as hot as 110 degrees, insufficient access to water, whipping and other abuses. The bears were eventually seized by U.S. federal marshals and sent to zoos throughout the U.S. The Polar Bear Protection Act gave credence to a brewing movement to improve the treatment of so-called "circus" or "performing animals." Earl encouraged national scrutiny on the treatment of circus animals and the growing legal restrictions on what kinds of conditions these magnificent creatures are exposed to in captivity.

This work to protect polar bears is part of Earl's larger agenda to end the importation of animal trophies. Trophy hunting is a type of direct exploitation of animals that is driving biodiversity loss on our planet. Trophy hunters place a greater monetary and personal value on killing rare animals for the sake of vanity and to display the dead animal, incentivizing the continued unnecessary killing of imperiled species which inhibits their recovery and conservation.

The U.S. is the world's largest importer of animal trophies, including federally protected species. Earl has been one of Congress's most active leaders opposing animal trophies. His advocacy has included urging the Japanese government to close its legal market for elephant ivory and successfully lobbying the Department of the Interior to add the African Lion to their threatened and endangered species list. Earl led this effort to combat the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service's decision to lift mauling of a Connecticut woman by her pet the ban on African Elephant trophy imports from Zimbabwe and Zambia. Earl has also supported legislation such as the African Elephant Conservation and Legal Ivory Possession Act and used his platform through the Congressional Animal Protection Caucus to fight for stronger restrictions on animal trophies.

Earl used his role on the Transportation and Infrastructure Committee to advance animal welfare issues on our nation's road system. Earl successfully pressed for the inclusion of provisions to increase "animal friendly roads" within a multi-year transportation funding bill. More than one million animals are killed on our roadways every day, and several thousand people are injured in these collisions every year. Additionally, collisions with deer alone cost the insurance industry over \$1 billion every year. Earl's efforts produced requirements for the U.S. Department of Transportation to study and publish a report on ways to reduce wildlife-vehicle collisions, produce a "best practices" manual, and develop a training course.

This resulted in increased funding for wildlife passageways and wildlife bridges, which save both animal and human lives and connect critical migratory habitats.

In 2009, Earl introduced the Captive Primate Safety Act, which would outlaw people from buying or transporting primates across state lines to keep as pets. The bill overwhelmingly passed the House following a highly publicized chimpanzee, Travis. The chimp was shot by police and died of gunshot wounds. The woman, Charla Nash, was given the nation's first ever face transplant. Subsequent versions of the Captive Primate Safety Act would outlaw pets as primates, and Earl worked to advance the bill in the 118th Congress.

Following the debut of the Netflix series 'Tiger King,' Earl saw an opportunity to advance similar protections for big cats being held as pets. In 2020, he co-led and helped pass the Big Cat Public Safety Act, legislation that restricts private ownership of big cats, reduces breeding, and helps minimize abuse of these exotic animals.

Earl's commitment to preserving habitat for wild animals led him to co-lead the Refuge from Cruel Trapping Act in 2021 and 2023. This legislation restores the original purpose of the National Wildlife Refuge System to be a sanctuary for wildlife by prohibiting the use of cruel body-gripping traps on these public lands.

Additionally, Earl is a longstanding champion for the Endangered Species Act, for robust funding for habitat restoration, and for protecting water and natural habitats for species across the country. He's spoken in vocal opposition to political interference with science that undermines species recovery, prevented rollbacks of critical environmental laws that protect animals and their habitat, and rallied his colleagues to defend native wildlife from legislative and administrative attacks. In the Pacific Northwest, he's been an outspoken leader on salmon and sage grouse protection, as well as gray wolves.

Under the Trump Administration, Earl fought back against a proposal to end federal protections for gray wolves under the Endangered Species Act, citing concern that such an action would undermine not only the recovery of gray wolves, but hundreds of other endangered species nationwide. That same year, he strongly opposed the Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife's (ODFW) endorsement of the administration's proposal to delist gray wolves from the Endangered Species Act (ESA).

## **Animal Testing**

For decades, animal testing has been used to determine the effectiveness and safety of cosmetic products, chemicals, and medicines for human use. Many of these tests have contributed to important scientific advances and have improved human health. Many have also caused significant animal suffering. Earl sees the challenge as constantly working to achieve the right balance – to ensure that any test on animals is performed humanely, and only when no equivalent alternative exists.

In 2015, Earl championed legislation (the AWARE Act) to ensure that farm animals used in agricultural research at federal research facilities be included in the definition of "animal" under the Animal Welfare Act. The Animal Welfare Act ensures that certain minimum standards of humane care are adhered to in federal and private research facilities. However, the Act defines "animal" in a way that egregiously excludes farm animals used in agricultural research. The AWARE Act was introduced in response to a New York Times expose on the U.S. Meat Animal Research Center in Clay Center, Nebraska where at least 6,500 animals are known to have starved to death and unknown numbers died from negligence such as easily treatable infections, exposure to bad weather, or attacks by predators - in a testing center that was funded by taxpayer dollars.

Earl also used the appropriations process to continue to raise the issue. He has fought hard for the annual USDA funding bill to require animal research centers, such as the Nebraska facility that was exposed for widespread abuse, to comply with Animal Welfare Act standards. His efforts have also included fighting for the establishment of Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee (IACUC) within USDA agencies that oversee the AWA to ensure

to ensure compliance with animal welfare standards and principles of scientific integrity at all facilities where animal research is conducted.

Earl has also rallied his colleagues to support the use of alternatives to animal testing when evaluating the safety and impacts of a chemical in the Toxic Substances Control Act. Thanks to Earl's advocacy, Congress passed legislation in 2016 that laid out several animal testing alternatives that companies could use, instead of requiring animal testing.

### Farm Animal Welfare

With the advent of large-scale, industrialized agricultural production, every facet of the life of an industrialized chicken, cow, or pig is engineered or mechanized. Factory farming has grown to be a massive industry that subjects animals to unthinkable suffering and presents serious environmental, health, and safety risks on a scale unimaginable in earlier times. It has also forced tens of thousands of small farmers out of business while industrialscale agriculture grows. Earl's advocacy for farm animals comes from his belief that by producing healthier, better-treated animals, we reduce suffering, lessen our impact on the natural world, and produce better outcomes for human health.

Every five years, Congress takes up the Farm Bill, legislation that serves as the cornerstone of the American agricultural sector. An outspoken advocate for reform, Earl developed a sweeping alternative to the Farm Bill — the Food and Farm Act — which lays

out a vision for federal agriculture policy that does better by growers, eaters, planet, and animals. The Food and Farm Act proposes the first-ever animal welfare title in the Farm Bill to reward producers who meet high welfare standards. He has also consistently outspoken against corporate agribusiness-backed "ag-gag laws" which intend to criminalize the exposure of inhumane conditions for farm animals. Earl has also been a vocal critic of federal action that would pre-empt state-level humane laws. In 2018, he mobilized opposition against the King amendment — a provision that would prevent states and local governments from being able to establish their own protections for agriculture, food, and the environment which was included in the initial draft of the Farm Bill. Joined by more than 100 of his colleagues from both sides of the aisle, Earl and the anti-King amendment coalition successfully stripped it from the final Farm Bill. Following the success of California's Prop 12 humane treatment law, the King amendment resurfaced in 2023 as the so-called **Exposing Agricultural Trade Suppression** ("EATS") Act which would undo Prop 12 and state laws like it. In response, Earl has organized another strong, bipartisan coalition to urge the Agriculture Committee to keep the revived King amendment out of the Farm Bill and uphold state-level animal welfare wins.

A source of great frustration has been the timid response of the federal government to aggressively enforce our animal welfare laws and practices. Getting the federal government to just do its job protecting animals would make a huge difference.

### Legislative Accomplishments

- Earl led the charge in Congress to stop animal fighting for decades, frequently returning to the issue when it was clear that more work was left to be done. He has championed legislation to close loopholes in federal anti-fighting laws, strengthen penalties for those perpetuating animal fighting, and increased federal agency resources to enforce the laws on the books.
- Earl has shed light on scant protections for farm animals and sought to reward high-welfare producers in federal agricultural policy. His Food and Farm Act proposes the first-ever animal welfare title in the Farm Bill, and seeks to make concentrated animal feeding operations (CAFOs) ineligible for conservation dollars. For the most recent two Farm Bill cycles, Earl has also organized massive campaigns against to safeguard state-level animal welfare protection laws.
- Since 2005, Earl has led a bipartisan annual appropriations letter to the Agriculture Subcommittee demanding robust funding to improve enforcement of the Humane Methods of Slaughter Act, the Horse Protection Act, the federal animal fighting laws, address the needs of animals in disasters, and establish a veterinary student loan forgiveness program. This letter is traditionally one of the largest letters of the appropriations process, with over 100 members signing. It highlights the bipartisan nature of animal protection and the work that Earl and the Animal Protection Caucus have done in making animal welfare a bipartisan priority.

# The Oregonian Blumenauer vs. the Animal Fighters

# The Congressman has a good chance to pass a bill to toughen federal laws against a barbaric crime

Rep. Earl Blumenauer, D-Ore., may soon score an important congressional victory in his long battle for stricter federal laws against animal fighting.

The House Judiciary Committee has approved his bill to make it a federal felony to transport animals across state or national borders for fighting purposes. The legislation now goes to a vote in the full House, where it appears likely to pass, making the Oregon congressman a hero in the eyes of America's largest animal protection organization.

"Earl Blumenauer is the guy," says Wayne Pacelle, president and CEO of the Humane Society of the United States.

"Historically, he's the one in Congress who has done the most on this." Six years ago, Blumenauer led the charge on legislation to expand the federal ban on inter- state shipment of fighting ani- mals. A gaping loophole in the previous law gave cockfighters a convenient de- fense when confronted by police: They could say they were just raising the birds for shipment to one of the handful of states or countries where the gruesome "sport" was still legal.

Since then, Blumenauer has also been waging a frustrating fight to toughen the penalties for interstate shipment of these animals, elevating it from a misdemeanor to a felony with up to three years of imprisonment. Over and over, House Republican leaders sided with the dog fighters and gamecock breeders, thwarting his efforts.

Now Blumenauer's party controls Congress. A Senate bill similar to Blumenauer's, CO- sponsored by Sen. Maria Cantwell, D-Wash., is also expected to pass, so this congressional session is looking more and more like good news for the humane treatment of animals.

Now Blumenauer's party controls Congress. A Senate bill similar to Blumenauer's, CO- sponsored by Sen. Maria Cantwell, D-Wash., is also expected to pass, so this congressional session is looking more and more like good news for the humane treatment of animals. There's nothing radical about this legislation. Animal fighting is a cruel, barbaric criminal enterprise. The existing federal misdemeanor clearly isn't sufficient deterrent for the cockfighters in Ore- gon and Washington. Take a drive to almost any rural nook in the Northwest and you're likely to come upon a grassy field lined with rows of little huts housing gamecocks being raised for sale in Louisiana or the Philippines, where cockfighting is legal.

Police in Oregon say these birds, bred for aggression and selling for \$1,000 or more, are also widely used for underground cockfights in Oregon and Washington, despite state bans on the blood sport. The frequency of cockfighting busts in the news supports this claim. Blumenauer's bill to toughen federal laws on animal fighting won't make it go away. His efforts, however, will surely help crack down on it, and Oregonians can be proud that their 3rd District congressman is taking the lead nationally against one of human- kind's most extreme forms of animal cruelty. ing school kids and civic groups all over the state in more than 50 speeches every year.

Maybe it was Taylor's love of the limelight that got him crosswise with the governor. It didn't help when Taylor was referred to in a headline last month as Ore- gon's "climate guru" on a story in which he took issue with the science behind Kulongoski's push for stricter vehicle emissions standards and more reliance on re- newable energy sources.

The governor's sensible policies, however, face no threat from Taylor's dissenting views. Those opinions should be allowed to rise or fall on their scientific, not political, merit.

Taylor, meanwhile, could help end the fuss and confusion about his role in the state by simply changing his title to something more apt, like "OSU Climate Service director.



By: Sara Amundon Nov 05, 2023

The Oregonian/OregonLive's coverage of U.S. Rep. Earl Blumenauer's storied career did not mention his extraordinary devotion to animal protection, in which he has been an outstanding leader and legislator, ("Earl Blumenauer will not seek reelection, ending a nearly 3-decade career in Congress," Oct. 30). He has had a hand in the passage of nearly every major animal protection gain at the federal level over the past quarter century, and he has been a stalwart co-chair of the Congressional Animal Protection Caucus. He has helped to elect humane candidates across the country, and he has made the case to Democrats and Republicans alike that their constituents want them to show up strong for animals in the Congress.

It is not a coincidence that his commitment to the liveable community he has served for so many years led him to a deeper and more inclusive attitude of the interests of animals and the people who care about them. And it is impossible to overstate how much better the world is for animals and people as a result.

### E-Newsletter - April 26, 2017

#### Ending horse slaughter: a glimmer of hope on Capitol Hill

Dear Friends,

These are strange times in our nation's capital, with looming discussions of government shutdowns and tax giveaways for the wealthy. In this era, Congressional victories may seem difficult to come by.

Yet I wanted to tell you about one glimmer of hope that I saw today on Capitol Hill. Just a few hours ago, the Congressional Animal Protection Caucus, which I co-chair, held a briefing to highlight the issue of horse slaughter, the horrific killing and processing of horses for human consumption. The Caucus, a bipartisan group of over 120 lawmakers committed to passing legislation that promotes animal welfare, was formed to highlight important issues affecting animals and to educate members and their staff on the need for sensible animal protection legislation.

While it may sound foreign, horse slaughter is still prevalent in the United States. Each year, over 100,000 horses are purchased in the U.S. and shipped to slaughterhouses across our borders in crowded trucks, without food, water, or rest, only to be slaughtered using often gruesome methods. In order to educate my fellow Representatives on this issue, I invited experts from all over the country to testify on the need to end horse slaughter now. The panel that testified included animal welfare experts, as well as celebrities like "Pretty Little Liars" star Huw Collins and sportscaster Bonnie-Jill Laflin. The room was packed, and the presentation was powerful, personal, and highly effective in conveying the horrors of horse slaughter.

Today's event showed that people are paying attention, and something can be done. On the very first day of this Congress, with my colleague Representative Vern Buchanan (R-FL), I introduced legislation to bring an end to this abysmal practice of horse slaughter. H.R. 113, the Safeguard American Food Exports (SAFE) Act, now has 97 bipartisan co-sponsors. The momentum from our briefing represents a critical step in helping to usher this common-sense and humane legislation through Congress. I am committed to putting the resources of the Congressional Animal Protection Caucus behind the bill until it becomes law.

Whether it's fighting to strengthen existing laws, or working to push forward new ones, we must continue to fight for policies that protect animals in the United States and abroad. Today's briefing was a small, but significant step in this Congress, and I am proud to have worked to provide a glimmer of light amidst this strange and unusual time.

Courage.

Earl Blumenauer Member of Congress

### E-Newsletter - May 9, 2024

#### An issue that breaks through partisanship

#### Dear Friends,

After 12 horses senselessly died at the Kentucky Derby last year, we are still grappling with the fragility of our country's animal welfare laws.

Thankfully, in an era of unprecedented division and acrimony in Congress, animal welfare is an area that stands out as an opportunity to bring people together and solve a problem. The issue builds trust among lawmakers who do not normally work together and doesn't have the same special interest opposition as many other initiatives. Nothing has given me greater satisfaction than leading this work in Congress as co-chair of the Congressional Animal Protection Caucus.

Our caucus is an illustration of how government should function, and a respite from the breakdown of issues along familiar partisan lines. We have had remarkable success. Following pressure from the Animal Protection Caucus after last year's deadly Kentucky Derby, the Horseracing Integrity and Safety Authority announced long-overdue reforms to better protect horses and their riders. Just last week, after years of advocacy the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) finalized a rule to end horse soring: the intentional infliction of pain to produce a distinctive gait at horse shows.

Our work extends beyond horse racing. In 2018, we ended the barbaric practice of animal fighting and we followed it in 2019 by making animal cruelty a federal crime. We have secured protections for big cats in captivity, encouraged the federal government to use non-animal testing methods, and spotlighted the scant protections for farm animals.

We cannot let up now. As Congress prepares to renew the Farm Bill, animal welfare must be the central pillar of our agricultural policies. That's why I have proposed comprehensive legislation, the Food and Farm Act, to overhaul our nation's food system to center people, animals, and the environment instead of big agricultural interests.

We also need the federal government to actually enforce existing laws on the books. There have been horrific violations of the Animal Welfare Act, most recently in Virginia where the USDA failed to act after a breeder amassed hundreds of violations for keeping dogs in the most appalling conditions

Throughout my 28-year long career in Congress, animal welfare has demonstrated the ability to bring people together and make real progress. I look forward to continuing this work for the remainder of my time in Congress and beyond.

Courage,

Human al 1 Earl Blumenauer

Member of Congress

#### Animal Welfare

#### Appendix

- 2001: Amendment to Farm Security and Rural Investment Act of 2002 Amendment prohibits the shipment of fighting dogs or birds from the United States to foreign countries; and increases the penalties for promoting illegal animal fighting venues. Agreed to in House on October 8, 2001
- 2001: Amendment to Farm Security and Rural Investment Act of 2002 Amendment prohibits the interstate movement of animals for animal fighting. Agreed to in House on October 4, 2001
- 2002: Polar Bear Protection Act of 2001 Amends the Federal criminal code to prohibit knowingly making a polar bear available for use in a traveling show or circus.
- 2003: H.Amdt.224 to the Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2004 Increases funding for the Office of the Inspector General by \$800,000 for enforcement of animal fighting statutes. Agreed to in House on July 14, 2003.
- 2004: H.Amdt.676 to the Agriculture, Rural Development, Food and Drug Administration, and Related Agencies Appropriations Act, 2005 - Increases funding for the USDA Inspector General to improve the enforcement of Federal animal fighting laws. Agreed to in House on July 13, 2004
- 2007: Pollinator Habitat Protection Act of 2007 Amends the Food Security Act of 1985 to require that conservation programs, except the farmland protection program, establish a priority and provide incentives for: (1) increasing habitat for native and managed pollinators; and (2) establishing cropping systems, integrated pest management regimes, and other practices to protect native and managed pollinators.
- 2009, 2019, 2021: Captive Primate Safety Act This bill limits the trade and possession of nonhuman primates. For example, the bill prohibits most individuals from owning a nonhuman primate as a pet. Passed House on February 24, 2009.
- 2015: AWARE Act This bill amends the Animal Welfare Act to apply standards for humane treatment to farm animals at federal research or laboratory animal facilities.
- 2016, 2017: Limiting Inhumane Federal Trapping Act This bill prohibits the Department of the Interior or the Department of Agriculture (USDA), in performing their duties, from using, recommending, training in the use of, or planning for the use of, any body-gripping trap used to kill or capture an animal.
- 2017: Animal Welfare Accountability and Transparency Act Requires the Department of Agriculture (USDA) to maintain and publicly disclose records relating to the administration of the Animal Welfare Act and the Horse Protection Act.



#### Congressman Blumenauer: Cycling Champion

Congressman Earl Blumenauer came to Congress in 1996 with a bike instead of a car, one of the few members of Congress to not rely on a single-occupancy vehicle to get around. He brought with him a unique perspective about the bicycle as a transportation tool that could help people get where they need to go and help build communities that were safer, more economically resilient, greener, better places to live. This perspective was partly due to Earl's years helping implement Oregon's firstin-the-nation Bike Bill and creating a State Transportation Commission — Earl's first major piece of state legislation. The Bike Bill required that a certain portion of funds spent on building roads go towards projects that supported people walking and biking, nearly 20 years before the federal government would do so in the Intermodal Surface Transportation Efficiency Act (ISTEA). Earl also was a key player in integrating Oregon's unique land use system with transportation planning and spending, which further affirmed his commitment to the bicycle.

As a Multnomah County Commissioner and Portland City Councilor, Earl continued to direct the city to advance a multi-modal transportation perspective. His work would help make biking a safer, easier, more affordable, and greener way to get around Portland. Under his direction, Portland developed its first Bike Master Plan, setting it on the path to becoming the first major bicycle-friendly city in the United States in the late 1990s. These efforts meant that Earl came to Congress already having been recognized as one of the 100 most influential people in the cycling world. Congress was a chance to make the Portland story national.

His first year in Congress, Earl established the Congressional Bike Caucus. This bipartisan group of members works to make bicycling safer, more affordable, and more fun. It benefits millions in their districts who bike for fun, for exercise, or as a way to get around their community. The caucus proves that burning calories instead of carbon can be a way to build community and for members of Congress to find things that unite them instead of divide them. It is also a way for local communities to find ways to tell their bike story to those who otherwise wouldn't pay attention.

As a member of the Transportation and Infrastructure Committee and the Foreign Affairs Committee, Earl pushed for programs to improve bicycling in the US, and for opportunities to increase access to the bicycle in developing countries. The bicycle provided a low-cost, reliable, more efficient form of transportation. The World Bicycle Relief program has distributed over 700,000 bicycles internationally. This has helped people in developing countries, especially young women and school children, expand their world in

terms of education, healthcare, safety, and economic development.

Back at home, Earl helped the League of American Bicyclists, People for Bikes, and the larger cycling community come together as a strong voice for bicycling. The annual National Bike Summit was a robust voice for everyone who gets around by walking and biking in the US Capitol. The Summit became an annual event drawing up to 1,000 bicycling advocates to the Capitol. It highlighted the power of people biking and the value that biking can play in creating community, supporting economic development, and giving people safe, affordable options. The ubiquitous neon bike pin became a symbol of a movement, and can be found on messenger bags, blazers, fancy dresses, and bike jerseys throughout DC and throughout the country. Earl has been recognized as one of the Top 25 Changemakers in the History of Bicycling.

Not just the creator of a movement, Earl has served as the thought leader when it comes to bicycling policy, protecting the Transportation Enhancement Program and its set-aside for biking and walking. He helped local communities and USDOT protect local investments under the Transportation Alternatives Program. He set forth a vision for a transportation system that valued the safety and comfort of people biking as highly as people driving. His engagement with soon to be Secretary LaHood led to the creation of



the Livable Communities Task Force, the first coordinated effort between USDOT, HUD, and EPA to align their policies and programs for a more multimodal, livable future. His legislation has made getting around by bike a safe, affordable, and appealing option for millions of Americans, and has helped cement the Bike Lobby as a true stakeholder in the transportation world.

The decades of work, relationship-building, biking around the Capitol, and bike-pin wearing paid off in the 2021 Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act. After seeing the hunger in their own communities for more biking and walking facilities, other members of Congress joined Earl in pushing for increased funding and changed policy to make it easier, safer, and more affordable for people to choose biking and walking. This resulted in a number of successes in the bipartisan Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act of 2021, including the Safe Streets and Roads for All program, the Complete Streets set-aside

funding, the Active Transportation Infrastructure Investment Program, and the expanded Safe Routes to School program. These gains for cycling represent decades of work building a movement. Earl helped elected leaders and decision-makers in Washington, D.C. and across the country see bicycling as a solution to so many of our current problems. Biking builds community and connection. It addresses safety, decades of underinvestment in communities of color, climate change, air pollution and obesity. The system should not assume that everyone would prefer to drive and pay for an automobile, rather than giving people the choice about how to get around.

Earl also engages in the bike manufacturing policy world. From his role on the Ways and



Means Committee, he has led multiple bills to make it easier for bike manufacturers to access the components and materials they need. In the 118th Congress, Earl convened domestic manufacturers, organized labor, and civil society to examine the de minimis trade loophole. Since 1938, the intention of de minimis in U.S. trade law has been to ease the burden on the U.S. government related to processing imports – the revenue collected from imports of low value simply wasn't worth the effort. The federal government has significantly raised this limit since 1938, most recently to \$800 in 2016. The latest increase has coincided with an explosion in e-commerce packages that use the de minimis provision to enter the United States, currently more than two million packages per day. This influx of imports that do not pay duties, taxes, and fees and provide less data to the U.S. government has created a wide-ranging set of unaddressed issues, including noncompliance with U.S. laws related to forced labor and consumer product safety, while harming U.S. competitiveness.

While not immediately apparent, de minimis' relevance to bikes is significant. Many Chinese e-bike manufacturers are exploiting the de minimis loophole to sell \$799 e-bikes that are dangerous and hurt U.S. bike manufacturers' ability to compete. These bikes and their noncompliant lithium ion batteries are at the center of an incalculable number of fires across the United States. The fires from these

batteries begin without warning and have cost lives.

Earl's Import Security and Fairness Act would close the de minimis loophole for China. Their imports would no longer skirt safety regulations in U.S. law. This legislation passed as part of the Chips and Science Act but the Senate did not follow through. It was reintroduced alongside a bipartisan, bicameral coalition of members of Congress in the 118th Congress. Earl likes to say that bikes will save the world and e-bikes will help make it happen. Bikes help people live healthier lives, they help create connection amongst community members, they support local businesses, they encourage physical activity, they reduce greenhouse gas emissions, and they bring joy. With an e-bike, anyone can be a bike commuter, errand-runner, or park goer. As Congress's bike evangelist, Earl has helped spread the gospel of bicycling, and made it easier for people across the United States to get around their community safely, easily, and with the power of their own two wheels.



#### Legislative Accomplishments

- In his first two years in office, Earl worked closely with Chairman Young and Shuster and Ranking Member Oberstar to direct federal funding towards biking and walking projects; this resulted in a federal model much like the Oregon Bike Bill, committing 1% of State Transportation Project dollars to biking and walking projects.
- As a member of the Transportation Committee and the Ways and Means Committee, Earl protected and increased funding specific for biking and walking projects throughout five different reauthorization cycles, resulting in historic funding levels for biking and walking projects and increased control at the local level, where city, county, and state governments tend to better understand the needs of their residents and be more responsive to biking and walking.
- Earl has worked hard to remove the unseen ways in which the federal government incentivizes driving over biking. After over a decade of work, he passed the Bicycle Commuter Act, which gave people commuting to work via bicycle access to the employer-provided tax benefits that people driving or taking transit to work have been able to access for decades. Republicans removed this equalizing incentive in 2017.
- After helping Chairman Oberstar create the Safe Routes to Schools Act, Earl expanded it to high schools as part of the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act of 2021.
- As the number of people biking and walking increased in the 2000s, safety became a bigger and bigger concern. Cities across the country implemented Vision Zero plans, pushing for a system that prioritized human life and rejected the assumption that death was an inevitable part of getting around in our country. Earl led the charge at the national level with the first introduction of a Vision Zero bill in 2014, resulting in the Safe Streets and Roads for All program in the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act of 2021, which provides \$800 million in funding for projects around the country that are part of an identified Vision Zero plan.
- Earl's Active Community Transportation Act of 2010, which proposed the first federal grant program for communities building complete biking and walking networks, resulted in the Active Transportation Infrastructure Investment fund, part of the 2021 Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act.

#### **Legislative Actions**

- Introduced the Bicycle Commuter Act, which gave employees who bike to work the opportunity to access the transportation fringe benefit which is also given to those who drive or take transit (introduced 2001, enacted in 2008, repealed in 2017).
- Introduced a successful amendment to the Republican Energy Policy Act of 2003 and the Republican Energy Policy Act of 2005 to establish a Conserve by Bike program within the US Department of Transportation. The amendment became included in base legislative text, but the bill did not pass the Senate (introduced in 2003).
- Introduced multiple bills to address import, and safety needs for bicycle manufacturing, including five bills in the 109th Congress, five bills in the 110th Congress, and five bills in the 112th Congress.
- Introduced the Transportation and Housing Choices for Gas Price Relief Act of 2008, which created an array of grant programs, tax incentives, and provided data to consumer to help them reduce the impact of rising gas prices on their household budget
- Introduced the Safe Routes to High School Act, which would have expanded the Safe Routes to School program to include high schools as well as elementary and middle schools (introduced in 2009, enacted in 2022).
- Introduced the Green Routes to Work Act of 2009, which would have provided a series of tax incentives to commuters and companies to support folks walking, biking, taking transit, carpooling, or telecommuting.
- Introduced the Active Community Transportation Act of 2010, which would have established a federal competitive grant program to communities to build complete, safe, and connected biking and walking networks (introduced in 2009, enacted in 2022).
- Introduced the Commuter Relief Act of 2011, which would have made technical changes to make the bike benefit easier for people to use and companies to administer.
- Introduced the Bikeshare Commuter Act to make technical changes to the Bicycle Commuter Benefit and include bikeshare as an eligible use of the program (introduced in 2016).
- Introduced the Vision Zero Act in 2015, which would have established a federal grant program to cities to implement Vision Zero plans.
- Introduced the Bicycles for Rural African Transport Act (introduced in 2021) which would establish a rural mobility program within USAID to help people in international rural communities increase mobility and access to work, health care, education, and family.

\*in chronological order, does not include resolutions

#### Earl's Bicycle Dictation

The bicycle is the most efficient form of transportation ever designed. Allowing people to burn calories instead of fossil fuels, requiring minimal infrastructure investment. capturing opportunities for people to being able to meet fundamental transportation needs quickly, easily and efficiently. For over a hundred- and thirty-years, bicycles have made a profound difference. They were introduced at the latter part of the 1800s and soon captured the public's imagination. The Bicycle advocates actually inspired the good roads movement in America so it would be safer to ride bicycles. That power carried forward being rediscovered during the pandemic. Bicycles were an important form of relief from the pressures of the pandemic.

The bicycle has made a difference in the area of international development. The World Bicycle Relief program has distributed over 700,000 bicycles which has had a liberating effect for poor people, especially young mothers and school children to be able to expand their world in terms of education, healthcare, safety, and economic development.

The bicycle movement is facing a renaissance moment in the aftermath of the pandemic. In streets and sidewalks that are crowded with Amazon delivery trucks, the bicycle delivery mechanism is a godsend. In a sense it's back to the future, because UPS started as a bicycle delivery service. Even now as we're seeing



crowded urban roadways jammed with cars and trucks, the cargo bike and the food delivery service on e-bikes are helping break the gridlock to deliver goods and services and provide an opportunity for people to earn a living.

The Safe Routes to School program enables children to safely navigate their daily trip to school, it helps expand their world in a way that gives them self-control and enables them to burn calories instead of fossil fuel and preserves the quality of life in the neighborhood.

The e-bike can make any cyclist into an effective bike commuter in a low-carbon, quick, convenient fashion. There is little by way of infrastructure that's necessary and it has a profound quality of life improvement for our neighborhoods and communities.

The bicycle tourism movement has exploded with opportunities around the country for

people to explore America in a way that's fun, healthy, and exciting. Cycling is also revitalizing the neighborhood dynamic. We are finding that people using bikes are more likely to stop, shop and buy. It puts less stress on the neighborhoods we're trying to revitalize. Indeed, in Portland we have found businesses willing to surrender what had previously been a precious commodity, a parking space in front of their brewpub or bookstore and turn it into bicycle parking which they can accommodate eight people instead of one car.

But it's not all a bed of roses. There are some thorns here in terms of the dangers. We've had high profile accidents that illustrates the dangers to not just cyclists but to pedestrians. In our community non-motorized transportation has not had the priority that it should have with Federal, state and local transportation has not had the priority that it should have with Federal, state and local transportation authorities. But that is changing given the carnage on our roadway. This is an opportunity in light of legislation that we've helped enact to be able to empower people to make a difference to make cyclists and pedestrians safe. It is a way to bring people together in a high-profile manner that illustrates it. Our 122nd Avenue project with 20 million federal dollars would be an exciting opportunity to highlight this as well as smaller projects in our community as a result of unprecedented infrastructure investment.

When we add our program on 82nd Avenue there's an opportunity here to tie the narrative together in terms of opportunity, progress, and challenges for the future.

You get the idea. An issue, a constituency, a powerful story that is not fully understood or appreciated but within our capacity to change that narrative to give it more attention, more momentum and clarity.

#### Portland Bicycling

#### **Timeline:**

- 1971 The passage of the Oregon Bike Bill, championed by Don Stathos
- 1972 Portland Downtown plan adopted
- 1973 Portland's first bike plan
- 1974 Harbor drive closed for Waterfront Park
- 1975 Downtown Parking policy adopted to incentivize transit use and carpooling
- 1976 Mt Hood Freeway plans withdrawn
- 1978 Downtown transit mall opens
- 1986 Eastside Light Rail opened
- 1989 Central City Plan adopted
- 1996 Bike Master Plan adopted
- 2001 Eastbank Esplanade opened
- 2015 Tilikum Crossing opened
- 2016 Biketown opened

#### Earl's Work in Portland

Portland has long been hailed as one of the most bicycle-friendly cities in the United States. It did not achieve this status by chance.

Portland's first bicycle plan was developed by residents in 1973, leading to the establishment of a bicycle program and Bicycle Advisory Committee within the city's transportation bureau. In the decades following this plan, Portland worked to reclaim its downtown, and canceled a major highway project to build the nation's first light rail instead. Increased bicycle use followed, with counts on the Hawthorne Bridge rising from 200 cyclists per day in 1975 to over 2,000 twenty years later.

Under the leadership of then-City Commissioner Earl, Portland adopted a subsequent 20-year Bicycle Master Plan in 1995. The ambitious document made it the city's policy to "Make the bicycle an integral part of daily life in Portland." It laid out goals for increasing bike lane miles from 185 to 630, providing greater access to bicycle parking, and improving opportunities to use bicycles in conjunction with transit.

The city made rapid progress in the years immediately after the plan was adopted. From 1996 to 2002, Portland built 139 new miles of bikeways, including widening the sidewalks of the Hawthorne bridge in 1999 and opening the lower deck of the Steel Bridge to cyclists in 2001. With greater support for bicycling infrastructure, adoption took off: Portlanders went from bicycling on 1.5 percent of trips in 1990 to 6.8 percent in 2011.





#### Earl's Work in Congress

#### The Bicycle Caucus

When Earl arrived in Congress in 1996, he found bicycling a great way to connect with his new colleagues, regardless of their background or political party. Cycling experienced rapid growth in Portland around the same time, and just a few years before Reps. Peter DeFazio, Jim Oberstar, and Joe Kennedy had teamed up to amend the 1991 surface transportation reauthorization to require states to spend some federal highway funding on improvements for bicyclists and pedestrians.

Earl founded the Congressional Bicycle Caucus to build upon the work of their "Chain Gang." The caucus has helped educate the public and his colleagues about the role of bicycling as a transportation mode, and as part of our tools to combat obesity and climate change. In 2005, Earl was named one of The Top 25 Change Makers in American Bicycling History.

The bipartisan organization now counts nearly a hundred members and works to advance legislation supporting bicycling, serves as a resource for members of Congress and staff looking to understand bicycle policy, and welcomes bicyclists visiting our nation's capital from across the country.

#### Bicycle Commuter Tax Benefit

A matter of parity for bicyclists, the bicycle commuter tax benefit was originally enacted in 2009 and established a pre-tax benefit similar to that for employer-provided parking. Under the benefit, employers could offer to provide a reimbursement of up to \$20/month for expenses relating to bicycle commuting expenses. But if an employee elected to take advantage the bicycle commuting reimbursement, they were not eligible to receive transit or parking commuter benefits. The Tax Cuts and Jobs Act (P.L. 115-97), suspended the bicycle commuting reimbursement benefit through 2025.

The Bicycle Commuter Act would restore the benefit, and modernize it by:

- 1. Making the benefit a pre-tax benefit, like parking and transit, rather than a reimbursement.
- 2. Allowing employees to receive a bicycle benefit of up to 30% of the parking benefit (currently equivalent to \$81/month, less than \$1,000/year, for bicycling).
- 3. Allowing the bicycle benefit to be used in concert with the transit and parking benefits.
- 4. Adding bikeshare as eligible for the benefit and clarifying that electric bikes are eligible.

The Bicycle Commuter Act passed the House of Representatives during the 116th Congress as part of H.R. 2, the Moving Forward Act and during the 117th Congress as a part of H.R. 5376, the Build Back Better Act.

#### The Bikeshare Transit Act

As of 2022 at least 136 communities have bikeshare systems, supporting a network of more than 100,000 bikes. In 2022, riders took 157 million trips on bikeshare systems across North America,. Even as the COVID-19 pandemic weighed on transit ridership, bikeshare systems continued to see growing trip numbers as people seek transportation alternatives. Systems operate in communities of all sizes from Los Angeles and Portland to Topeka and Conway, Arkansas.

Despite their size and importance to transit systems and community mobility, bikeshare was not eligible for federal transit funding. This legislation, which was enacted in 2021 as part of the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act, makes bikeshare eligible for Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality programs.

#### The Vision Zero Act

In more than 40 urban, rural, and suburban communities across the country, residents, activists, and elected officials have come together to adopt and implement Vision Zero plans. These plans improve safety for pedestrians, bicyclists, transit users, motorists, and vehicle passengers. Vision Zero is an innovative, multifaceted approach to improve transportation safety by using data, new partnerships, safe planning, and community-focused solutions to achieve zero traffic fatalities.

While communities are integrating their Vision Zero plans into transportation policy, the federal government has not supported the design or implementation of Vision Zero plans. The Vision Zero Act of 2021, which was enacted as part of the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act, integrates Vision Zero into federal transportation policy to prioritize safety, equity, and proper planning.

The Vision Zero Act makes the development and implementation of Vision Zero plans eligible for federal funding through the Surface Transportation Block Grant program and the Highway

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Safety Improvement Program. Vision Zero plans must include: a description of projects, policies, and data-driven evaluation methods, implementation methods and strategies, a description of equitable investment for low -income and minority communities, and a description of local government coordination.

In February 2023, the Biden Administration announced \$800 million in grants to support implementation of Vision Zero plans around the country.

#### **The Washington Post** Capitol Hill Spokes Man By Benjamin Forgey, August 19th, 2001

When It Comes to Urban Design and 'Livability' Issues, Rep. Earl Blumenauer Isn't Just Spinning His Wheels

To negotiate a narrow passageway just outside the office of Democratic Rep. Earl Blumenauer, you have to step around the bicycle leaning against the wall -- a no-frills, off-the-shelf model with a battered black frame.

Blumenauer brought the bike with him on the plane from Oregon five years ago when he was first elected to the House. It has done the congressman a world of good in his short Washington career.

On the most mundane level, the bicycle provides personal transportation. Blumenauer rides it to and from work each day -- a short commute, as he lives in an apartment on Capitol Hill. Sporting plastic bike pins -fuchsia or chartreuse -- on his lapels, he'll snap on his elastic pants protectors during the day, wheel out the vehicle and pedal off to meetings at the White House or federal offices around town.

Using the bicycle every day also helps him stay in shape, not a negligible benefit in the mind of an intense 53-year-old who insists on running several marathons every year. Blumenauer's long morning runs or bike rides are doubly useful because he dictates speeches and letters on the move. Staff members get used to the choppy rhythm of the tapes.

Right from the start, Blumenauer used his interest in bicycles to widen his circle of political acquaintances on the Hill. Noting that there was a caucus of like-minded members for almost any issue -- but not yet for bikes --Blumenauer organized the Congressional Bicycle Caucus shortly after he arrived in 1996.

The bicycle, it seems clear, helped Blumenauer escape the plunge into invisibility suffered by



most new House members. It is not easy to gain attention as a low-ranking name on a list of 435 publicity-conscious souls, but Blumenauer quickly recognized the potential of becoming the leading member of a congressional biking pack. The caucus is a tripartisan group, its founder is pleased to point out, that has grown to 82 members -- 60 Democrats, 21 Republicans and one independent.

Yet by far the most potent political function of the bicycle for Blumenauer is its symbolism. As a low-cost, healthy, energy-efficient mode of transportation, the bicycle epitomizes the congressman's all-consuming interest in issues associated with "livability." After only two full terms in the House, Blumenauer, quite remarkably, has become a sort of congressional Mr. Livability.

"Every issue, if it is ever going to take off, needs a champion who is focused and committed, who can walk through walls or walk through fire in order to make something happen," says Daniel S. Wilson, a chief lobbyist for the American Institute of Architects. "And that's what Earl is. He is the Energizer Bunny of livability on Capitol Hill."

With his wiry frame, bike pins, signature bow tie and close-cropped salt-andpepper hair -- always a bit disheveled -- Blumenauer is the picture of professorial earnestness during his frequent appearances on the House floor or on the livability lecture circuit. He includes a ritual definition of livability early in most of his speeches -- it is anything that helps "make our families safe, healthy and economically secure."

As this broad language suggests, livability -- often also referred to as "smart growth" or, by environmentalists, as "sustainable growth" -- is more a theme than a single, easily definable issue. Anthony Downs, senior fellow at the Brookings Institution, has pointed out that it is hard to find anyone openly opposed to something called smart growth -- "since its opposite is 'dumb

## The Washington Post

growth.' " The same might be said of livability. Who, after all, stands tall for unlivability?

For Blumenauer, however, smart growth and dumb growth, livability and unlivability are not vague abstractions. Rather, he believes, they are omnipresent qualities of our everyday lives -and most citizens can tell the difference between them.

Take the location of post offices, for instance. Would you prefer your local post office to be personably situated on a convenient street near other stores, or somewhere out of town in a big, and possibly more efficient, warehouse-type building?

Blumenauer thinks most people would choose the smaller, ostensibly less efficient post offices -- such convenient services, he says, are "building blocks of a vibrant, small downtown." By contrast, he argues, the U.S. Postal Service's propensity to abandon old, centrally located stations in favor of new, larger buildings on the fringes of towns and cities is "an immense contributor to sprawl or dumb growth."

To give local folks a say in such matters, Blumenauer authored the Post Office Community Partnership Act, a bill that would require the Postal Service to obey local land use laws and consult with local groups when making decisions about locations. "The Postal Service routinely gives people more input into what version of the Elvis stamp it is going to select," Blumenauer routinely points out, "than over something that can have a huge impact on people's lives."

This is modest legislation, indeed -- but it could have a very important, very direct impact on the vitality -- or should we say livability -- of hundreds of American places.

Blumenauer's career in Congress so far has been dedicated to writing or supporting a relentless stream of such modest proposals, and to composing a ceaseless flow of commentary on livability issues. He never seems to miss an opportunity for a C-SPAN moment in the House, and almost always uses it to deliver a spirited discourse on energy conservation, mass transit, mixed-use neighborhoods, affordable housing, historic preservation, farmland retention, open space protection . . . the list could go on and on.

Legislators, even strong livability advocates, characteristically spoon out just one or two topics from the rich stew of available issues. Sen. Lincoln Chafee (R-R.I.), for instance, has long been an advocate of safe development of those abandoned, poisoned industrial tracts -- "brownfields" -- that scar many American cities and towns. Finally, this year Chafee's "brownfields" revitalization bill looks as if it has a good chance of becoming law.

Blumenauer is different. He makes it a point to be all over the place. As a relative neophyte in Washington and member of the

House minority, Blumenauer knows he lacks the clout to attach his name to a single big legislative program -- a Livability Act of 2001 or some such thing. Probably, he wouldn't want to do it in any case. Huge, catchall federal initiatives are not his thing.

"The customary way of doing federal business hasn't worked," he says. "Every administration since Lyndon Johnson has had some variation of the big urban program -- enterprise zones or whatever it is called -- in which they try to bribe people to invest where they don't want to live."

The congressman's approach to governing is rooted in his home town of Portland, a medium-size city that is close to legendary in livability circles. Blumenauer helped make it that way -- for the better part of a quarter-century before his election to Congress, he was a major player in Portland's politics of livability.

With its growth boundary and a host of other initiatives -removal of a functioning highway to make a riverside park, mandatory street-level retail stores in its revived downtown, stringent urban design guidelines and many others -- Portland also is a place libertarians, property rights activists and certain conservatives love to hate.

In a 1999 Newsweek column attacking Al Gore for his prolivability procilivities, conservative columnist George Will quipped that "liberalism is about to suffer an acute case of Portland envy." The growth boundary and other governmental interferences, Will and others argue, have driven up housing prices and decreased housing choices. Furthermore, Portland critics argue, the advantages of the city's alternative transportation policies are minimal at best --Blumenauer's fellow bike riders, they point out, account for only two percent of Portland commuters.

Blumenauer, for his part, relishes rallying to Portland's defense. Housing costs have risen, he agrees, but Portlanders "have more choice." He also says "studies show that Portland homeowners are more satisfied with their housing than in other cities -- such as Atlanta." And that two percent commuter biking figure, he proudly huffs, "is five times the national average -- despite a terrible biking climate."

Our aim in Portland," Blumenauer says simply, "was to give people a sense that they belong. We looked at schools, at jobs and at the fabric of the community, and tried to make sure all these things came together to support the quality of life people want." He rates the city's success as "stunning."

Like many activist politicians of his generation, Blumenauer got his start in a battle against a federal highway. In 1970, shortly after graduating from Portland's Lewis and Clark

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College, Blumenauer enlisted as a foot soldier in the "epic struggle" -- his words, 30 years after the fact -- to stop an interstate freeway from plowing through the city's neighborhoods. Then, in 1972, Blumenauer got himself promoted to the equivalent of lieutenant, at least, by running successfully for the Oregon legislature on a platform of environmental reform. He was 24.

And, as it happened, he was elected at a turning point for Oregon. An unusual coalition of rural Republicans and urban Democrats united to adopt a statewide planning law mandating urban-growth boundaries and other reforms designed to preserve open space and combat sprawl. Among the law's other effects, in Blumenauer's view, was paving the way for Portland's renaissance.

Although he had not yet received his law degree (that came in 1976), Blumenauer distinguished himself in his inaugural term by writing and floor-managing a comprehensive transportation law. Like most states, Oregon followed the federal lead (and federal dollars) in emphasizing road construction almost to the exclusion of other kinds of transportation infrastructure. Blumenauer's law changed that.

In Oregon, after 1973, rails, bike paths, bus lanes, sidewalks, pedestrian bridges -- you name it -- had to be given a fair shake, and connections between different kinds of transportation had to be carefully thought out. Blumenauer's law anticipated by nearly two decades similar reforms in federal policy embodied in the Intermodal Surface Transportation Act of 1991 -- a fact the congressman doesn't mind calling attention to.

n 1978 Blumenauer switched from state to local government, getting elected to the Multnomah County Commission. In 1986 he won a seat on Portland's five-member City Council. He lost a bid to become mayor in 1992, but stayed on as a councilman until 1996, when he ran for Congress twice, and won twice.

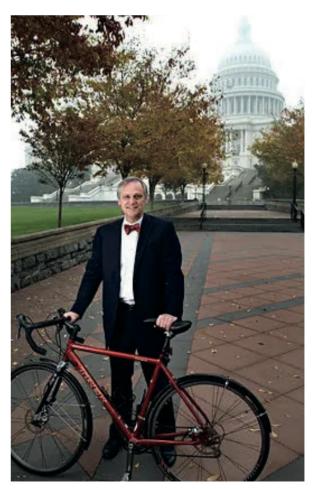
IIt was one of those fortunate swerves that politicians are always on the lookout for. After Republican Sen. Bob Packwood had been forced to resign in disgrace, Democratic Rep. Ron Wyden, a fixture in the most urban and most Democratic of the state's five congressional districts, made a run for the Senate in a special election, and won.

Blumenauer, by then a familiar and well-liked figure in Portland (the most populous part of Wyden's 3rd District), veered into the race for the vacant House seat and won. In the fall elections he won again -- his campaign buttons read "Vote Earl, Vote Often" -- and he hasn't been seriously challenged since.

Under Portland's commission form of government, where council members also have executive responsibility for running city departments, Blumenauer's special domains were planning and transportation. He oversaw the downtown's revival and the expansion of the city's light-rail network. His consensus-building style, forged in the anti-freeway struggles, involved getting lots of people together on a regular basis to consider different options for this or that policy decision.

Early in his council days, recalls lifelong friend and political associate Rick Gustafson, Blumenauer realized that people in the neighborhoods didn't know enough about the issues to take on City Hall on anything like an equal footing. Blumenauer's innovative solution was to instigate a course at Portland State University where neighborhood leaders can be schooled at city expense. The result, Gustafson says, ensures Portland "maybe the besteducated population anywhere on transportation and land use issues."

Blumenauer believes this background in local government is perfect for a livability crusader. "The issue," he says, "is driven primarily by what's happening at the neighborhood, local and state levels." As "America's biggest landowner, landlord and employer," the federal government should simply become "a better partner in making communities livable," he says.



# The Washington Post

In practice, of course, it isn't so simple. Competing interest groups and the government's size and complexity can frustrate even the best intentions. Blumenauer pecks away tirelessly, however.

He is very good at spotting small issues that may have a large symbolic impact. In 1999 Blumenauer was able to badger the House into providing employees with monthly transit passes for the first time in its history. The subsidy doesn't amount to much -- the pass is worth \$21, as compared to a free parking space Blumenauer estimates to be worth about \$155.

But it is something for Blumenauer to build, and harp, on -he's a persistent critic of the inconsistencies in policies regarding the commuting habits of federal employees, policies he believes largely favor the automobile commuter. "Some agencies give away huge amounts of free parking," he notes, "and some charge for it. Some provide \$21 for a transit pass, and some \$60. How hard would it be for the federal government to just say, "We are going to be neutral in this"? Not actually to promote transit, but just treat everybody the same."

Blumenauer is at once a nagger and a policy wonk, a potentially tedious combination. But he is a tireless student of his subject, and he uses his knowledge both to persuade and disarm. Even many opponents appreciate Blumenauer's style and dedication. "We don't always agree with Earl's concepts or what he advocates," says Gary Garczynski, first vice president of the National Association of Home Biulders, "but we've found him always to be accessible and open-minded -- he's a soldier in the fight for sustainable, intelligent growth."

A divorced father of two grown children, Blumenauer is "on a personal level almost antisocial," says boyhood friend Gustafson. "Earl is who he appears to be," says Bill Wyatt, another longtime friend and political associate. "Voters after a while get a sense of that, and so do others, the interest groups and people who influence the political landscape. So, when he advocates alternative transportation, it isn't something he wants you to do but doesn't do himself. He's always been this way. He walks his talk very effectively."

Blumenauer is a highly partisan politician -- the founder, in fact, of the Committee for a Livable Future, a PAC that channeled \$145,500 to Democratic congressional candidates in last year's election. At the same time he speaks the language of bipartisanship and even manages to find a certain grim satisfaction in political life in a Republican House under a Republican president.

"I anticipate ironically that the politics of the Bush administration are going to help us," Blumenauer says. "The administration's budget and tax policies haven't left a whole lot of money. These issues of urban form and design, and of federal partnership, are pretty low-cost and high-impact." So far, however, Blumenauer has not experienced sterling success with his legislative agenda. This does not surprise him, doesn't seem to faze him and certainly doesn't stop him. This year alone, in addition to the post office bill and measures designed to benefit his Oregon constituents, Blumenauer has introduced or co-sponsored bills aiming to increase the supply of affordable housing, improve high-speed rail transportation, provide federal grants to states for rewriting their basic planning laws, raise tax benefits for land conservation and -- it almost goes without saying -- do something for biking commuters. Notably, all but one of these measures have a Republican or independent sponsor.

Blumenauer is perhaps at his most creative when zeroing in on issues that presidents, party leaders and committee chairmen don't talk about much. Military housing, for instance. "The U.S. military is the largest manager of infrastructure in the world," Blumenauer points out. "There are something like a third of a million units of military housing, and an amazing number of them are awful. Yet when you think about it, the military gets access to the largest chunk of the budget, it can finance these units at the lowest rate anywhere, the managers don't have to obey any of the ordinary rules and regulations that affect design, and they can court-martial bad tenants. Why shouldn't that lead to the best housing anywhere to be found?"

The stuff-'em-into-barracks era of military housing was out of date the moment Congress decided to abandon universal conscription, Blumenauer reasons, because from that time forward military services had to compete to attract, and keep, competent personnel. And if building sensibly designed communities for our soldiers and their families makes sense as a competitive strategy, he asks, wouldn't it also set a fine example for society as a whole?

The military as an exemplar of affordable housing and livable communities? It'll never happen, cynics would say. Far-fetched and impractical, pragmatists might argue. But it makes mighty good sense, rationalist Blumenauer would doggedly respond. This is Blumenauer at his unorthodox best, directing attention to a topic most folks simply take for granted and, with a combination of realism and idealism, offering a fresh perspective. In the short run -- and possibly in the long run, too -- this may well turn out to be Blumenauer's most important gift.

#### The Oregon Democrat, two-

wheeling and dealing for "smart growth."Rep. Earl Blumenauer's bike plays more than a symbolic role in his office. The three-term congressman rides it to and from work each day.

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#### Earl Blumenauer of Oregon Rides to the White House; Look Out for Motorcades

By Greg Hitt - December 29, 2007



WASHINGTON -- A little after 6:00 one morning, Earl Blumenauer emerged from his Capitol Hill row house. The temperature hovered near 40 degrees and it was really raining. The Oregon congressman hopped on his rust-colored Trek Portland, an aluminum-frame bicycle with a carbon front fork designed to absorb road shock, and pedaled to his office.

Though he was alone on the road, and despite the downpour, he stopped at every red traffic signal. At one odd-shaped intersection, Mr. Blumenauer mused aloud about all the streets jutting off at odd angles. Perfect for a traffic circle, he suggested.

Later that morning, House Minority Leader John Boehner, the Ohio Republican,

was incredulous that anyone had been out in such weather. "Are you out of your mind?" he asked.

Some members of Congress come to Washington and get in the fast lane. The 59-year-old Mr. Blumenauer came to Washington and got in the bike lane. Few members of Congress care more than he does about cranks and sprockets.

Mr. Blumenauer's "obsession with bicycling borders on the interesting," sniffed TV satirist Stephen Colbert.

"Bikeman," a House colleague from Oregon calls him. Mr. Blumenauer owns seven bikes. His congressional office is one of the few -- if not the only one -- that didn't even apply for a parking permit. On occasion, Mr. Blumenauer has cycled to the White House.

On Mr. Blumenauer's first visit, the Secret Service, more accustomed to limousines, was flummoxed at the sight of his bike.

"I leaned it up against the portico," Mr. Blumenauer says.Washington isn't particularly bicycle friendly. The summers are swampy. The winters are cold. And if you aren't careful, you could get flattened by a motorcade.

But Mr. Blumenauer has been a pedal pusher since his days on the Portland City Council, when he pressed for more bike lanes and set an example by riding around in his suit and a big bow tie. When Mr. Blumenauer arrived in Washington in 1996, he didn't bring a car. Soon he was preaching the benefits of pedaling.

He launched the Congressional Bike Caucus, a bipartisan group that promotes public investment in cycling. In his early days, he tracked down Speaker Newt Gingrich in the House gym to pitch transit-fare subsidies for House workers. He got them. As the ranks of the Bicycle Caucus have grown -- there are now more than 170 members -- money for bike projects has grown, more than doubling during his time in office.

So, too, has Mr. Blumenauer's reputation: He's a Pacific Northwest liberal, labor and eco-friendly, with an earnest demeanor. He broke his foot in early 2006, tripping as he took out the trash for recycling at his home in Portland. "It could not have been more politically correct," says Kerry Tymchuk, state director for Oregon Sen. Gordon Smith, a Republican. For several weeks afterward, Mr. Blumenauer, on crutches, stayed off his bike.

At a community fund-raiser last winter, Washington Rep. Brian Baird, a Democrat representing a district across the Columbia River from Portland, spoofed Mr. Blumenauer and Portland's liberal sensibilities. In a dead-on parody of President Bush, Mr. Baird confused the word "bicycle" with "bisexual."

# WSJ

"Maybe they do things different out there in Oregon than we do in Texas," Mr. Baird said with a Bush twang.

Mr. Blumenauer's bike, a Trek Portland, leans up against the wall in his Washington office. Trek makes two bikes named for urban places -- the other is the Trek Soho -- and Mr. Blumenauer likes the idea that he represents one of them. "Really slick," he says. "How do I not buy that?" Actually, Mr. Blumenauer bought two -- one for Washington and one to keep at home.

On his way out of Rayburn House Office Building, Mr. Blumenauer pushed open the door with one hand and dragged his bike through with the other. He exited among soaring columns and onto a horseshoe-shaped drive, where 11 cars lined up along the curb. Many more were parked tightly on the street beyond.

Mr. Blumenauer swung his leg over the Trek and pedaled off, a blue messenger bag slung around his neck, crumpling the collar of his blazer. A reflector strap was tied around his pant leg. He turned right at the bottom of the drive, avoiding Independence Avenue, choosing instead a more circuitous but less congested route.

As he approached a metal guard gate, a Capitol policeman called out, "Getting your exercise, Sir?"

He passed several Greenpeace activists tromping around in whale suits near the Supreme Court.

A few blocks beyond, he pulled up at the Dirksen Senate Office Building, where Democrats were meeting to talk election-year strategy. He was there to give a presentation on online town halls. He looked around for a bike rack. With none in sight, he grabbed the heavy-duty U-lock slung over his handlebars and secured the bike to a street sign: Authorized Permit Parking Only.

With Democrats in the majority for the first time since he came to Washington, Mr. Blumenauer snagged a seat on the Ways and Means Committee, and has had some success peddling a proposal to encourage bike commuting. The tax code already encourages employers to subsidize parking spots for workers who drive or fare cards for those who use mass transit. But it is silent on bikes.

"You can't provide a benefit for people who burn calories instead of petroleum," says Mr. Blumenauer, in disbelief. "It just seemed outrageous that somebody who cycles got zip."

The provision would encourage employers to provide fringe benefits to bicycle commuters -- such as for repairs and annual upkeep -- at a cost to American taxpayers of \$1 million a year.

Mr. Blumenauer found a home for the proposal in the massive energy bill crafted by Democratic leaders in the House over the summer. When the measure first hit the floor, Republican critics derided it as an attempt "to tell the American people, stop driving, ride a bike," as Rep. Patrick McHenry of North Carolina put it. The measure was later dropped, and has a ways to go before becoming law.

"I'm not anticar," Mr. Blumenauer says. In a pinch, he will take a cab. And back in Portland, he and his wife drive a Toyota Highlander Hybrid.

In his more than 10 years in Congress, Mr. Blumenauer says he has saved tens of thousands of dollars by not driving, money that helped pay for the townhouse he bought. And when he cycles across town to an event, he often gets there faster than his friends in Congress do.

During his rainy ride to the Capitol, Mr. Blumenauer was unfazed by the wind and the damp. He wore running shorts and a black pullover, and planned to change into work clothes at the office. He pulled up to the garage at the back of the Rayburn building at about 6:30. A heavily bundled police officer waved him in. Late that night, action on the House floor kept the congressman from making a trip across town to the Four Seasons Hotel in Georgetown. He stayed instead in the Capitol. After votes, he led an hour-long debate on energy policy and global warming. One important solution: bikes, he says.

# The New York Eimes

A Bicycle Evangelist With the Wind Now at His Back

By Cornelia Dean Jan. 12, 2009

PORTLAND, Ore.

For years, Earl Blumenauer has been on a mission, and now his work is paying off. He can tell by the way some things are deteriorating around here.

"People are flying through stop signs on bikes," Mr. Blumenauer said. "We are seeing in Portland bike congestion. You'll see people biking across the river on a pedestrian bridge. They are just chock-a-block."

Mr. Blumenauer, a passionate advocate of cycling as a remedy for everything from climate change to obesity, represents most of Portland in Congress, where he is the founder and proprietor of the 180 (plus or minus)-member Congressional Bicycle Caucus. Long regarded in some quarters as quixotic, the caucus has come into its own as hard times, climate concerns, gyrating gas prices and worries about fitness turn people away from their cars and toward their bikes.

"We have been flogging this bicycle thing for 20 years," said Mr. Blumenauer, a Democrat. "All of a sudden it's hot."

But Mr. Blumenauer's goals are larger than putting Americans on two wheels. He seeks to create what he calls a more sustainable society, including wiser use of energy, farming that improves the land rather than degrades it, an end to taxpayer subsidies for unwise development and a transportation infrastructure that looks beyond the car.

For him, the global financial collapse is "perhaps the best opportunity we will ever see" to build environmental sustainability into the nation's infrastructure, with urban streetcar systems, bike and pedestrian paths, more efficient energy transmission and conversion of the federal government's 600,000-vehicle fleet to use alternate fuels.

"These are things that three years ago were unimaginable," he said. "And if they were imaginable, we could not afford them. Well, now when all the experts agree that we will be lucky if we stabilize the economy in a couple of years, when there is great concern about the consequences of the collapse of the domestic auto producers, gee, these are things that are actually reasonable and affordable." All this might still be pie-in-the-sky were it not for one of Mr. Blumenauer's fellow biking enthusiasts, Representative James L. Oberstar, a Minnesota Democrat, avid cyclist and chairman of the House Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure, which has jurisdiction over surface transportation.

"He's been wonderful," Mr. Oberstar said of his Oregon colleague. And as support for cycling grows, he said, builders, the highway construction lobby and others have stopped regarding biking as a "nuisance" and started thinking about how they can do business.

With an eye on the potential stimulus package, cycling advocates "have compiled a list of \$2 billion of projects that can be under construction in 90 days," Mr. Oberstar said, adding that prospects are "bright."

Representative Earl Blumenauer of Oregon. Stirling Elmendorf

In addition, after many attempts, this fall Mr. Blumenauer saw Congress approve his proposal to extend the tax breaks offered for employee parking to employers who encourage biking. The measure, which Mr. Blumenauer called a matter of "bicycle parity," was part of a bailout bill.

Mr. Blumenauer has spent a lot of time on another issue that ordinarily draws little attention: the federally subsidized flood insurance program. The program serves people who own property along coasts and rivers who otherwise would pay enormous premiums for private flood insurance, if they could obtain it at all.

The insurance "subsidized people to live in places where nature repeatedly showed they weren't wanted," he said. They might be better off if they did not live there, he said, but "it's un-American to say, 'Get out.' " Politicians who should confront the problem "are betting Nimto, not in my term of office," he said. They hope that disasters will spare their districts or, if they strike, that the government will come to the rescue, Mr. Blumenauer said.

A Portland native, Mr. Blumenauer, 60, has spent his adult life in elective office. He graduated from Lewis and Clark College in 1970 (after organizing an unsuccessful 1969 campaign to lower the state's voting age to 18) and worked until 1977 as assistant to the president of Portland State University. In 1972, he won a seat in the Oregon House of Representatives. He moved to the Multnomah County Board of Commissioners in 1978, and from

## The New York Eimes

there, in 1986, he won election to the Portland City Council. Though he lost a mayoral election in 1992, he easily won election to the United States House in 1996 and has not faced serious opposition since.

Mr. Blumenauer entered Congress just after Newt Gingrich, the Republican speaker, killed a stopgap spending measure, shutting down much of the government, out of pique over his treatment on Air Force One. "Partisan tensions were very raw," Mr. Blumenauer said. The bicycle caucus was "a way to bring people together."

Sherwood Boehlert, a Republican and fellow bicyclist who represented upstate New York in Congress until 2007, agreed. When "partisanship was at an all-time high and tolerance of another point of view was at a longtime low," he wore the bike caucus's plastic bicycle lapel pin. "Bicycling unites people regardless of party affiliation," he said. In addition to bicycles, Mr. Blumenauer is particularly interested in public broadcasting and the plight of pollinators like honeybees. He is a founder of a "livable communities task force" whose goal, he said, is to educate members of Congress and their staffs on the benefits of transportation alternatives, open space, sustainability, vibrant downtowns, affordable housing and transparency in government.

Initially, he said, these interests marked him as "kind of left coast." Not anymore. "They are becoming very

mainstream," said Adam B. Schiff, a Democrat who I represents in Congress the area around Pasadena, Calif., and who, with Mr. Blumenauer's bicycle advice, now regularly rides to work from his home in Maryland. "He has been way out in front of the Congress," Mr. Schiff said. "Now the rest of us are trying to catch up."

When Mr. Blumenauer is in his Portland district, he usually gets around by bike, cycling about 20 miles in a typical day. He has three bikes in Washington and five here, and he cycles in all weather, even in the unusual snow Portland has had recently. "In falling snow you can get some traction," he said. But the surge of bicycling in Portland has not been free of incident. The Oregonian newspaper and bloggers have reported on "bike rage," drunken biking, hit-and-run bicycle accidents and other problems. Drivers complain about bikers who ignore traffic rules or hog narrow roads, phenomena some irritated motorists attribute to feelings of entitlement or moral superiority.

Mr. Blumenauer brushes off this criticism. "They are burning calories, not fossil fuel, they are taking up much less space, they are seeing the world at 10 miles per hour instead of 20 or 30," he said. "And even though there are occasionally cranky or rude cyclists, they are no greater a percentage than cranky or rude motorists."

Plus, he added, "they have really fought for their place on the asphalt."

### STREETS**BLOG**

#### **Rep. Earl Blumenauer Reflects on His Career, And Why 'Bike-Partisanship' is America's Secret Weapon**

As he concludes his nearly 30-year career in Congress, Earl Blumenauer says America has never been better positioned to make a "quantum leap" towards bikeability.

November 14, 2023

As co-founder of the Congressional Bike Caucus Rep. Earl Blumaneuer (D– Ore.) has long been one of Washington's staunch advocates for sustainable transportation — not least during the writing of the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law, which he fought to make better for vulnerable road users through the inclusion of programs like Safe Streets for All and Reconnecting Communities.

Now, on the two-year anniversary of that law's passage, host Kea Wilson sits down with Earl himself to reflect on the BIL's bright spots — as well as his own 27- year career in Congress, which he recently announced is about to come to an end. And along the way, we also chat about how bikes can help unify a polarized political landscape, how a federal parking cash-out law could create a more just society, and why he considers a little site called Streetsblog the "secret weapon" of advocates everywhere.



This conversation was on October 11th. The following excerpt has been edited for clarity and length.

Wilson: I'm so excited to meet you, and I'm a longtime admirer of your work. It's really an honor to get to hear a little bit about your legacy as the chair of the Congressional Bike Caucus — and also the topic that your staff suggested we talk about today, or at least use as a spine for a broader conversation, which is the last two years of the bipartisan infrastructure law.

Blumenauer: I'm happy to do that, but let me just say — I appreciate your work. Streetsblog is our secret weapon. And for anybody who takes the time to become acquainted with it, you you help bring it home in in ways that are very realistic. We have a great group in in Portland, especially Jonathan Maus, but you play a vital role as part of this national network. And I'm looking forward to the conversation. Thank you.

Wilson: Yes, shout out to Bike Portland as well; we republish them a lot and deeply admire their work!

So just to take it back to the big picture: we are, again, two years into the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law now. And I was wondering if you could just say, broadly: what impact has this legislation had on the bicyclists, pedestrians, and transit users of America? And what impact do you anticipate it having in the years to come?

Blumenauer: Well, it is an example of where we can actually get something done. This is an area where, for the first time — I've been working in this space for decades — this is the first time we've had an administration that was committed to rebuilding and renewing America and spending money on it. This is very exciting. As you know, these are unprecedented sums; these are game-changers. For years, I've been working to try and deal with the problem of inadequate transportation funding, and looked at different ways to go about it, trying to make sure that Congress owned up to its responsibilities. But with the passage of this legislation, the floodgates opened.

Between the Inflation Reduction Act and the Infrastructure Legislation, there's just a gusher of money, and a wide array of ways that people can access it. And this is something that is fundamental, here: we need to have people appreciate what difference it makes to be able to incorporate these resources in ways that can bring about a low carbon, equitable future.

...

Wilson: You've used the word "bike-partisanship" several times this conversation. I think it's really great. Could you say a little bit more about what that means? And was it easy to make cycling a bipartisan issue when you founded the Congressional Bike Caucus?

Blumenauer: One of the things I found when I came to Congress is that everybody has a bike story. And bike partisanship is something that is under appreciated and utilized. That's why we tried to ramp up the work with the bike caucus; it's sort of to share the love, have people understand their own connections to cycling.

### STREETS**BLOG**

There was a senior member of the came [to Congress] who told me a story. He said, You know, 'one of the things I did before I went on the Appropriations Committee, when I was on the transportation infrastructure committee, was to secure some funding for a bike path in my community in Ohio. And I got a lot of grief because people wanted roads and bridges. It was like, you know, what's this bike stuff?' And he got lots of pushback. But he told me, 'you know, within three years, the bike project that I got funded, was part of the city's official seal.' It was popular in terms of recreation, and in terms of what happens economically, the bike customer spends more money than somebody who's racing through a neighborhood.

I was Portland's Commissioner of Public Works for 10 years before I went to Congress, and one of the things I found is that a lot of people's single most prized possession was having a parking space in front of their bookstore, or their brew pub, or in their in their neighborhood. But we've watched in Portland over the years as we've been working to integrate cycling especially in Washington? into the broader transportation and community landscape. And we found that on streets where we've been able to calm the triac, what happens is that the property values on those streets are enhanced. It's not just that they're safer.

The bicyclist is the indicator species of a livable community. And it strengthens the bonds of the people who live there. We have had well over 150 people in Portland volunteer to have that precious parking space in front of the bookstore or the brew pub converted to bike parking. These are people that, voluntarily, sought to make bike parking permanent. They've done the math, they understand that you can have six, eight, ten, bike parking spaces for where that one car would be located. And as I mentioned,

There was a senior member of the<br/>Appropriations Committee when I first<br/>came [to Congress] who told me apeople who biked through the<br/>neighborhood actually spend more money<br/>and take more time.

So it's a matter of helping people understand the power of these concepts, to take advantage of the federal legislation, but more fundamentally, to take advantage of what they can do at the local level. Because these issues are inherently very personal, local; you're talking about your business, you're talking about your neighborhood. And being able to protect and defend and enhance the quality of life where you live and work is really very powerful.

Wilson: You know, as I'm hearing you talk about the importance of these personal local actions — things like removing parking spaces to build bike parking that, to me seems like a huge win and a huge deal that, on aggregate, can make a massive impact for our planet. But you deal with issues all the time in Congress that, to others, might feel a lot more urgent. How do you make the case that bicycles, pedestrian issues, the things that we talk about on Streetsblog all the time, really matter ,in the context of a time period where there are cascading global crises that are competing for our attention, especially in Washington?

Blumenauer: We're dealing with a lot today. I mean, I'm talking to you in the midst of a war breaking out in the Middle East; we're fighting a war against Russian aggression with Ukraine; and many of us have been fighting the climate battle for years. And it seems almost overwhelming. It seems like many people are on the verge of despair.

But what we're talking about here is a way to empower individuals to make a difference. We're not going to have a single policy or project that's going to solve the climate crisis. It will be the collection of billions of individual decisions that we all make every day: what we eat, where we live, how we move. The collection of those decisions, is what, ultimately, is going to save the planet and our neighborhoods. And what we're talking about here is a scale that anybody can relate to. Anybody can make a decision, for example, to walk a little more, to eat a little more strategically, to support the environment, and the neighborhood environment. That, collectively, makes a huge difference in terms of the carbon footprint, in terms of being able to withstand natural disasters, in terms of being able to keep our families safe, healthy and economically secure.

And this is the key to fight the despair. That is, I think our our greatest challenge: that people just seem overwhelmed. And trust me, I understand! But what gives me hope and encouragement is knowing that there are these decisions that are totally within our capacity that are not expensive. To the contrary, they *add* value.

And that once you get people engaged, they kind of get it. They like the opportunities to have locally-sourced and grown food; making streets safer around our schools is something everybody can get behind. And with all of the opportunities for safety for the environment and revitalization that we have before us today, there's something for everybody.



### **Roll** Earl Blumenauer takes his last ride through Congress

#### Oregon Democrat will pass the Bike Caucus baton

By Justin Papp April 18, 2024

Aside from his bike pins and bow ties, and the holiday fruit cakes he delivers to colleagues, Earl Blumenauer has carved out his own niche in the House.

"I've got a pretty interesting portfolio of issues," says the Oregon Democrat, like trying to ease federal cannabis policy. He cites his work on neuroscience and nutrition. He calls "The Omnivore's Dilemma" author Michael Pollan his friend. And he preaches the gospel of public transportation to anyone who will listen.

"Not particularly sexy, but important," says Blumenauer, who has biked to his job at the Capitol for nearly 30 years.

As the Portland native prepares to retire from Congress at the end of this term, he says he's not done yet. Sporting an orange bike pin on his lapel, he sat down with Roll Call to reflect on his legacy, his most memorable ride in D.C. and the future of bow ties on the Hill.

This interview has been condensed and edited.

#### Q: How are you seeing your impact as you get ready to leave?

A: I'm not a high-profile member of Congress. I don't run explosive campaigns. I don't get on television saying outrageous things, and most of my issues are things you're not going to read about in The Wall Street Journal or see on MSNBC or Fox News.

But we're engaging people. I just went to a streetcar summit in Charlotte, and we've been working with people trying to develop the reintroduction of the modern streetcar around the country.



On nutrition, we've made some progress in highlighting the fact that we're subsidizing a diet that makes Americans sick. I've had extensive conversations and work with my friend Michael Pollan, who's also in the psilocybin space.

We're trying to promote greater public understanding and build momentum. Legislation is increasingly difficult, when we're swamped with social media, and too many colleagues are here for the performative aspects and not digging into the substance.

#### Q: Are you frustrated, and was that part of your decision?

A: First of all, I spend 14 hours a week on airplanes or in airports. I have better things to do with my life than hang around airports. As you may know, I spent decades trying to increase the resources for infrastructure, for sewer and water and transportation. Well, we kind of hit the gusher [with the bipartisan infrastructure law in 2021 and the 2022 law known as the Inflation Reduction Act]. But now we've got a huge challenge in terms of figuring out how to access it, and then implement. And this is where actually not being in Congress will help me.

I'm in the back nine of life. I don't want to spend time in pointless meetings, listening to the same points over and over and over again. I want to spend time working with people to actually make it work.

Q: So what's next for you?

A: People have given me all sorts of suggestions, and I'm listening. But I'm in no hurry to settle on one. I'm going to spend at least half my time back in Portland. For the last 54 years I've worked on making my community the most livable in the country, and up until about four years ago, I think people would have said, "That's the place. Go visit Portland. See what they're doing with mass transit and housing and environmental protection and bicycles." We've run into a rough patch, and so I want to work with the folks at home.

[In the meantime] I've written a series of exit memos. I had a conversation with Dan Kildee, who worked with me on forced labor, and now we're strategizing about how we hand this issue off to somebody for next Congress.

And I consulted with my colleague Mike Thompson on the Ways and Means Committee, and I'm handing off to him later in the year the Democratic leadership on the Bike Caucus. We already greased the skids for that with the National Bike Summit a few weeks ago and introduced Mike.



Q: How has Congress changed since you came in 1996?

A: It's harder to do the day-to-day work. I'm not an intensely partisan person. I do a lot of work with the governing wing of the Republican Party in the House, and it's shrinking, painfully so. And they're frustrated.

Part of the reason I ran for Congress in the first place is I was appalled at what Newt Gingrich did trying to vilify the opposing party. My first press conference was one about bringing civility back to the House, with [Republican] Ray LaHood and others. But the imposition of social media on top of this makes it very hard. The attention span is that of a gnat. It is intensely performative, and it's hard to get people's attention to just have a substantive discussion. And I don't see that changing anytime soon.

#### Q: You've biked a lot in D.C. Any memorable moments?

A: I probably shouldn't admit this, but cycling was at the core of my most embarrassing moment as a member of Congress. [NPR radio host] Ari Shapiro is an Oregonian and grew up just outside my district, and we decided to go on a bike ride and be interviewed at the same time. And I led him down the wrong way on a one-way street and just about killed him and me.

Q: Are there any intersections in the city you avoid when you're biking?

A: Up around Dupont Circle, we've seen horrific crashes. But watching the billions of dollars now that we're investing in bike safety and bike facilities across the nation is amazingly gratifying. During the pandemic, the explosion of cycling was transformative. We're looking at city streets differently. Burning calories instead of fossil fuel is good for the environment, but it's also good for the soul. You know, we promote "bikepartisanship." Everybody has a bike story, whether they're a cyclist or not. Q: Your signature look is a bow tie. With both you and <u>Patrick McHenry</u> retiring, are you worried about the future of bow ties on the Hill?

A: We'll be reaching out for new recruits.

#### Q: Have you prepared an exit memo on that?

A: I'm working on that. When I came here, the only one who wore bow ties regularly was Tom Bliley in the House, and [Daniel Patrick] Moynihan in the Senate.

One of my great friends and mentors was Sen. Mark Hatfield, a Republican giant and a very decent human being. He said, "You often wear a bow tie, don't you?" I said yeah. He looked at me and said, "Always wear a bow tie."

How does another middle-aged white guy stand out on Capitol Hill? I mean, I'm kind of pasty-faced, and I don't dress flashy, and we've already established that I'm not charismatic. But wear a bow tie and a bike pin, and you don't have to be stopped by security. They know who you are.

#### Quick hits

**Favorite bow tie?** Patti Simon gave me a bow tie worn by her husband, Paul. We named the Water for the Poor legislation after him, and so periodically when we're doing an international water event, I'll pull out my Paul Simon bow tie.

**Best friend across the aisle?** There are a number of people I deeply respect. Dave Joyce and some of his cannabis work. Bill Huizenga, we trade holiday cakes. I'm sorry Mike Gallagher is leaving. Steve Womack is a thoughtful, even-tempered, hard-nosed conservative. People like that make it a little easier to function around here.

**Your least popular opinion?** For years I worked to raise the gas tax, but I've kind of given up. There's no political will for it, and because of what we're doing with electrifying the system, funding transportation based on gallons of fossil fuel consumed is a downward spiral.

In politics, can the ends justify the means? That's a slippery slope. We are experts at rationalization, but you have to be careful. Principles matter, and if it appears you are unmoored, it undermines your credibility.

**One thing you'll miss about Congress?** The setting. I love the city, and the Capitol is majestic. And also some really great people.

#### E- Newsletter - April 2nd, 2024

Dear Friends,

The bicycle is the single most efficient form of transportation ever designed. It is low-cost and allows people burn calories instead of fossil fuels. It connects our communities and generates tremendous economic opportunity. Critically, it also brings people together: everyone has a bike story.

Over the past few weeks, I had the opportunity to celebrate how far the bike movement has come. When I founded the Congressional Bike Caucus 28 years ago, bike infrastructure was neglected by the federal government. It received a fraction of all federal spending, if anything at all. Federal investments focused on moving cars quickly, to the exclusion of almost everything else.

Today we've created a national movement shaping communities large and small. President Biden's Bipartisan Infrastructure Law included historic funding levels for bike and pedestrian infrastructure. I am particularly proud it included the creation of a \$1 billion Safe Streets and Roads for All grant program to fund vision zero infrastructure projects, modeled after legislation I authored. There is now a gusher of funding available and our communities are taking advantage.

We celebrated our progress at the 2024 Bike Summit in Washington, D.C. Our nation's capital is itself a symbol of how far we've come. One of my proudest accomplishments is working to get bike lanes installed along Pennsylvania Avenue. Countless federal employees now use them to bike to work down one of our nation's most iconic streets. At the Bike Summit, I accepted the first-ever Lifetime Achievement Award in Bike-Partisanship, which recognizes how bikes bring people together and cut through partisanship on Capitol Hill.

Kicking off the annual Congressional Bike Caucus ride

We then capped off a phenomenal week in Tucson, where I received the Jim Oberstar award for supporting the bicycle movement. Receiving a lifetime achievement award in honor of my infrastructure mentor in Congress, the legendary Jim Oberstar, has special meaning for me. Oberstar never stopped working for the bicycle community and neither should we.

I am proud to accept these awards. But more to the point, they are a symbol of how far we've come to increase federal investments and build support for our movement.

The bicycle offers us a roadmap to rebuild and renew America and bring people together. Most importantly, it has the power to unlock the full potential of livable communities: places where families are safe, healthy, and economically secure.

I look forward to the work ahead.

Courage, ul Blumenn

Earl Blumenauer Member of Congress

#### **Roll Call**

#### Pennsylvania Avenue Bikers Win a Lane Apart

By Daniel Newhauser Posted May 19, 2010 at 5:32pm

**D** SMARTCITIES **DIVE** 

**DIVE BRIEF** 

### Bill would reinstate national tax benefit for bike commuters

Published March 7, 2019

OREGONLIVE The Oregonian

COMMUTING

### Earl Blumenauer pushes to reinstate tax benefit for bike commuters

Published: Mar. 14, 2019, 2:48 p.m.



TRANSPO / RIDEABLES / ELECTRIC BIKES Feb 24. 2021 at 10:08 AM EST

#### E-bikes are expensive, but this congressman wants to make them more affordable

/ A new bill would give a refundable tax credit of 30 percent on the purchase of a new e-bike

#### **BikePortland**

One year in, Blumenauer Bridge is wellloved and well-used

Jonathan Maus (Publisher/Editor) August 22, 2023 😞 65



Rep. Earl Blumenauer (D-Ore.), chair of the Congressional Bike Caucus, appears at a rally by participants in the Brita Climate Ride on Capitol Hill. Photo by Brendan Hoffman/Getty Images

March 25, 2024, 3:00 AM MDT

#### Bicyclists Are Losing Their Biggest Champion on Capitol Hill

#### Appendix

- **1999, 2000**: H.Con.Res.314 Authorizing the use of the Capitol Grounds for a bike rodeo to be conducted by the Earth Force Youth Bike Summit. *Agreed to in House on May 3, 2000.*
- 2003: H.Amdt.78 to the Energy Policy Act of 2003 Provides for the establishment of a conserve by bicycling pilot program within the Department of Transportation; authorizes ten pilot projects dispersed throughout the United States; and requires a report to Congress on the feasibility of converting motor vehicle trips to bicycle trips. *Agreed to in House on April, 10, 2003*
- 2005: H.Con.Res.145 Expressing the sense of Congress in support of a national bike month and in appreciation of cyclists and others for promoting bicycle safety and the benefits of cycling. *Agreed to in House on July 25, 2006.*
- 2002, 2005: Congratulating Lance Armstrong on his exceptional career upon his victory in the 2005 Tour de France and retiring from professional cycling.
- 2005: H.Amdt.88 to the Energy Policy Act of 2005 Amendment provides for the establishment in the Department of Transportation of the "Conserve by Bicycle Program". *Agreed to in House on April 21, 2005*
- **2008:** H.Con.Res.305 Recognizing the importance of bicycling in transportation and recreation Supports policies that increase bicycle use. *Agreed to in House on June 2, 2008.*
- 2016, 2017, 2019, 2021: Bikeshare Transit Act This bill allows bikeshare projects to be eligible for federal funding. *Enacted in the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act*
- 2016: H.Amdt.1165 to the Continuing Appropriations and Military Construction, Veterans Affairs, and Related Agencies Appropriations Act, 2017, and Zika Response and Preparedness Act Requires the Architect of the Capitol to conduct a feasibility study regarding the installation and operation of Capital Bikeshare stations on Capitol Grounds. *Agreed to in House on June 9, 2016.*
- 2022, 2023: Bicycles for Rural African Transport Act To establish within the Office of Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment of the United States Agency for International Development a rural mobility program to promote mobility in rural communities through access to affordable, fit-for-purpose bicycles, provide support to sustainably increase access to rural areas

### CANNABIS

Now a multi-billion-dollar industry, the federal government's archaic prohibition of cannabis continues to cause confusion, uncertainty, and harm for state and Tribal governments, small businesses, medical providers, veterans, and communities most impacted by the failed war on drugs.

Congressman Earl Blumenauer first became involved with cannabis reform as a new legislator in his first session of the Oregon State Legislature in 1973. Cannabis was illegal everywhere and public opinion was not favorable. But as part of this effort to reevaluate public policy, the weight of evidence suggested that criminal penalties were not effective in changing behavior and were decidedly unfair.

More fundamentally, it made no sense to criminalize a substance less harmful than alcohol and less addictive than tobacco. Selective law enforcement led to wild disparities in how people, especially people of color, were treated. Young Black men especially were treated shamefully.

This came to a head with legislation advanced in the 1973 Oregon legislative session. The most remarkable event occurred with a speech from Stafford Hansell, a respected Republican pig Farmer, who represented parts of Eastern Oregon. Stafford neither smoked or drank, he was the very model of sobriety. But he supported decriminalizing cannabis. From that moment on, Earl became an outspoken supporter for legalization, not just decriminalization.

His leadership became even more pronounced with the passage of initiatives to legalize adult use in Washington and Colorado in 2012. In 2014, Oregon and Alaska followed suit notably with a higher-winning percentage in 2014, a non-presidential and lower turnout election. This unleashed a torrent of state and local initiatives. Earl was involved with them all, meeting advocates campaigning for the initiatives. He was a respected and effective voice for reform. When one of Congress' prominent cannabis champions, Barney Frank, retired, Earl assumed the mantle as the foremost champion for rationalizing the federal government's misguided approach to cannabis.

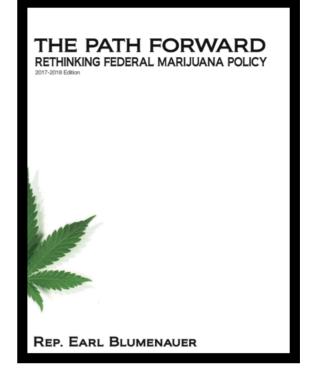


#### Leadership in Congress

In the 113th Congress, Earl and Rep. Jared Polis worked together to introduce a legislative vision for marijuana legalization: a regulatory package, offered by Polis, and a marijuana taxation package, offered by Earl, who also introduced legislation on medical marijuana. At the same time, Earl also published a report on the policy path forward for marijuana legalization: "The Path Forward: Rethinking Federal Marijuana Policy." This report became a blueprint for advocates and congressional members over the next decade to guide reform efforts.

Earl created the bipartisan Cannabis Working Group, which ultimately led to the creation of the Congressional Cannabis Caucus. The Marijuana Working Group's first big legislative achievement was during the 2013 Farm Bill process, when Polis, Earl and Rep. Massie offered an amendment to the Farm bill to allow colleges and universities to conduct research on industrial hemp. The bill passed, making it the first successful federal vote related to marijuana legalization.

That same year, Earl also worked with the Obama administration to remove a barrier to marijuana public health research, to enable researchers to move forward with marijuanabased drug development research. As multiple states considered marijuana legalization, including Oregon, Earl worked with those states to advance local legislation and worked both in Congress and with the Obama administration to smooth the pathway at the



federal level. Toward the end of the 113th Congress, Earl introduced his Veterans Equal Access Act, which would allow VA health care providers to give recommendations on and complete forms for medical marijuana in states where medical marijuana was legalized.

In 2017, Earl, together with Reps. Polis, Young, and Rohrabacher established the Congressional Cannabis Caucus as a bipartisan platform for members to come together and educate Congress on and advance new ideas addressing the path forward for federal cannabis policy.

The 116th Congress was arguably the most transformative for cannabis policy to date. One of the major legislative wins early in the 116th Congress was the passage of the SAFE Banking Act, which would provide safe harbor for depository institutions to bank marijuana

and ancillary businesses that operate in compliance with state law. This passed the House in September 2019 with broad bipartisan support (321-103). The second session of the 116th Congress started with another legislative victory. Earl's Veterans Equal Access Act passed out of the Veterans Affairs committee with bipartisan support.

The murder of George Floyd sparked overdue discussions around systemic racism in the United States, and for those engaged in marijuana policy, including Earl, it pushed them to do more about drug criminalization and consequent interactions between police officers and Black Americans. The murders of Breanna Taylor and George Floyd were both conducted as drug-related enforcement and are two examples of the tragic deaths perpetuated through the failed war on drugs operations. Earl used this conversation to engage more members in marijuana legalization discussion, and to engage with the racist foundation of the failed war on drugs and write policy proposals to better address the inequities that marijuana criminalization highlighted.

The 116th Congress saw the passage of the first comprehensive cannabis reform legislation in either chamber of Congress: the MORE Act, which would remove marijuana from the Controlled Substances Act, normalize federal marijuana regulation, and invest in communities targeted under federal marijuana prohibition. This was the first time any chamber of Congress voted to deschedule marijuana and was a major priority for the cannabis justice reform advocates.

The bill passed in December 2020 with five Republican votes and six Democratic defectors. The MORE Act, and Earl's Medical Marijuana Research Act, passed the House only to die in the Senate.

Earl, his Cannabis Working Group, and the Congressional Cannabis Caucus regrouped and passed House and Senate versions of the Medical Marijuana Research Act. In December of 2022, the Medical Marijuana and Cannabidiol Research Expansion Act became the first federal standalone cannabis reform to be enacted since 1971.

That year, President Biden also took the historic step to pardon all federal simple marijuana possession convictions and to begin the administrative review of the scheduling of marijuana. Earl worked closely with the Administration to move this process forward and ensure that it is transparent in its decisionmaking. The Department of Health and Human Services recommended rescheduling marijuana to Schedule III, which is historic and exceedingly consequential. It would end the application of Section 208E taxation on marijuana businesses; however, it would not legalize existing medical or adult use marijuana programs.

#### Legislative Accomplishments

- Bringing 50 years of experience with cannabis reform at the state and federal level, Earl has advanced the window of opportunity on cannabis reform more than any other individual elected official. As founder of the Congressional Cannabis Caucus, he has built the bipartisan partnerships that have allowed the progress we have seen to date, and he has brought new members to the cause, shaping the next wave of work on this issue.
- "Scheduling" refers to how a substance is categorized under the Controlled Substances Act, which determines the authorizations required to produce, transport, or consume the substance as well as the penalties for violations. Famously, Schedule I triggers devastating mandatory minimums in sentencing, including for simple possession. Earl has been at the forefront of congressional work to address marijuana's antiquated scheduling and has led the charge for educating multiple administrations about why they should address the unjust scheduling. Biden's evolution on this issue is the result of years of pressure and education, an effort Earl led on the congressional front.
- Medical Marijuana and Cannabidiol Research Expansion Act Earl built a coalition representing groups from marijuana advocates to prohibitionists in order to update current polic around marijuana research testing. His Medical Marijuana and Cannabidiol Research Expansion Act was the first federal standalone cannabis reform enacted since the Controlled Substances Act was adopted, and it set the stage for the research we need to best harness the potential of marijuana and for further federal action.

### The New York Times As He Exits Congress, **Blumenauer Wants His Party to Embrace Pot Legalization**

The long-serving congressman from Portland, who has become the top marijuana advocate on Capitol Hill, believes the issue could boost President Biden's support with young voters.

> By: Kayla Guo April 28, 2024

As a 23-year-old serving his first term in the Oregon state legislature, Representative Earl Blumenauer cosponsored the first bill in the country to the mold, is to come out foursquare for decriminalize small amounts of marijuana.

More than 50 years later, the congressman from Portland is preparing to retire after nearly three decades on Capitol Hill, and mounting a lonely campaign to persuade his fellow Democrats, including President Biden, to press for legalization of marijuana at the federal level as a central plank of their political platforms.

"I have been doing this longer than any other politician in America, and I can say unequivocally, no politician was ever punished for being on the cutting edge of

legalization of cannabis," Mr. top advocate for changing marijuana policy, said in an interview. "This is something every candidate should embrace."

Mr. Blumenauer has urged officials close to Mr. Biden to make the issue a more prominent part of the president's reelection message. He argues that legalization is not only good policy, but a potentially "electric" political issue that could help the 81-year-old Mr. Biden appeal to young people who polls show have drifted away from him, and whose backing could be vital to his chances of winning a second term.

"I take every chance I get to nudge my friends in the Biden administration," he said this month at a cannabis policy forum. "The quickest way to engage young people, minority voters, to break legalization. For compassion. For people who have been caught up in the legal morass of the failed war on drugs, and make a clean break of it."

Legalization, in some form, is overwhelmingly popular across the country, with 88 percent of Americans saying marijuana should be legal for medical or recreational use, according to a January survey by the Pew Research Center. Twenty-four states have legalized small amounts of marijuana for adult recreational use, and 38 states have approved it for medicinal purposes.

But federal law still prohibits the use and Blumenauer, who has become Congress's possession of weed, and it puts marijuana under a classification reserved for the most dangerous drugs, including heroin and LSD, that the government deems to have a "high abuse potential" and "no accepted medical use." Advocates have urged the federal government to reevaluate that classification and remove it from the list of controlled substances altogether.

> Mr. Blumenauer, now 75, estimated that he has been involved, in some way or another, with every state-level cannabis policy initiative that has cropped up since his days as a "child member" of the state legislature. Back then, the government was still jailing chronic late-stage alcoholics and a movement to relax antiweed laws was growing in the face of the war on drugs.

> On Capitol Hill, Mr. Blumenauer, with his signature bow tie and bicycle-shaped lapel pin (he is an avid cyclist and commutes by bicycle), has led the charge to make marijuana more widely accessible. He has pushed legislation to expunge federal marijuana use and possession crimes from criminal records, expand medical marijuana research, ensure veterans can access medical marijuana, tax and regulate marijuana, allow legal marijuana businesses to access financial services and more.

He founded and is a co-chair of the Congressional Cannabis Caucus, and he was honored this month by the National Organization for the Reform of Marijuana Laws with an inaugural

# The New York Times

"Trailblazer Award" named for him.

"He has literally been our most important and most influential advocate. He's played an enormously powerful role," Keith Stroup, the organization's founder, who lobbied the Oregon state legislature on cannabis policy during Mr. Blumenauer's early statehouse years, said in presenting the award.



Mr. Blumenauer speaking during a town hall meeting on legalizing marijuana in Portland, Ore., in 2013.

Mr. Blumenauer, who announced in the fall that he would not seek reelection, argued that this was the year to "break the logjam" and get federal changes across the finish line.

He cited a spate of successful state ballot initiatives to legalize marijuana in some way, on top of bipartisan backing in the House for various pieces of cannabis legislation and support from top Democrats including Senators Chuck Schumer of New York, the majority leader, and Ron Wyden of Oregon, the chairman of the Finance Committee, for federal legalization.

With Republicans, many of whom have opposed cannabis legalization, in control of the House, congressional action this year is an exceedingly long shot. But Mr. Blumenauer pointed to Mr. Biden's own evolution on the issue as a glimmer of hope.

The president, who has long been personally conservative on marijuana policy, directed his administration to "expeditiously" review how marijuana is scheduled under federal law. Though that review is still underway, U.S. health officials recommended the Drug Enforcement Administration downgrade marijuana to a lower classification that covers drugs, such as ketamine, that are viewed as less dangerous and that can be obtained legally with a prescription.

Mr. Biden also made a high-profile mention of the issue during his State of the Union address this year, and he has pardonedthousands of people convicted of nonviolent drug offenses in an effort to remedy racial disparities in the justice system. Vice President Kamala Harris recently called marijuana's federal classification "absurd," and said that "nobody should have to go to jail for smoking weed." And this month, just before April 20 considered a holiday by marijuana devotees — Karine Jean-Pierre, the White House press secretary, emphasized that Mr. Biden had been "very, very clear he doesn't believe that anyone should be in jail or be prosecuted just for using or possessing marijuana."

Still, Mr. Blumenauer said, Mr. Biden needed to do more to prioritize changes in the law, including by directing the D.E.A. to remove cannabis from the controlled substances list altogether, which would end the federal prohibition on the drug. Doing so, he argued, would make a bold statement to voters and telegraph a commitment to ending the war on drugs, promoting social justice, expanding medical research and boosting businesses.

"Honestly, I can't think of anything else that would have this impact immediately, in terms of aligning interests with young people, with racial justice, solving real-life problems for thousands of businesses and millions of people," Mr. Blumenauer said.

He diagnosed slow federal action on the issue as "inertia" generated by 40 years of a policy of prohibition and once-broad public disapproval of marijuana usage.

But he argued that decisive action was necessary to reap the potential political benefits of the issue in what Democrats have cast as an existential election cycle.



"I can't think of anything else that would have this impact immediately, in terms of aligning interests with young people, with racial justice, solving reallife problems for thousands of businesses and millions of people," Mr. Blumenauer said of marijuana legalization.

# The New York Eimes

"It would send shock waves. People wouldn't expect Joe Biden to do this," Mr. Blumenauer said, adding that a strong position for legalization would likely set up a contrast with former President Donald J. Trump. "It's one of the few things that could really upset the apple cart."

In fact, Mr. Blumenauer contended that it was an embrace of pot legalization that won Democrats control of the Senate. Senator John Fetterman of Pennsylvania, whose victory in 2022 provided Democrats with their two-vote majority, included legalization in his platform. Mr. Blumenauer also noted that a marijuana ballot initiative in Arizona had drawn progressive voters to the polls in 2020 to help clinch the battleground state for Mr. Biden.

"It's time to unlock the full power of legalization, being straight with the American public and making sure that we mobilize the pro-cannabis electorate, because we need it," Mr. Blumenauer said at the marijuana policy summit. "Democracy is on the line this election."

Mr. Blumenauer, who has about seven months left in Congress, vowed to keep pushing for policy changes, even after leaving office.

"If we can break the logjam," he said, "I think it ceases to be very controversial — except it's controversial that we're not doing more, faster."

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## Lawmakers And Advocates Celebrate Marijuana Reform Legacy Of Retiring Congressman Blumenauer, Pledging To Carry His Work Forward



#### By: Kyle Jaeger October 31, 2023

After a half century advocating for marijuana reform including 27 years representing Oregon's 3rd district in Congress—Rep. Earl Blumenauer (D-OR) announced on Monday that he will not be seeking reelection next year.

The congressman, a founding co-chair of the Cannabis Caucus and architect of a federal marijuana legalization "blueprint," has earned the respect of advocates, stakeholders and lawmakers across the aisle as he's worked to navigate challenging waters on Capitol Hill, where even modest cannabis legislation has consistently stalled despite the evergrowing state legalization movement and increasing voter support. Those congressional waters remain stubbornly volatile. Even a bipartisan cannabis banking bill that moved through a Senate committee last month is on pause as legislators reassess political dynamics in the GOP-controlled House, which has a new, anti-marijuana speaker, Rep. Mike Johnson (R-LA).

Blumenauer's pending departure from the House has left some wondering who might take up the mantle. There are several other bipartisan leaders on the issue, but none who can necessarily tout the same credentials and history as the Oregon congressman. Besides sponsoring legislation, Blumenauer has also led the charge to hold administrations of presidents of both



parties accountable to the public, a majority of which is ready to disband with prohibition.

"I am proud that for more than 50 years I have championed the effort to end the failed war on drugs and decriminalize cannabis," Blumenauer said in a press release announcing his retirement on Monday. "I have helped make cannabis reform a mainstream position in American politics and been involved in every successful state legalization initiative. We have set the stage for the final steps of legalization and racial justice."

The congressman, who helped enact marijuana decriminalization in Oregon during his time as a state legislator a half-century ago, also says he's not stepping away from the issue after his term ends next year. He pledged to "continue championing common-sense policy and strategizing on federal legislation with advocates, industry and impacted communities."

What that kind of outside advocacy looks like is yet to be seen. But for members who've worked with him inside the Capitol, there's a newfound sense of responsibility to make the most out of the remainder of the two-year session and then carry out his legacy.

"Congressman Blumenauer is a committed leader, an effective legislator, and a good friend. His advocacy in the cannabis space and leadership within the Cannabis Caucus has helped bring us to where we are today—right on the cusp of badly needed federal reform," Rep. Barbara Lee (D-CA) told Marijuana Moment. "The Cannabis Caucus will continue to carry the torch toward cannabis justice, but we have big shoes to fill. I wish him the best in this next chapter of his life and congratulate him on a retirement welldeserved."

Blumenauer's congressional record goes much further back, starting in 2003 with a cosponsorship on a bill to amend the Controlled Substances Act (CSA) to provide an affirmative defense to people facing prosecution over medical cannabisrelated activity made legal at the state level. His name has been attached to nearly 100 marijuana bills and resolutions (in addition to countless amendments) over his tenure in Congress, and he's been the lead sponsor of more than a dozen cannabis reform measures himself.

Legalization, banking, state protections, social justice, tax equity, veterans' access and research have all been on the congressman's routine roster of reform priorities. He was also one of the first sitting members of Congress to advocate for psychedelics legislation. On research, he sponsored legislation to remove marijuana study barriers and allow scientists to access cannabis from state-licensed dispensaries; a Senate version without that latter provision became the first marijuana reform bill in history to get signed into law last year.

"Earl has been an incredible friend, colleague, and advocate for the cannabis industry," Rep. Dave Joyce (R-OH), a Cannabis Caucus co-chair, told Marijuana Moment on Tuesday.

"Over the last decade, we have worked together as Co-Chairs of the Congressional Cannabis Caucus, and introduced legislation ranging from the SAFE Banking Act and STATES Act, and pushed to increase medical cannabis access for veterans," he said. "I look forward to working with him through the end of 2024 to advance commonsense cannabis priorities and wish him and his family the best as they begin their next chapter."

Rep. Brian Mast (R-FL), another Cannabis Caucus co-chair, told Marijuana Moment that there's "no doubt that Earl's work on cannabis is a cornerstone of his legacy."

"We didn't always approach the issue in the same way, but he's been instrumental in the progress that's been made," he said. "I look forward to building on that progress to make sure federal cannabis policy is based on science, based on what will keep communities safe, and based on what will respect states' rights."

Sen. Jeff Merkley (D-OR) said that he's watched Blumenauer lead on issues, including cannabis, since he was "in high school" and thanked him for his "public service."

Another member representing Oregon, Rep. Suzanne Bonamici (D-OR), also recognized the congressman's work on cannabis issues.

Rep. Don Beyer (D-VA) said it's "hard to imagine the House without my dear friend Earl Blumenauer." "He is one of our bravest and most thoughtful members, a great leader on cannabis reform, trade, and especially on climate," he said.

Advocates will miss having that kind of consistent ally that they found in Blumenauer. While it wasn't the congressman's only issue (the bike-riding member is also well-known for championing climate policy, for example), but he's been a voice for activists, often at times when marijuana was far from frontof-mind for the rest of the Democratic conference.

"Congressman Blumenauer has a special credibility all his own when it comes to good cannabis policy," Shaleen Title, a former member of the Massachusetts Cannabis Control Commission and founder of the Parabola Center for Law and Policy, told Marijuana Moment.

"In my interactions with him, he was always enthusiastic, kind, and unwavering in his support for legalization. He is simply a legend," she said. "We'll miss his bowtie and his sense of

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humor. We hope that the next champions of marijuana law reform in Congress will bring the same courage and integrity he has always brought."

Justin Strekal, founder of the BOWL PAC, told Marijuana Moment that there's "no one who is more knowledgable, tenacious, or effective on cannabis reform than Earl Blumenauer and the team he has led." "When we win legalization, we should name the bill after him," he said.

Blumenauer's advocacy was also marked by a willingness to challenge bipartisan administrations to take on cannabis issues. Just last week, he led a letter with 30 of his colleagues, pressing the Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA) to take a holistic look at the marijuana policy landscape as it carries out a scheduling review directed by President Joe Biden.

Bespectacled and bow-tied, Blumenauer's affability could turn biting when given the chance to confront those still defending what he sees as the failed and harmful policy of prohibition.

"The importance and impact of Rep. Blumenauer's leadership in cannabis policy reform cannot be overstated," Morgan Fox, political director of NORML, told Marijuana Moment. "From making Oregon the first state in the union to decriminalize possession to championing numerous federal bills and being a key player in getting the first legislation to deschedule cannabis passed in the House, he has spent more than five decades at the forefront of this movement."

"His courage, compassion, and wisdom will be sorely missed on Capitol Hill, but his efforts to educate his peers through co-founding and chairing the Congressional Cannabis Caucus have ensured that a growing bloc of lawmakers are well prepared to keep up the fight to end the national tragedy that is cannabis prohibition," Fox said. "We at NORML are honored to have been able to work with him since our inception, and are beyond grateful for his many years of service. We look forward to collaborating with him long into the future."

The National Cannabis Roundtable also thanked Blumenauer for his work on marijuana reform and said his "congressional leadership cannot be replaced, but we will all continue to work to carry his critical work on the Hill forward."

Kaliko Castille, president of the Minority Cannabis Business Association (MCBA) and an Oregon resident, told Marijuana Moment that Blumenauer is "one of the rare examples of someone who went to Congress and never forgot why he was there." He fought to "deliver for the people of Oregon—but just as importantly—to fight for issues like ending cannabis prohibition that impacts more than just the people of Oregon's 3rd Congressional district," Castille said. "His leadership in Congress on cannabis issues is unmatched and he will not easily be replaced, but I'm grateful for every minute he stood in the fight with us. We are better positioned than we've ever been thanks to Earl's work."

The blueprint to federal marijuana legalization may not fully materialized by the time Blumenauer exits the House. But there's large consensus among supporters that the infrastructure he helped laid will be invaluable as the movement persists into its next chapter and as new congressional leaders emerge.



## **Congress' Top Legal Pot Advocate on the Future of**

### **Marijuana Policy**

"The United States, when it thinks something is right or important, it doesn't hesitate to stand alone. Why not drug policy?" asks Rep. Earl Blumenauer

By: Tessa Stuart April 20, 2016

IT'S BEEN A lonely 20 years for Democratic Rep. Earl Blumenauer of Oregon, one of legal marijuana's biggest champions in Congress. He's introduced or co-sponsored more than two dozen pieces of legislation over those two decades, each one designed to chip away at the federal anti-marijuana monolith: laws that would make it legal for Veterans Administration doctors to speak to patients about marijuana, that would make sure students with marijuana-related convictions remain eligible for financial aid, and that would allow owners of marijuana-related businesses to have bank accounts and file normal taxes.

Most of them have failed, but the margins they've been defeated by have shrunk in recent years. That's one of the signs Blumenauer sees indicating the anti-pot tide is finally turning at the federal level.

Blumenauer, who's in New York to attend the United Nations' Special Session on Drug Policy this week, spoke with Rolling Stone about how close we are to ending the federal prohibition on marijuana, who he thinks the best presidential candidate would be with respect to weed policy, and the prospect of a pot-related surprise announcement from President Obama in the last few months of his final term.

Tell me about the UN special session. What is a congressman like yourself doing there?

Part of what's in the background of the effort to reform federal drug laws is the fact that we're kind of hamstrung by previous UN conventions on drugs. We're limited in our ability to unilaterally make major changes because we vowed to help other countries fight this scourge of illegal marijuana and other drugs.

The United States has not been an agent of change in terms of drug policy reform. We're not aligned with the countries that are seeking to reform, like Yugoslavia and Switzerland. We're not talking about more drug executions, like China, but we're not reforming. We're kind of in the comfortable middle — kind of leading from the middle. Ambassador William R. Brownfield [now the Assistant Secretary of State for the Bureau of International Narcotics and Law Enforcement Affairs] was explaining to me in my office that he was really pleased that the United States is right in the middle: "That sweet spot." But the United States, when it thinks something is right or important, it doesn't hesitate to stand alone. Why not drug policy?

What's going on now falls too heavily on the poorest and most vulnerable people, who are literally caught in the crossfire between these militarized forces and law enforcement and the cartels. They're desperately poor. Why wouldn't we be aggressively shifting from this hard-edged and expensive enforcement and spend some of this money to help these poor farmers profitably go into other crops? Why don't we work hard to change the nature of incarceration? And not just in this country, which is an embarrassment, but in Central America, where prisons are community colleges for crooks. It's a recruiting ground for the cartels; it's where they learn the trade. The notion that we wouldn't be able to help take the profit and the violence out of this, and try other approaches, and support the enlightened in different countries, I find it appalling.

# The New York Eimes

## Joe Biden, Pot President?

On Labor Day in 2022, John Fetterman found himself in a room in Pittsburgh with President Biden.

Fetterman, a Democrat who was then the lieutenant governor of Pennsylvania and in the middle of his successful run for the U.S. Senate, had a simple message he wanted to share: Go big on legal weed.

And how did the president respond? "He was just, like, 'Yeah, absolutely," Fetterman told me yesterday.

The Justice Department on Tuesday said it had recommended that federal restrictions on marijuana become a whole lot chiller. And while it is not clear that lobbying from Democrats like Fetterman has played any role, the move was the latest step by the Biden administration to liberalize the nation's cannabis policy — something his allies believe comes with an obvious political upside when more than two-thirds of Americans support legalization of the drug.

"High reward, zero risk," said the perpetually sweatshirted Fetterman, joking that he advises Biden only on matters of fashion and weed policy.

Biden, a suit-wearing president who is more statesman than stoner, has become something of the pot president. It could elevate his standing specifically with young voters, who support rescheduling, or reclassifying, marijuana as a less serious drug, as well as with supporters of changes to criminal justice laws.

One of the president's allies just wishes he would talk about it more.

"He has pardoned people, he initiated this rescheduling, but he has not embraced it. It's not too late," said Representative Earl Blumenauer of Oregon, the 75-year-old Democrat who has been pushing for looser cannabis policy for half a century. "The public needs to know that this is the single most significant step that has been taken by the federal government in the more-than-50-year-old war on drugs."

A careful embrace of cannabis reform

For much of his career, Biden pushed for tough-on-crime policies. And as a presidential candidate in 2019, he got made fun of by Senator Cory Booker, Democrat of New Jersey, for saying he opposed federally legalizing marijuana — although he also said The president's allies say the Justice Department's chill take on marijuana has a political upside. By: Jess Bidgood

May 3, 2024

during that campaign that no one should be in jail for smoking it.

As president, Biden has sought to make good on that promise, pardoning thousands of people convicted of marijuana possession under federal law. In directing his cabinet to review marijuana's classification as a Schedule I drug, he opened the door to a major federal change that would subject the drug to fewer restrictions on production and research — and make it easier for people who use it or build businesses around it to access lifelines like public housing, banking and tax breaks.

Biden promoted those actions at events including his State of the Union address in March, though when the White House held a round table on cannabis reform about a week later, it was hosted by Vice President Kamala Harris, not Biden himself. He has been quiet about the rescheduling of marijuana this week. When asked about it, his press secretary, Karine Jean-Pierre, said she did not want to get ahead of the complex process underway at the Justice Department.

Blumenauer warns that Biden is leaving a political opportunity on the table. Fetterman helped his party keep its hold on the Senate with a campaign that pushed for legalizing marijuana.

"In terms of energizing young people, in terms of being on the side of reform, being on the right side of history, I think this is something that Joe Biden and his administration should embrace," Blumenauer said. "This is not low-hanging fruit. This is picking the fruit up off the ground."

It is not clear, however, that marijuana policy is as important an issue to younger voters as issues like abortion rights or the economy.

In some ways, Biden has handled the issue of marijuana similarly to how he handled another progressive priority: student loans. Progressives spent months urging him to cancel \$50,000 in student debt for those who had it in one fell swoop. His administration proceeded more cautiously, carefully reviewing its legal

# The New York Eimes

options before rolling out a more moderate approach.

Mild objections signal a broader shift

The administration's move comes as 38 states and the nation's capital have already legalized marijuana for medical reasons. Twenty-four states and Washington, D.C., have legalized it for recreational use.

And, perhaps for that reason, some Republicans sought to minimize the impact of Biden's action on policy as well as on the political landscape.

"It's an election year. A lot was said in 2020, but not much has been done," said Representative Dave Joyce of Ohio, a Republican and a former prosecutor who has worked with Blumenauer on cannabis reform. Biden's move won't prompt immediate change, he said.

Gov. Chris Sununu, Republican of New Hampshire, said marijuana policy was essentially a nonpartisan issue. He has come to the conclusion that legalization is inevitable in New Hampshire, so he is open to it as long as it is carefully regulated.

"I don't think politically it's some great win," Sununu said. "I think people understand it's a gateway drug."

The lack of fiery Republican attacks on Biden for his marijuana policy, however, seems to say something about how deeply marijuana has shifted in the American political psyche.

"It's a no-brainer," Fetterman said, before referring to a name given to those who are still deeply opposed to the drug. "The reefer madness caucus is probably smaller than the 'I like to shoot my dog' caucus."

#### PRESS RELEASE: Godfather of Cannabis Accepts Inaugural Earl Blumenauer Trailblazer Award

#### April 17th, 2024

WASHINGTON, D.C.—Today, Congressman Earl Blumenauer (D-OR), founder and co-chair of the Congressional Cannabis Caucus, accepted the inaugural Earl Blumenauer Trailblazer award from NORML at the 2024 National Cannabis Festival Policy Summit. The award celebrates lawmakers who blaze a path toward cannabis legalization.

"This is a great honor. As somebody who has been fighting this battle for over half a century, I hope it inspires all of us to redouble our efforts and make this the year we finally end the failed war on drugs. We are in the midst of a revolution and Joe Biden could help make landmark progress. It wouldn't just have profound political impact, it is absolutely the right thing to do," said Congressman Earl Blumenauer.

"After more than half a century fighting for cannabis justice, we are at the cusp of momentous change, and we absolutely would not be here without Earl Blumenauer," said Keith Stroup, founder of NORML. "We are incredibly grateful to have the opportunity to bestow this award on him in honor of his courage and leadership, and also in the hopes that many other lawmakers will follow the path he has charted."

Since 1973, Congressman Earl Blumenauer has led the nation in cannabis reform. In 2012, Blumenauer and then-Representative Jared Polis founded the Marijuana Working Group. Blumenauer and Polis released the first comprehensive legislative blueprint to legalize, tax, and regulate cannabis federally. In 2017, Blumenauer, with Representatives Polis, Young, and Rohrabacher founded the Congressional Cannabis Caucus which continues to lead Congress in common-sense cannabis reform.

In 2020, Blumenauer's Marijuana Opportunity Reinvestment and Expungement (MORE) Act became the first and only comprehensive legalization legislation to pass either chamber of the United States Congress. Less than two years later, Blumenauer's Medical Marijuana and Cannabidiol Research Expansion Act was signed into law by President Biden. This proposal to ease medical marijuana research was the first federal standalone marijuana reform enacted into law.

Most recently, Blumenauer has been Congress' foremost champion in demanding the Biden-Harris Administration deshedule cannabis entirely. He pressed the DEA to increase transparency in the scheduling review process. He has also urged the Administration to embrace the political benefits of cannabis reform, repeatedly making the case to cabinet secretaries.

Blumenauer continues to lead a strong, bipartisan legislative agenda that includes:

• The SAFE Banking Act to allow state-legal businesses to access standard financial services.

 $\cdot$  The Small Business Tax Equity Act to allow state-legal businesses to take standard tax deductions associated with running a business.

 $\cdot$  The Veterans Equal Access Act to end the Department of Veterans Affairs prohibition on supporting veterans in accessing medical cannabis.

The Washington Post Democracy Dies in Darkness

#### ECONOMIC POLICY

## Just how mainstream is marijuana? There's now a "Congressional Cannabis Caucus."



Analysis by Christopher Ingraham

February 17, 2017 at 3:23 p.m. EST

## **HIGH TIMES**

#### House Lawmakers Reintroduce Bipartisan Veterans Equal Access Act

A bipartisan pair of lawmakers has reintroduced legislation designed to give military veterans access to medical marijuana.

BY A.J. HERRINGTON · APRIL 3, 2023

#### PORTLANDINNO

## Will the 118th Congress be the one to make cannabis reforms a reality? Rep. Blumenauer hopes so



By Malia Spencer – Portland Inno, Portland Business Journal Apr 19, 2023

#### CANNABIS

#### Congressman Presses DEA For Answers on Ongoing Cannabis Scheduling Review

U.S. Rep. Earl Blumenauer wrote to DEA Administrator Anne Milgram Feb. 8 for further details on the review process, including when the agency might publish its draft rule on the scheduling of cannabis.

- 2013: States' Medical Marijuana Patient Protection Act Allows medical marijuana patients and businesses who are complying with state law the ability to access and distribute marijuana free from federal interference. Adopted as the Rohrabacher-Farr Amendment in CJS Appropriations in 2014.
- 2013, 2015: Marijuana Tax Revenue Act (formerly Marijuana Tax Equity Act) Amends the Internal Revenue Code to impose an excise tax on the sale of marijuana by producers or importers of such drug equal to 50% of the sales price and on each person who is engaged in a marijuana enterprise.
- 2013, 2015, 2019, 2023: Small Business Tax Equity Act Amends the Internal Revenue Code to allow deductions and credits relating to expenditures in connection with marijuana sales conducted in compliance with State law. If marijuana is moved to Schedule III, it would accomplish the purpose of this legislation.
- 2014, 2015, 2017, 2019, 2022, 2023: Veterans Equal Access Act Authorizes Department of Veterans Affairs health care providers to provide recommendations and opinions to veterans regarding participation in State marijuana programs. Passed out of the House Committee on Veterans Affairs in the 116th Congress. Passed on the floor as an NDAA amendment in 2022. Passed in the House as a MilCon-VA amendment in 2023 and 2024.
- 2014: H.Amdt.630 to the Military Construction and Veterans Affairs, and Related Agencies Appropriations Act, 2015 Prohibits the use of funds to implement the prohibition on VA providers from completing forms seeking recommendations or opinions regarding a Veteran's participation in a State marijuana program.
- 2015: H.Amdt.130 to the Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2016 Prohibits the use of funds to implement, administer, or enforce the prohibition on "VA providers for completing forms seeking recommendations or opinions regarding a Veteran's participation in a State marijuana program".
- 2015: Clean Slate for Marijuana Offenses Act Amends the federal criminal code to allow an individual convicted of certain marijuana-related offenses to file a petition for and gain expungement upon fulfilling all requirements of the sentence.
- 2015: Fair Access to Education Act of 2015 Amends section 484(r) of the Higher Education Act of 1965 to exclude certain marijuana-related offenses from the drug-related offenses that result in students being barred from receiving Federal educational loans, grants, and work assistance.
- 2015: H.Amdt.319 to the Commerce, Justice, Science, and Related Agencies Appropriations Act, 2016 - Prohibits the use of funds for any inspection under the Controlled Substances Act with respect to narcotic drugs or combinations of such drugs, being dispensed for maintenance or detoxification treatment.

- 2016: MAILS Act Amends the Controlled Substances Act to allow for advertising of certain controlled substances in compliance with state law.
- 2016: H.Amdt.1062 to Military Construction and Veterans Affairs and Related Agencies Appropriations Act, 2017 - Prohibits the use of funds to implement, administer, or enforce the prohibition on VA providers for completing forms seeking recommendations or opinions regarding a Veteran's participation in a state marijuana program.
- 2017, 2019: Marijuana Revenue and Regulation Act Imposes an excise tax on any marijuana product produced in or imported into the United States and an occupational tax on marijuana production facilities and export warehouses.
- 2018, 2019: Maintaining Appropriate Protections for Legal Entry (MAPLE) Act Removes various marijuana-related acts from the list of crimes that would make an alien inadmissible for entry into the United States or deportable, if the act was lawful in the jurisdiction where it occurred.
- 2019: H.Amdt.398 to the Further Continuing Appropriations Act, 2020, and Further Health Extenders Act of 2019 Prohibits the Department of Justice from interfering with state cannabis programs.
- 2019: H.Amdt.457 to the Further Continuing Appropriations Act, 2020, and Further Health Extenders Act of 2019 - Prohibits the Department of Veterans Affairs from interfering with a veterans participation in a state medical cannabis program, denying a veteran who participates in a state medical cannabis program from being denied VA services, and interfering with the ability of VA health care providers to recommend participation in state medical cannabis programs.
- 2019: H.Amdt.397 to the Further Continuing Appropriations Act, 2020, and Further Health Extenders Act of 2019 Prohibits the department of justice from interfering with tribal cannabis programs.
- 2019: State Cannabis Commerce Act Prohibits the use of federal funds to prevent a state from implementing a law that authorizes certain marijuana-related activities. (Prevents Federal agencies from interfering with the marijuana policy of states.)
- 2019: Regulate Marijuana Like Alcohol Act Removes marijuana from the list of controlled substances and establishes requirements for the regulation of marijuana products.
- 2019: Strengthening the Tenth Amendment Through Entrusting States (STATES) Act -Eliminates regulatory controls and administrative, civil, and criminal penalties under the Controlled Substances Act for certain marijuana-related activities that comply with state or tribal law and requires the Government Accountability Office to study and report on the effects of marijuana legalization on traffic safety.

- 2019: H.Amdt.864 to the Defense, Commerce, Justice, Science, Energy and Water Development, Financial Services and General Government, Labor, Health and Human Services, Education, Transportation, Housing, and Urban Development Appropriations Act, 2021 - Prohibits the Department of Justice from interfering with state and tribal cannabis programs, including the District of Columbia, the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands, Guam, the Virgin Islands, and Puerto Rico.
- 2017, 2019: Responsibly Addressing the Marijuana Policy Gap Act Amend the Controlled Substances Act to reduce the gap between Federal and State marijuana policy.
- 2020: Emergency Cannabis Small Business Health and Safety Act Makes cannabis-related legitimate businesses and service providers eligible for certain Small Business Administration programs established in response to COVID-19.
- 2019, 2021: Medical Marijuana Research Act Amends the Controlled Substances Act to make marijuana accessible for use by qualified marijuana researchers for medical purposes. Passed House on December 9, 2020, and on April 4, 2022.
- 2020: Small Business Disaster Relief Equity Act- This bill makes state-legal cannabis businesses eligible for disaster assistance, and it requires each agency that administers disaster assistance to allow these businesses to retroactively apply. Disaster assistance is any service, grant, loan, tax credit, tax deduction, or any other assistance that is made available in connection with (1) a federally declared disaster, or (2) specified COVID-19 (i.e., coronavirus disease 2019) relief programs.
- 2022: Medical Marijuana and Cannabidiol Research Expansion Act Establishes a new, separate registration process to facilitate research on marijuana by directing the Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA) to register (1) practitioners to conduct marijuana research, and (2) manufacturers to supply marijuana for the research. Signed into law on December 2, 2022.
- 2023: Hemp Access and Consumer Safety Act To allow for hemp-derived cannabidiol and hemp-derived cannabidiol containing substances in dietary supplements and food.
- 2024: The DOJ announces a Notice of Proposed Rulemaking to move cannabis to Schedule III.

# CIVICS EDUCATION

### **Civics Education**

Congressman Earl Blumenauer has consistently championed comprehensive federal investment in civics education programs. His involvement stems from his earliest political experiences. While still a student at Lewis and Clark College, Earl led the effort to lower the voting age both in Oregon and nationally. It was a unique coalition led by young people across Oregon who were joined by a broad cross-section of adults. The campaign included most of the major elected officials in both parties at the state, local, and federal levels.

While initially unsuccessful in Oregon, the campaign culminated with Earl testifying to Congress and the passage of 26th Amendment. In his testimony, Earl highlighted that the Oregon campaign gave credence to the idea that young people were responsible enough to vote and "that the process of enacting such an amendment into law would be a valuable exercise in promoting the better communication, better understanding between diverse elements in our society." He emphasized that a Constitutional amendment would engage young people in the political process and that it would provide an opportunity to build "the type of coalition that is going to have to be established to deal with the tremendous environmental and social problems that confront us."

Earl's first foray into politics laid the groundwork for his engagement with civic education for the rest of his career. As the City of Portland's Public Works Commissioner, he created a class at Portland State University that teaches citizens how to effectively advocate for traffic and transportation changes in their neighborhoods. At its core, the class is a civics course which equips participants with the ability to identify the right governing authority, succinctly define the problem, and suggest a solution that is supported by science and the community. It still exists today, almost forty years after its advent, and has helped thousands of Portlanders learn how to improve their neighborhoods and engage with city government.

Earl's landmark legislation to establish the Special Immigrant Visa program to protect foreign nationals who helped Americans abroad to escape the Taliban and Al-Qaeda grew out of a civics class in a Portland high school, where students were working to protect a young Iraqi interpreter.

In March 2021, Earl co-led the Civics Secures Democracy Act, which includes his USA Civics Act, with Representatives DeLauro and Cole and Senators Cornyn and Coons. The bill would invest \$1 billion annually in civics education. While Earl's federal efforts have been bipartisan, the culture wars around education have flared up in what should be a non-controversial issue. In April 2021, the Department of Education published a proposed rule on the Federal Register regarding the American History and Civics Education programs.

### **Civics Education**

The proposed rule mentioned "The 1619 Project" and would give priority to applicants with projects "that incorporate teaching and learning practices that reflect the diversity, identities, histories, contributions, and experiences of all students create inclusive, supportive, and identity-safe learning environments." Conservative backlash to the proposed rule led to the Republicans backing away from prioritizing this bill and complicated the path forward.

With partisanship stymicing efforts at the national level, Earl worked to improve things in his home state. Earl successfully advocated for civics education to be included as a requirement for high school graduation which the Oregon State Legislature passed in 2021.

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## The New York Times **Oregon to Settle Voting Age** Issue

May 24, 1970

PORTLAND, Ore., May 23-Oregon voters will decide Tuesday whether to lower the voting age to 19 years, a measure whose future has been clouded by three weeks of turmoil on the state's college campuses.

In a primary election that has generated little voter inter est, Oregon Democrats also will choose between State Treasurer Robert Straub and a University of Oregon professor, Arthur Pearl, to oppose Gov. Tom Mc Call, a Republican, in the fall.

The vote at 19 measure had been rated a toss-up by politi cal observers before President Nixon sent troops into Cam bodia. But then the University of Oregon and Portland State University were closed for two days and Oregon State University for one day in the after math of student protests.

Governor McCall, who joined all other state officials in back ing the lower voting age, said this week that "the 19 year vote is down the drain." He cited the great volume of mail he was receiving in which residents gave the campus pro tests as their reason for opposing the measure.

However, Earl Blumenauer, 21, chairman of the Oregonians for Go-19 Committee refused to accept the Governor's judgment. "There is a distinction between an uphill battle and a lost cause," he said. "The task has not been made any easier but we can still win."

Mr. Blumenauer, a senior at Lewis and Clark College in Portland, had led the movement since the issue came before the rate of unem ployment in Oregon's 1969 legislature. His committee has raised \$20,000 and enlisted 2,000 volunteers for door-to door canvassing.

The measure's only public op position has come from William J. Moshofsky, a Portland lawyer who was instrumental in the winning campaign of Governor Rockefeller of New York in the 1964 Oregon Presi dential primary. Mr. Moshofsky believes that young people "should get their own lives in order before expecting them to help govern the affairs of others. This is a time for learn ing, not leading," he adds.

In the Democratic race for Governor, Mr. Straub has been made a favorite over Dr. Pearl, a 47-year-old professor of edu cation making his first bid for public office.

A poll printed last month by the state's largest newspaper, The Portland Oregonian, sur prised politicians by showing Mr. Straub in a dead heat with Governor McCall, who has op position from two political un knowns, and Rew Gigler and Robert Wampler, in the Republican primary.

#### 2,000 Supporters at Work

Mr. McCall defeated Mr. Straub by 72,000 votes in the 1966 Governor's race and he had been made the favorite again

Mr. Straub has spent no money on advertising during the primary campaign, although he has remained highly visible by speaking throughout the state. He is basing his cam paign on opposition to

the Nixon Administration's eco nomic policy, which he said has led to the high lumber based economy.

Dr. Pearl, meanwhile, has en listed many of the same per sons who campaigned for Sen ator Eugene McCarthy in his upset of Senator Robert F. Ken nedy in the

1968 Oregon Presidential primary.

Dr. Pearl is an outspoken critic of the Vietnam war, which this week brought him the endorsement of former Sen ator Wayne L. Morse. He has also advocated calling out the National Guard to block pro posed shipment of nerve gas from Okinawa to the Umatilla Army Depot in, eastern Oregon. This, he said, would put the President in the embarrassing position of having to federalize the Guard.

Six other Democrats will also be on the ballot but none has mounted a statewide campaign.

# The New York Eimes

## Redistricting, a Bipartisan Sport

#### By: Earl Blumenauer and Jim Leach July 8, 2003

Congressional redistricting is about as interesting as someone else's genealogy. But occasionally the subject produces headlines, as it did two months ago when Democratic members of the Texas Legislature fled to Oklahoma to avoid creating a quorum to address the issue. Their desperate maneuver failed; Republican leaders have convened a special session on redistricting and the State Legislature will continue to debate the issue today.

Despite the public perception that the drawing of legislative maps is an insider's game of no particular relevance, the health of American democracy hinges on how state officials approach the issue. If competitive elections matter -- and to much of the world they are what America stands for -- then redistricting also matters

Using redistricting to gain advantage over one's opponents has been going on almost since America was founded. "Gerrymandering," the term to describe the process of creating strangely shaped legislative districts, dates back to 1812 or so, when Elbridge Gerry devised a legislative map in Massachusetts to benefit his political party's interests.

The courts have occasionally waded into this legislative thicket, principally to protect the one-person, one-vote principle but also to ensure compliance with the Voting Rights Act. But redistricting simply for partisan advantage -- so long as it doesn't result in less minority representation and isn't too geographically egregious -- is not generally considered grounds for court interference.

It is, however, a matter of profound importance to our system of government. A few partisans should not be allowed to manipulate the landscape of state and national politics by legislative linedrawing. But that's exactly what has happened.

Gerrymandering has become a bipartisan pastime. California Democrats produced a plan that turned a closely divided Congressional delegation (22-21) into a 28-17 Democratic advantage after the 1980 reapportionment. After the 1990 reapportionment, Georgia Republicans were able to turn a 9-1 disadvantage into an eventual 8-3 majority. In fact, Republican control of the House, won in 1994 for the first time in 40 years, was probably due more to shrewd redistricting than to the muchpublicized "Contract with America."

In the wake of the 2000 census, candidates for governor and even obscure state legislators who would have a hand in drawing new legislative boundaries received unprecedented attention. In an unusual role reversal, some members of Congress even contributed money to state campaigns and hired their own lobbyists to represent their interests in state capitols..

The effort paid off. In big states that Republicans came to control, they were able to make gains. In Michigan, incumbent Democrats were forced into races against each other. In Pennsylvania, Democratic-leaning districts were eliminated altogether. And though the 2000 presidential election made clear that Florida is evenly divided on party preferences, it sends 18 Republicans to Congress and only 7 Democrats.

Democrats, meanwhile, did their own manipulating where they could, picking up seats in Georgia, North Carolina and Maryland. Battles are now brewing in New Mexico and Oklahoma as Democratic state legislators try to tailor districts to their party's advantage -- just as Republicans are trying to do in Colorado and Texas.

More than either political party, however, the real winners in the redistricting games are incumbents. Nationwide, in 2002 only eight incumbents were defeated in the general election -- and four of those lost to other incumbents. On average, last year Congressional incumbents won with more than two-thirds of the vote.

One response to all this, of course, could be indifference. Political manipulation is to be expected. Besides, despite the best efforts of partisans of both parties, Congress is still almost evenly divided, with only a slight Republican tilt.

But the consequences of entrenched incumbency should concern us all. Without meaningful competition in 90 percent of all races in the House, representatives become less accountable to voters and citizens lose interest in democracy.

More subtle consequences also unfold. When control of Congress rests on the results of those 20 to 30 races that are potentially competitive, the political dialogue in these campaigns, and legislative strategies in the House, become skewed. The few competitive races become playgrounds for power brokers who specialize in expensive, divisive and manipulative campaign techniques.

In Washington, legislative initiatives are frequently distorted in an effort to keep the vulnerable few in the political cross hairs. Bills on issues like farm policy or free trade are often framed to force members to choose between constituencies -- farmers and unions, for example. Bills on health care may force members to choose between doctors and lawyers.

# The New York Times

There is also a profound problem that is not subtle at all. Primary elections in districts that are overwhelmingly Republican produce candidates generally to the right of the average Republican, while more liberal Democrats usually emerge from primaries in districts that are overwhelmingly Democratic. The political center -- where most Americans are most comfortable -- gets the least representation in Congress.

In short, the current system produces a House that is both more liberal and more conservative than the country at large. Members are less inclined to talk and cooperate, much less compromise. The legislative agenda is shaped more to energize the political base than to advance the common good.

It doesn't have to be this way. Iowa, which has about 1 percent of the United States population and only five representatives in the House, saw as many competitive races in the last election as California, New York and Illinois combined. (For the record, those three states account for 101 seats in the House). Iowa is so competitive largely because it has an independent redistricting commission that is prohibited from considering where incumbents live when it draws new legislative maps.

What works for Iowa could work for the nation. The formula for avoiding inequities, undue partisan advantage and political dysfunction is the creation of independent redistricting commissions. Arizona recently followed Iowa's example, and such a commission has been proposed in Texas.

These commissions offer the best hope for taking partisanship out of the redistricting process. The public should insist that candidates for governor and state legislatures favor the development of strong nonpartisan redistricting plans.

ompetitive elections are essential to the American system of government. Just as antitrust laws are necessary for a strong economy, so redistricting reform is critical for a healthy democracy.

# **The Oregonian** Lincoln High School wins state "We the People" Constitution Championship

By: Simina Mistreanu Jan 26, 2014

A team from Lincoln High School won the state "We the People" Constitution competition, and will represent Oregon in the national finals.

The contest assesses students' knowledge and understanding of the U.S. Constitution. Teams study the supreme law, and then participate in mock Congressional hearings. Judges and lawyers question and evaluate the students.

The state competition took place Saturday, Jan. 25, at the Mark O. Hatfield Courthouse. Six teams – all winners in regional contests – competed in this stage.

Teams from Grant High School and Franklin High School finished second and third, respectively. They were followed by teams from Lake Oswego High School, Central Catholic High School and Sisters High School.

The winners will participate in the national championship, held annually in congressional hearing rooms on Capitol Hill in Washington, D.C.

Portland has a good track record in this competition. According to a statement by Rep. Earl Blumenauer, D-Portland, checked by PolitiFact Oregon, Portland has won more national Constitution contests than any city in America.

The state winning team this year has 36 members, of which 30 are sophomores, three are juniors and three are seniors.

## Sen. Ron Wyden and Rep. Earl Blumenauer Introduce Nationwide Vote-by-Mail Bill

#### The bill is part of a package of "pro-democratic reforms" released today by a new majority Democratic House.

By: Elise Herron

January 03, 2019

U.S. Sen. Ron Wyden (D-Oregon) and Rep. Earl Blumenauer (D-Portland) today introduced a bill aimed at curbing voter suppression.

The politicians are proposing a nationwide adoption of Oregon's vote-by-mail system, which they say will help democratize elections processes.

The Vote-By-Mail Act would require passage by a Republican-controlled Senate and President Trump to become reality. On the eve of a 13-day government shutdown over funding of a U.S., Mexico border wall, that's an unlikely scenario.

Wyden, a vocal critic of the Trump administration, said in a statement, "This administration and special interests want to make voting harder so they can advance an anti-democratic agenda that rewards the powerful and hurts regular Americans."

Reports of long lines at polling places, locked polling places or polling place location changes and malfunctioning machines dominated headlines two months ago.

"Last November, once again, voters across the nation faced unacceptable barriers just to have their ballots counted," Wyden said.

The bill—included as part of a package called House Resolution 1—would also build upon Oregon's automatic voter registration program and require states to register to vote any resident who provides information to the local motor vehicle authority.

"Our first priority should be to ensure our democracy is available to everyone, which is why this is my first bill of the new Congress," Rep. Blumenauer said. "I am proud that the success of the Oregon model is now being recognized federally by paving the way for all Americans to vote by mail."

### **Civics Education**

### PRESS RELEASE: Blumenauer Congratulates Lincoln & Grant High Schools for Success in 'We the People' Competition

#### April 26th, 2016

**Washington, DC** — Today, on the floor of the U.S. House of Representatives, Congressman Earl Blumenauer (OR-03) congratulated the constitution teams of Lincoln High School and Grant High School for their success in this year's "We the People" Constitution competition, with Lincoln placing first and Grant placing third in the national finals yesterday. Congressman Blumenauer commended both teams' students and volunteer coaches for their efforts and passion for the Constitution and government.

"These teenage scholars, most not old enough to vote or to drive, compete in a contest demonstrating their knowledge of the Constitution and democratic principles, as well as their ability to think on their feet," Blumenauer said. "At a time when civics education doesn't appear to be a priority for most of American education, this shows the appetite and the capacity to fill that gap."

On Friday, April 22, ahead of the competition, Congressman Blumenauer met with both teams on the House floor to wish them luck and answer detailed questions about partisanship and the political climate, the breadth of the administrative state, the challenges presented by special interests and weakened campaign finance laws, and the role of a legislator in the 21st century.

"Listening to their comments and questions, I celebrated their insights and hard work, their commitment," Blumenauer said reflecting on the meeting. "I wish we could have all of them on the floor of this House to elevate the discussion and deliberation, and I think they'd add, frankly, to the decision making. But until their time will come, and it can't come soon enough, we celebrate five consecutive national championships for two public high schools in Portland, Oregon. Congratulations, Lincoln Cardinals on your championship, and Grant High School for finishing third. Together, you have dominated this elite competition for five consecutive years. Congratulations!"

### **Civics Education**

#### E-Newsletter - May 12th, 2021

#### Dear Friends,

Civics education has been a driving force throughout my career, but nothing showed me the urgency of the issue like being in the U.S. Capitol on January 6 as thousands of armed insurrectionists stormed the building, literally determined to stop the election certification and kill the Vice President, Speaker of the House, and others doing the hard work of democracy.

The events of that day made clear just how fragile our democracy is and how important it is to have citizens who are knowledgeable about our democracy and committed to protect it.

#### Failing to foster greater civic engagement will only accelerate and invite further threats to our democracy.

I strongly believe in making sure that young people understand how the process works. That is why, over the years, I've been in hundreds of classrooms around the country, in high school and college discussing the importance of civics education.

#### This should be something that people on both sides of the aisle can come together on - at both the state and federal level.

At the federal level, I am working to move forward my USA Civics Act to prepare the civics educators of today and tomorrow.

But much of this work also must happen at the state level. It's inexcusable that Oregon remains one of the 11 states that lacks a civics graduation requirement for high school students. As a result, only 24% of students met the proficiency standard in civics. This needs to change.

Yesterday, I met with a number of local leaders about civics education. What Parkrose High School student Josedavid Muñoz-Ronquillo said during our discussion was spot-on: "If it is the role of schools to prepare students for the outside world, then civics education should be a part of what we are learning. I believe it is our civic duty to understand the power of our shared government."

This year, the state's legislatures have that opportunity. The Civics Education Act, which is being considered this week, is a common-sense measure that guarantees every Oregon high school student receives one semester of civics education before graduation. The legislation is in the home stretch, and I sincerely hope that the state legislature will take the step to make sure we equip our young people to be guardians of democracy.

As we saw on January 6, it's more important now than ever.

Courage,

Buren Earl Blumenauer

Member of Congress

- 2019: Co-sponsor Rep. Alcee Hastings' Civics Learning Act which would have amended the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 to prioritize innovative civics learning and teaching and to provide additional funding in FY2020 for civics education programs, including before and after school, service learning and extracurricular activities.
- 2020: First introduced the USA Civics Act with Rep. Cole and Sens. Cornyn and Coons. The bill would authorize grants to colleges or university-nonprofit partnerships that promote knowledge of American political thought and history, free institutions, democracy, or means of participation in political and civic life. The goal was to introduce it as an amendment to Ed&Labor Chairman Scott's Higher Education Act reauthorization; however, due to the pandemic, it never came to the floor.
- 2021: Led the Civics Secures Democracy Act with Rep. DeLauro, Rep. Cole, Sen. Cornyn, and Sen. Coons. The bill would annually invest \$1 billion in civics education. However, in April, the Department of Education published a proposed rule on the Federal Register regarding the American History and Civics Education programs. The proposed rule mentions "The 1619 Project" and would give priority to applicants with projects "that incorporate teaching and learning practices that reflect the diversity, identities, histories, contributions, and experiences of all students create inclusive, supportive, and identity-safe learning environments." Conservative backlash to the proposed rule led to Sen. Cornyn and Rep. Cole to consider pulling out of leading the Civics Secures Democracy Act. This all happened before the Critical Race Theory moral panic got into full swing, so they are still on the bill. That being said, we have all just kept quiet about the legislation since introducing.
- Advocated for Oregon SB 513, legislation passed during the first regular session to add a half-credit of civics to statutory list of required credits to graduate high school beginning with the 2025-2026 school year.

# END OF LIFE CARE

One of Congressman Earl Blumenauer's health care legacies is his commitment to improving end-of-life care and bringing Oregon's leadership in this space to the national stage. Earl's goal has always been to ensure that patients are treated with compassion and empowered to make the decisions that are best for them and their families during an extremely vulnerable time. Most importantly, to make sure their decisions are informed and honored, whatever they decide.

Oregon has always been a leader in talking about end-of-life care and planning. Oregon created the initial iteration of Portable Orders for Life Saving Treatment (POLST) forms in 1991 to direct patient treatment and began statewide use in 1995. These forms allow patients to relay their preference for lifesaving treatment to hospitals and providers around the state and set the stage for Earl's work in Congress on advance care planning.

Earl will often remind you that he's "the death panels guy." As the health care debates heated up in 2009, Earl wanted to use the healthcare reform discussions to make sure that Medicare made it easy for people to have conversations with their doctor about the things that were important to them in their final days. Earl championed efforts to allow Medicare to cover advance care planning conversations between doctors and patients about the patient's wishes for end-of-life care including things like pain management and severity of treatment, captured in documents like orders for life sustaining treatment and living wills Treating people thoughtfully means empowering patients and families to think about these decisions before it is too late. Sadly, we have a long way to go convincing people to use these tools. The best example is that while the overwhelming majority of people would like their last days to be at home surrounded by family and friends, unfortunately, the majority of people die in hospitals, contrary to their wishes.

Earl's bipartisan bill to allow for Medicare to cover advance care planning was included in the House health care reform bill, which passed in 2009. Then, Sarah Palin accused the provision of establishing "death panels" that would kill grandma—an absurd statement which was later declared Politifact's 2009 Lie of the Year. In the end, the simple idea of allowing people choices about their end-of-life care became radioactive and was stripped out of the final Affordable Care Act. Earl spent the following years introducing standalone bills to create this benefit and slowly working to rebuild bipartisan support for the concept.

In October 2015, after many years of lobbying, consensus building, Republican outreach, etc., CMS created a benefit to encourage physicians to discuss advanced care planning. That benefit started in January 2016 and was used

almost 570,000 times the first year it was available, and more every year since then.

Building on this success, Earl has turned to ensuring that beneficiaries are able to access advance care planning services for free. Advance care planning is free for beneficiaries only during their annual wellness visit and not at other points of the year or with other providers. For example, if a patient is diagnosed with cancer, they would be charged for having conversations about their wishes with their oncologist instead of waiting for the annual visit. Additionally, physicians aren't always the best provider to discuss these plans with, but social workers aren't covered by these payment codes. Earl has introduced legislation that would make the benefit free at any point in the year and allow social workers to be able to bill for the service. If passed, this legislation will ensure that patients can access this benefit whenever they need to with the provider that makes the most sense for them.

Beyond the initial benefit being created, Earl kept working to protect and enshrine patient choice into their medical care. In order for patients to feel that they oversee their own health care decisions, they need the chance to revisit their end-of-life care wishes, and they need to have confidence that those wishes will be respected. Simultaneously, providers need to know how to have these conversations in the first place, and how to summarize them so that they can be followed. All of this needs to happen in context of a more comprehensive effort to change how we provide care to people with advanced, chronic, and persistent illness – better palliative care, better hospice care, and ultimately better care coordination and delivery.

Building on this work, in 2017, Earl introduced bipartisan, bicameral legislation to address all the areas with had the support of over 35 groups that span the continuum of care. In 2018, the Physician Technical Advisory Committee (P-TAC) recommended the advanced illness management model contained in the bill to the Secretary of HHS as a demonstration project that the Administration would take on. Principles of the model were included in the Primary Care First Serious Illness Model. However, in 2021, CMS decided to not go forward with the model. Given that decision, stakeholders began exploring other ways to promote treating advanced illness, and Earl is working to address barriers to payment for palliative care within the Medicare program.

Earl has also focused on improving the hospice benefit—a key option when discussing end of life care. He'll often say that hospice is magic for people at the end of their lives. When done right, it's compassionate and often provides a better quality of life. However, the nature of hospice to forgo curative care can pose barriers for certain conditions. Earl took interest in this issue because ESRD patients

must suspend dialysis sessions if they want to enroll in hospice, resulting in a cliff in care that's extremely painful. Earl is championing an effort to allow patients to enroll in hospice while still receiving some services that are not life-sustaining but can ease discomfort.

In November 2022, ProPublica published a scathing expose revealing rampant fraud and abuse in the hospice benefit. The article detailed a number of horrifying allegations that run the gamut from hospices improperly enrolling people, defrauding the government while also interfering in patient care plans, to hospice licensure fraud where hospices hit Medicare reimbursement limits, shut down, and buy a new license with the same patients. The article highlights that, to some extent, hospice payment (which happens on a per diem basis) rewards providers for recruiting patients who aren't dying since longer stays translate into larger margins.

Earl immediately called upon hospice stakeholders to partner with him in addressing these issues. Following a roundtable, the hospice industry began providing recommendations to address program integrity and oversight at CMS as well as looking at how to redesign and modernize the benefit to disincentivize bad actors. Earl led bipartisan letters to CMS and the Inspector General raising concerns about these reports. He's elevated the recommendations made by industry and joined calls with CMS to lend his support for using every tool to address this issue. Earl has been clear that it shouldn't be hard to allow good providers to continue to provide care while stopping fake hospices from existing and is committed to being a congressional champion for actions the Administration wants to take. Following Earl's advocacy, CMS took a number of steps to strengthen the hospice oversight process and protect patients including releasing ownership data of hospices to allow patients and researchers to see the effects of private equity, conducting a nationwide project to physically do site visits and verify hospices, requiring providers to be enrolled with Medicare to order hospice, and strengthening oversight during the enrollment process in areas with high rates of fraud.

Earl has single handedly moved the issue of end-of-life care planning forward, during times when it has been the object of some of the most toxic and farcical partisan attacks. His dedication and commitment to the work has helped millions of Americans and their families achieve more rest and comfort in their final days.

#### Legislative Accomplishments

- Earl's work in championing end of life care has resulted in CMS taking action to implement and improve care options. He helped the federal government establish a value on end of life care within the Medicare benefit. In 2016, Earl's work on creating an advance care planning benefit came to fruition with the Obama Administration creating Medicare payment codes for the service.
- Earl pushed the Biden Administration to engage more on hospice fraud, resulting in increased attention from CMS. Throughout 2023, CMS has worked to release ownership data of hospices, engaged in a nationwide validation project to ensure licensed hospices exist, and enhanced oversight during the enrollment process.

## **Hospice News** Rep. Earl Blumenauer Plans

# Landmark Hospice Reform Bill

By: Jim Parker June 13, 2024



Rep. Earl Blumenauer (D-Oregon) is drafting a landmark bill that, if enacted, would represent the most significant reforms to date for hospice payment and oversight.

Blumenauer announced the bill, the Hospice Care Accountability, Reform, and Enforcement (Hospice CARE) Act, on Thursday at the Hospice News Elevate conference in Washington D.C. Though the bill language is still in development, key provisions will likely include a new payment mechanism for high-acuity palliative services, changes to the per-diem payment process and actions to improve quality and combat fraud.

The bill would also implement a temporary, national moratorium on the enrollment of new hospices into Medicare, to help stem the tide of fraudulent activities among recently established providers concentrated primarily in California, Arizona, Texas and Nevada.

"We would actually stop new enrollments until we have the chance to work this through, dealing with exceptions that need to be in place. We're very interested in developing a transitional program, so that people are able to get the type of service they need on day one," Blumenaur said at Elevate. "We're going to take a hard look at what we're doing with the per diem system ... That's going to have a modest amount of controversy, but I think it's something that is long overdue and important." addition of a per-visit payment for clinical services to ensure that hospices are delivering appropriate care to patients.

The bill would also institute a payment add-on to support delivery of higher-acuity care palliative services that are difficult for hospice to support within the current payment structure. In the current draft of the legislation, this would include dialysis, chemotherapy, radiation and blood transfusions.

If enacted, the legislation would also prohibit payment to hospice programs that do not submit required quality data. Currently, about 20% of hospice programs do not submit quality data despite a 4% payment penalty for noncompliance, according to Blumenaur's congressional office. It would also allow nurse practitioners to certify patients for hospice, among other changes to the Medicare benefit.

At Elevate, Blumenaur encouraged hospice providers to contact his office to express their views and needs when it comes to reforming hospice care, oversight and payment.

"This is an opportunity to do something in this Congress that is concrete, specific, that will save money and improve the quality of care for some of our most vulnerable people ..." Blumenauer said. "This is an essential part of being able to humanize the health care system to improve patient outcomes."

The legislation would also create new levels of respite care. Current regulations limit inpatient respite care to no more than five consecutive days. If the bill passes, it would allow for five inpatient respite days during per election period.

It would also allow for transitional inpatient respite care for up to 15 days for patients that first elect hospice from a hospital stay (which

Among the key changes would be a reduction in hospice daily rates and the

# Hospice News

may include a stay for observation). This would allow eligible patients to transition to hospice sooner from a hospital stay without first going to a skilled nursing facility.

"When people are coming on the benefit in that moment of crisis, they don't necessarily have a plan," Mollie Gurian, vice president of home-based and HCBS policy at LeadingAge, told Hospice News. "This would be giving more time for families to figure out what the best next step is, whether they need to go to a nursing home and they need to get the paperwork done for that, or assisted living, or just the family getting ready in the home environment for people to come home."

The bill would also create a short-term, home-respite level of care for when respite care is provided to individuals in their homes for at least eight hours during a 24-hour period for no more than five days during an election period, according to a discussion draft of the legislation.

"Congressman Blumenauer continues to be a valued thought leader in evolving the Medicare Hospice Benefit on behalf of hospice and palliative care providers, patients, and their families," Ben Marcantonio, COO and interim CEO for the National Hospice and Palliative Care Organization (NHPCO), told Hospice News in an email. "We are grateful to him for his dedicated effort to advance serious illness and end-of-life care and look forward to providing feedback on the Hospice CARE Act."

Like any major changes, these reforms, if they come to fruition, would require careful implementation, according to National Association for Home Care and Hospice President Bill Dombi.

"While we appreciate that this draft legislation can help support broader conversations about how best to improve the hospice program for all Americans, we want to make sure the proposed policies don't unduly burden hospices following the rules and delivering quality care, and jeopardize timely access to care for the sickest among us," Dombi told Hospice News in an email. "We will work with our members and partners to gather detailed feedback on the draft, and look forward to providing input to help inform legislation that recognizes the value hospice brings to patients, communities, and taxpayers."

The bill is still in draft form and has yet to be introduced in Congress. After introduction occurs, it will have to wind its way through the legislative process, including committee markups.

Each of the nation's four largest hospice industry groups have committed to providing feedback to help shape the legislation

as it progresses through Congress, including NHPCO, NAHC, LeadingAge and the National Partnership for Healthcare and Hospice Innovation (NPHI).

"We thank Congressman Blumenauer for his attention to the difficult challenges facing NPHI members and the broader hospice community. His release of the draft text of the Hospice CARE Act of 2024 is just the latest development in his yearslong championing of high-quality end-of-life care," NPHI CEO Tom Koutsoumpas told Hospice News in an email. "We look forward to working closely with the Congressman, his staff and committee staff to provide feedback on this detailed and thoughtful proposal."

## The New York Times **My Near Death Panel**

### Experience

**Bv: Earl Blumenauer** Nov 14, 2009

I DIDN'T mean to kill Grandma. I didn't even mean to create death panels.

But now that I and my fellow lawmakers in the House have passed a health care bill, I'm finally free to explain what I learned as the author of the now-famous end-of-life provisions. My experiences during the bizarre controversies of the summer should provide a note of caution 2008, Gov. Sarah Palin of Alaska issued about what potential troubles and political distortions might lie ahead as health care legislation moves forward in the Senate, through the reconciliation process and toward a final bill.

This proposal was not even my top health-care priority. During my 13 years in the House, I have written and cosponsored numerous provisions to change end-of-life provision. My Republican cothe way the government pays for health care. I am much more interested in extending coverage to the uninsured and moving away from "fee for service" Medicare, which rewards volume over value.

In this context, I found it perverse that Medicare would pay for almost any medical procedure, yet not reimburse doctors for having a thoughtful conversation to prepare patients and families for the delicate, complex and emotionally demanding decisions surrounding the end of life. So when I was working on the health care bill, I included language directing Medicare to cover a voluntary discussion with a doctor once every five years about living wills, power of attorney and end-of-life treatment preferences.

I was especially committed to this issue because helping patients and their

families clarify what they want and need is not only good for all Americans, but also a rare common denominator of health care politics. Indeed, the majority of Congressional Republicans supported the similar provisions for terminally ill elderly patients that were part of the 2003 prescription drug bill. In the spring of a proclamation that stated the importance of end-of-life planning.

With this history in mind, I reached out to Republicans, including conservative members of Congress who often expressed support for the concept, and worked with national experts in palliative "would make it mandatory, absolutely care and advocacy groups in devising the sponsor, Charles Boustany of Louisiana, told me he had many end-of-life conversations as a cardiovascular surgeon but unfortunately they often were too late. He wished that he could have spoken to patients and their families falsehood." when they could have reflected properly, not when surgery was just hours away.

While continuing to work on other important health care reform provisions, I was confident that in this area, we had made a contribution that would ultimately be in the final bill. It might even serve as a bridge for bipartisan compromise as we entered the frustratingly contentious end game of finishing the overall legislation.

But the battle lines were being drawn. Little did I know how deep the trenches would be dug, nor how truth would be one of the first, and most obvious, casualties.

The House Ways and Means Committee "mark-up session" of the health care bill, on July 16, lasted all day and into the night. Republican colleagues offered dozens of amendments aimed at numerous provisions. Nowhere was there a single proposal to change the end-of-life language, nor a word spoken in opposition. Not a single word.

Then Betsy McCaughey entered the fray. A former lieutenant governor of New York, Ms. McCaughey had gained notoriety in the 1990s by attacking the Clinton health plan. In a radio interview, she attacked the end-of-life provisions in the health care legislation, claiming it require, that every five years people in Medicare have a required counseling session that will tell them how to end their life sooner." The St. Petersburg Times's fact-checking Web site PolitiFact quickly excoriated her: "McCaughey isn't just wrong; she's spreading a ridiculous

But in today's vicious news cycle, lies take on lives of their own on Web sites, blogs and e-mail chains and go viral in seconds. Ms. McCaughey's claims were soon widely circulated in the thirst for ammunition against the Democrats' health care reform plan. "Mandatory counseling for all seniors at a minimum of every five years, more often if the seasoned citizen is sick or in a nursing home," was how Rush Limbaugh described the provision a week later. "We can't have counseling for mothers who are thinking of terminating their pregnancy, but we can go in there and counsel people about to die," he added.

# The New York Eimes

Two days later, the lie found its way into Republican politicians' statements. "This provision may start us down a treacherous path toward governmentencouraged euthanasia if enacted into law," declared the House Republican leader, John Boehner of Ohio, and Thaddeus McCotter of Michigan. I was shocked. This really struck at the heart of what I was trying to do I to build consensus.

Still, nothing could prepare me for what came next. As luck would have it, on July 28 I was presiding over the House of Representatives when my Republican colleagues decided to have a filibuster of one-minute speeches attacking the Democratic health care reform proposals, or rather, the proposals as seen through their skewed vision.

Representative Virginia Foxx of North Carolina made the singularly outrageous claim that the Republican version of health care reform "is pro-life because it will not put seniors in a position of being put to death by their government." More groups and politicians repeated and exaggerated the claims.

The most bizarre moment came on Aug. 7 when Sarah Palin used the term "death panels" on her Facebook page. She wrote: "The America I know and love is not one in which my parents or my baby with Down syndrome will have to stand in front of Obama's 'death panel' so his bureaucrats can decide, based on a subjective judgment of their 'level of productivity in society,' whether they are worthy of health care. Such a system is downright evil."

There is, of course, nothing even remotely themselves had supported such like this in the bill, yet other politicians joined the death panel chorus. On "This Week With George Stephanopoulos," the organizations like the AARP pushed former Republican House speaker, Newt Gingrich, refused an opportunity to set the record straight. Instead, Mr. Gingrich It didn't matter. The "death panel" noted "the bill's 1,000 pages," as if the number of pages was an excuse for his misrepresentation, and then declared,

"You're asking us to trust turning power of reporting the facts. By lavishing over to the government, when there in establishing euthanasia." The Speaker Gingrich I served with a decade ago would have been appalled at the blatant and repeated falsehoods of the Newt Gingrich of 2009.

Such behavior is a graphic example of how the issue of health care was hijacked. Town hall meetings became dominated by people shouting down their opponents and yelling misinformation. Some town hall participants even told politicians to keep government out of their Medicare 🛛 something that would be difficult to pull off since Medicare is a government program.

To be fair, some sincerely believed what they were saying to be true, but that only made them more indignant when others challenged them or tried to give them correct information.

The news media was a particular culprit in this drama. This was not just Fox News; seemingly all the national news organizations monitored any meetings they could find between lawmakers and constituents, looking for flare-ups, for YouTube moments. The meetings that involved thoughtful exchanges or even support for the proposals would never find their way on air; coverage was given only to the most outrageous behavior, furthering distorting the true picture.

My office quickly produced testimonials from 300 respected professionals and organizations to set the record straight. Articles followed about how Republicans extremists and their own rhetoric. provisions. Sites like PolitiFact and Factcheck.org as well as national back on the lies.

episode shows how the news media, after aiding and abetting falsehood, were unable to perform their traditional role

uncritical attention on the most clearly are people in America who believe exaggerated claims and extreme behavior, they unleashed something that the truth could not dispel.

> There was a troubling new dynamic: People like Senator Chuck Grassley, an Iowa Republican, were now parroting these falsehoods in their town meetings and letting it drive their policy decisions. (Mr. Grassley: "We should not have a government program that determines if you're going to pull the plug on Grandma.") When the most extreme elements peddling false information can cow senior members of Congress into embracing their claims, it does not bode well for either policymaking or for the Republican Party.

ON Sept. 9, President Obama spoke about the health care reform plan to Congress. Although his speech was more thoughtful and less partisan than much of what I've seen from presidents in my years in Congress, it was greeted by the call of "You lie!" from a backbencher from South Carolina, Joe Wilson. The accusation came as President Obama was attempting to debunk the many myths about the health care bill; Mr. Wilson's outburst was the culmination of the summer's frenzy, of everything that my end-of-life provisions had unwittingly set in motion.

The resulting support from the right wing and the inability of Republican leadership to acknowledge Mr. Wilson's behavior as crude, unprecedented and inappropriate is telling. The Republican Party has been taken captive by these tactics, the

In a curious way, however, Joe Wilson's eruption helped turn this particular debate full circle. Energized reform advocates began to push back. Support for the measure increased, and I began to hear, beneath the anger, some honest skepticism, along with an accurate complaint from fellow lawmakers that the language in the provisions was not as

# The New York Times

clear as it could be. The end-of-life provisions, I am proud to say, are in the bill that the House approved and sent to the Senate, where there is a reasonable chance of passage.

The inability to protect even the smallest element of bipartisan consensus from being used as a savage weapon of political attack makes lawmakers' tasks harder, and the American public even more disillusioned. But perhaps the troubles of the summer and the success of the fall will provide a road map that leads to members of Congress finally enacting health care reform 🛛 and working together again on the long list of America's unfinished business.

## **The Oregonian** Earl Blumenauer Q&A on Medicare's end-of-life discussions, Sarah Palin and 'death panels'

By: Jeff Mapes Jul 11, 2015

Rep. Earl Blumenauer, D-Ore., is the longtime sponsor of legislation to allow Medicare to reimburse physicians who discuss end-of-life care with their patients.

Portland Congressman Earl Blumenauer won a big victory this week when Medicare officials said they plan to reimburse doctors for talking with seniors about their wishes for end-oflife care.

The Democratic lawmaker first brought this concept to Congress and was working without controversy to include the provisions in the new federal health care legislation six years ago -- until former GOP vice presidential nominee Sarah Palin charged that these provisions showed the Obama administration wanted to set up "death panels" that would decide who would and would not get live-saving care.

The ensuing controversy helped keep Blumenauer's provision out of the Affordable Care Act and kept the Obama administration from acting until now.

Blumenauer talked with The Oregonian/OregonLive from Washington, D.C., Friday about his belated win and why he thinks it is important to get people talking about end-of-life care long before they are confronted with it.

The conversation was edited for clarity and for brevity.

Q: Why did it take so long for Medicare to act?

BLUMENAUER: It's been such a struggle. It is no secret that even though the Sarah Palin death panel claim deserved to be political lie of the year, it nonetheless created a lot of controversy and it was an effective tool that opponents of the Affordable Care Act used to create doubt.

There are studies that showed that several years later, 20 percent of the population still thought death panels were part of the Affordable Care Act. Even though it had no substance, it had resonance.

It was very difficult to get people aligned on this and to follow through on. It's like most things in politics, it's harder than it should have been."

Q: Why do you think this is needed? Aren't a lot of these conversations already taking place in doctors' offices?

BLUMENAUER: Actually, that's not the case. There are some, but when I first introduced this proposal and it was approved unanimously by the House Ways and Means Committee, one of the Republican doctors on the committee said, "You know, I have these conversations quite often, but usually they are too late."

They don't happen at a time when people can evaluate what their choices are and be able to make reasonable decisions involving their family. There's very strong evidence that if we are sick or old, it's harder for us to evaluate the evidence. And if we are in the midst of a medical emergency, it is absolutely too late.

Q: How is this Medicare decision - which won't take effect until sometime after a 60-day public comment period - going to change things?

For the very first time, the federal government will put a

# The Oregonian

value on this conversation. It's ironic that Medicare will pay for thousands of medical procedures, some of them very, very expensive, and maybe some that would actually shorten a person's life -- like a serious operation on somebody who's got late stage terminal cancer, and they're having a hip operation. But it will not pay \$100 or \$200 so their family and their medical provider of choice can talk through the situation.

Patients are more likely to do it if they don't have to pay for it out of pocket, physicians are more likely to do it if they get paid for it. Because it is now accepted, it's something that's going to make it easier for people to do when it is not always the most comfortable conversation to have.

Secondly, there's more more public awareness about this need for advanced care planning, there's more awareness about what choices people have, and that's absolutely critical to have the awareness because unless somebody thinks to ask and follows through, it's not going to happen.

Q: Palin said on her Facebook page this week that she is right about death panels because "faceless bureaucrats" will decide who lives and who dies as the government rations health care.

BLUMENAUER: She absolutely continues to be unable to read legislation and she doesn't read regulations any better than she reads legislation. All this does is permit a person to choose to have a conversation. They pick with whom they want to have the conversation with. It's not somebody from the government.

Q: But does she have a point that the Affordable Care Act will lead to new restrictions on what Medicare covers?

BLUMENAUER: That has nothing to do with having this conversation with your physician. And the evidence is that the provisions in the Affordable Care Act are actually working to improve the quality of health care.

For instance the latest decisions (aimed at better coordinating medical care) just say, "Wait a minute, we're not going to just pay you for your mistake. You know, the more that you mess up, the more we're going to pay you." That's changing.

She's wrong about my provision and she's wrong about the efforts to improve Medicare. I mean, what does she think happens with benevolent insurance companies, which used to cut people off with lifetime limits and used to withdraw people from health care when they got sick? Why wasn't she concerned about that? Gawande's book, "Being Mortal," rocketed onto the New York Times bestseller list, it was actually referenced in Billy Graham's last book about how this is a Christian responsibility to spare loved ones from guessing about what our wishes are. There are now insurance companies that are moving in this direction. This is pretty mainstream now. It's just a case of the federal government catching up where the practice of medicine is going.

Ninety percent of the public supports this. Dr. Atul

### End Of Life Care

#### E-Newsletter - February 5th, 2024

Dear Friends,

In Congress, I try to focus on work that is not intensely partisan. There are dozens of common-sense issues that bring people together rather than divide them and can make a real difference in our communities. One of those issues is compassionate end-of-life care.

For years I have fought to raise awareness to equip and inform families, and to encourage doctors to have those often difficult conversations with their patients, about a time of great stress and vulnerability: the end of life.

I led the battle for the federal government to put a value on those discussions by adding end-of-life conversations to the list of services eligible for Medicare reimbursement. It took longer and was made more difficult by Sarah Palin's lies about "death panels," but nonetheless, we won that fight.

Now, doctors have the opportunity to invest their time and energy to have those difficult discussions. This work ultimately earned support from both parties. In the first year of implementation, these payment codes were used 570,000 times, and we've seen a 187% increase in utilization in the five years following.

I'm proud of our progress, but so much more needs to be done to protect our families.

Courage,

Earl Blumenauer Member of Congress

P.S. We all need to do our part by filling out advanced directives and making our wishes known so people don't have to guess when our time comes. It is the least we can do for our families and loved ones.

### End of Life Care

#### the conversation project



# The Conversation Project and NHDD Go to Washington

Posted on 05/12/2017



#### UPDATE: RESPONSE TO HOUSE REPRESENTATIVE EARL BLUMENAUER (OR-3)'S ANNOUNCEMENT

🛇 OCTOBER 31, 2023 🛛 💄 BY STEPHANIE MARBURGER 🛛 🥒 POLICY AND ADVOCACY UPDATES 👘

Congressman Blumenauer was recently recognized as a 2022 Hospice Angel. He received his award as a part of Hospice Action Week 2023, after taking time to speak with participating hospice and palliative care advocates.

### Hospice News



### End of Life Care

#### Appendix

- 2009, 2010, 2011, 2013: Personalize Your Care Act Provides Medicare and Medicaid coverage for voluntary consultations between patients and their doctors about advance care planning.
- 2016: Personalize Your Care Act 2.0 Amends titles XVIII and XIX of the Social Security Act to improve end-of-life care and advanced illness management
- 2017: Patient Choice and Quality Care Act Establishes a model in Medicare to test new ways to compassionately care for patients with advanced illness and improves coverage of advance care planning services.
- 2019: Comprehensive Care for Seniors Act Directs the Secretary of Health and Human Services to issue a final regulation based on the proposed regulation relating to the Programs of All-Inclusive Care for the Elderly (PACE) under the Medicare and Medicaid programs.
- 2022: Improving Access to Advance Care Planning Makes the advance care planning benefit free for Medicare patients and allows social workers to bill for the service.
- 2024: Hospice Care, Accountability, Reform and Enforcement (CARE) Act Makes the most significant update to Medicare's hospice benefit to prevent fraud and meet the needs of modern patients.

# ENVIRONMENT & SUSTAINABILITY

Over the course of his fifty-year political career, Congressman Earl Blumenauer has been recognized as one of the foremost environmental champions in Oregon politics, working to shift paradigms and finding out of the box ways to address complex environmental issues.

#### Land Use

As part of the early visionary group of policy leaders in Oregon focused on land use, Earl has spent his career fighting for Oregon's special places, engaging in transportation, land use, and zoning policy.

As a young legislator, he helped lead the effort to stop the ill-fated Mount Hood freeway. He championed efforts to stop its devastation cutting through the heart of Southeast Portland. Earl took an aggressive stand in his very first campaign at a time when that position was extraordinarily controversial and opposed by organized labor and the business community. Because of his passion, Governor Tom McCall appointed Earl in 1969 to be the youngest member of his Livable Oregon Committee that focused on problem-solving particularly thorny land use areas, like the Columbia River Gorge.

All of this leadership at a young age meant that Earl was well-positioned to lead in the legislature and play a key role in Senate Bill 100, Oregon's landmark land-use legislation. Upon its passage, he worked to implement it first as a county commissioner and then a Portland city counselor. Throughout the first fifty years of Oregon's land use program, Earl repeatedly engaged in policy discussions, ballot initiatives, and legislative fixes to protect Oregon's land use system.

#### Climate Change and Clean Energy

Earl believes that climate change is the greatest existential threat of our time. It is clear that the climate crisis is already here; we must now work not only to reduce our greenhouse gas emissions but also to protect our communities as we experience the real-world impacts of burning up our planet. We must act expeditiously to ensure a just transition to a clean energy future and to make our communities resilient to the impacts of climate change.

In 2007, Earl was nominated to the Select Committee on Energy Independence and Global Warming. The committee held 80 hearings and briefings from March 2007 to December 2010 exploring American energy resources, clean technologies, climate change and the risks associated with it.

The committee played a major role in the creation of 2007 energy act and the 2009 stimulus act (which included \$90 billion in spending on green energy and energy efficiency). Most prominently, the committee played a major role in shaping the 2009 climate bill—the American Clean Energy and Security Act or "Waxman-Markey"—which was passed by the House but never became law due to the

Senate's refusal to take up the bill. In 2009, Blumenauer was appointed Vice Chair of the Committee, and he played an important role in communicating the urgency of the climate crisis to the American public and building support amongst his congressional colleagues for the American Clean Energy and Security Act.

As a founding member of the Sustainable Energy and Environment Caucus, and an early co-chair, Earl organized multiple efforts to push back against Republican efforts to attack climate change and undo protections against air pollution, carbon pollution, and water pollution. Earl also worked hard to spotlight Republicans who recognized the existential threat of climate change, hosting briefings with Bob Inglish and using his relationships with Republican members to try to find common ground on clean energy, energy efficiency, and water efficiency.

The Trump years were notoriously hard on the environment, but Earl fought back. He introduced legislation to ensure Donald Trump has a stake in the catastrophic consequences of ignoring climate science. The Prohibiting Aid for Recipients Ignoring Science (PARIS) Act will prevent properties owned by a president or his or her family from receiving federally subsidized flood insurance from the National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP).

In February 2019, when Trump declared a national emergency to build a wall at the U.S.-Mexican border, Earl vehemently

objected, stating that the real national emergency is climate change. Earl worked with local community members to draft a congressional resolution declaring a climate crisis. He then worked with Congresswoman Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez and Senator Bernie Sanders to introduce what became the Climate Emergency Resolution, which declares a national emergency to fight climate change.

#### Inflation Reduction Act 2022

Earl was proud to help write the Inflation Reduction Act, the single largest investment in climate action in our nation's history. This critical legislation will deliver \$385 billion in energy and climate investments, including investments in solar and wind energy, electric vehicles, energy efficiency, clean manufacturing, and vulnerable communities most impacted by natural disasters and environmental degradation. Critically, this package put the United States on a path toward a 40 percent reduction in emissions by 2030.

Several crucial climate-related provisions Earl authored were enacted in the final package, including production and investment tax credits to incentivize wind and solar projects, a critical component in ending our dependence on fossil fuels.

Likewise, Earl's legislation to reinstate the Superfund Tax—which ensures that polluters, not taxpayers, are responsible for cleaning up after themselves—is now the law of the land.

L

Below is a complete list of climate-related provisions that Earl authored and championed:

#### <u>Sec. 13601 – Reinstatement of Superfund</u> <u>Financing Rate (based on H.R. 2674, the</u> <u>Superfund Reinvestment Act)</u>

• Reinstates the Hazardous Substance Superfund Financing Rate on crude oil and imported petroleum products and increases it from 9.7 cents/gallon to 16.4 cents/gallon beginning in 2023, adjusts the rate to inflation.

#### <u>Sec. 13801(a) – Directpay (based on H.R.</u> <u>3180, the Renewable Energy Investment Act)</u>

• Allows certain taxpayers to elect to be treated as having made a payment of tax equal to the value of the credit they would be eligible for, thereby receiving the credit as a direct payment.

#### <u>Sec. 13801(b) – Transferability (based on H.R.</u> 27014, the Renewable Energy Transferability Act (116th Congress))

 Allows for taxpayers to transfer tax credits received to project partners.
 Eligible tax credits include those for wind and solar projects, electric vehicle charging stations, carbon oxide sequestration, nuclear production, clean hydrogen, and advanced manufacturing.

#### <u>Sec. 13303 – 179D Improvements (based</u> on H.R. 5181, the Energy Efficient Commercial <u>Buildings Act)</u>

• Increases the maximum tax deduction, determined on a sliding scale that is based on building efficiency, removes the lifetime limitation for taxpayers taking the deduction, and expands the deduction to tax-exempt entities.

#### <u>Sec. 13404 – Two- and three-wheeled electric</u> <u>vehicle charging stations</u>

• Allows for the electric vehicle charging station credit to be used for two- and three-wheeled electric vehicles, like scooters and bikes.

#### Sec. 13102 – Small Wind Investment Tax Credit (based on H.R. 1484, the Rural Wind Energy Modernization and Extension Act)

• Extends the small wind investment tax credit at full value for 10 years, followed by a 2-year phase down, and sunsetting for projects commencing construction in 2034 and thereafter. Expands the wind ITC to include project sizes greater than the current 100 kw limitation.

#### <u>Sec. 13102 – Energy Storage Investment Tax</u> <u>Credit (based on H.R. 1684, the Energy Storage</u> <u>Tax Incentive and Deployment Act)</u>

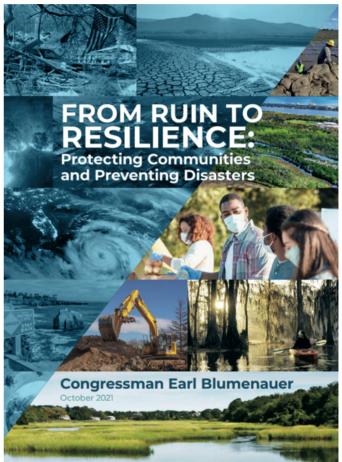
• Expands the Investment Tax Credit to include energy storage technologies such as batteries, pumped hydropower, fuel cells, and more.

#### Resiliency

Earl has long recognized that tackling the climate crisis means addressing the climatefueled disasters that are becoming an increasingly frequent and devastating part of our reality. In recent years, heat waves, wildfires, floods, and other extreme weather events have wreaked havoc across Oregon and the United States. Black, Brown, and Indigenous communities are disproportionately impacted by climate disasters yet often do not receive the necessary support before and after disaster strikes.

Since 2004, when Earl predicted the destruction of Hurricane Katrina two weeks before it made landfall, he has worked to reform the National Flood Insurance Program. He was the first member of Congress to bring people together to explore disaster mitigation efforts to ensure that such tragedies and oversight failures didn't happen again. In 2004, his legislation to reform the National Flood Insurance Program passed out of the House of Representatives. If enacted into law, it would have saved the federal government millions of dollars in avoided disaster relief payments for properties that are continually flooded.

In 2012, Earl again helped lead efforts to reform the National Flood Insurance Program by working to pass the Biggert-Waters Flood Insurance Reform Act, which phased out insurance subsidies for high risk, repetitively flooded properties. In 2021, Earl released "From Ruin to Resilience," a legislative report to guide the federal government's response to climate disasters. In 2022, Earl introduced the first piece of legislation that fits into that roadmap, the Climate RESILIENCE Act.



The Climate RESILIENCE Act would have helped protect communities around the country by improving the Federal Emergency Management Agency's (FEMA) preparation for, and response to, climate disasters. This bill is the first of many steps outlined in Earl's legislative roadmap to protect our communities from the devastating and compounding effects of climate change.

#### Superfund and

#### Water Issues

Earl has engaged in water quality issues from his early days as a Multnomah County Commissioner, to his time on the Transportation and Infrastructure Committee, and and as a senior member of the Ways and Means Committee. On the Multnomah County Commission, he developed and implemented a plan to replace East County's use of ground water to dump raw sewage 14,000,000 gallons of raw sewage by establishing sewers in the largest urbanized unsewered area in the United States. It was very controversial, complex, and hard, but Earl provided the leadership so that ultimately Portland residents had a equitable, costeffective solution and stopped using aquifer as a dumping ground for a sewage.

Since then, Earl has also been at the forefront of dealing with the cleanup of the Columbia and Willamette rivers. He managed the program at the city to combine sewer overflows and clean up water quality in the Columbia River and Willamette River.

In Congress, Earl has championed legislation to reinstate the Superfund tax. Superfund sites are the nation's worst toxic waste sites. The Superfund program was originally created in 1980 to cleanup these contaminated sites. At that time, the Superfund Trust Fund was established to pay for cleanup at sites where the responsible parties cannot be identified or do not have the ability to perform the cleanup. The Trust Fund was financed through taxes on petroleum, certain chemicals, and corporate income, ensuring that those industries responsible for pollution pay for the cleanup. Earl arrived in Congress in 1996 just as the Superfund tax expired. The tax, which placed a modest fee on the use and importation of some of the most toxic chemicals, funded the massive clean-up costs of toxic sites that resulted from the use of those chemicals. Otherwise, taxpayers were on the hook for the cost of cleaning up polluters' messes.

Earl had spent years in Portland working to clean up the local Superfund project in the Willamette River and knew that, without the Superfund tax, hundreds of toxic waste sites around the country would stay polluted and a hazard to the people living around them. One of his first acts in Congress was to reintroduce the Superfund tax, to make polluters pay and clean up communities around the United States. This legislation would end the polluters' tax holiday and make Big Oil and other polluters pay for their mess. The bill reinstated the per-barrel excise tax on crude oil and indexed it to inflation. It also reinstated the Superfund tax on certain chemicals and adjusted the tax to inflation.

After years of advocacy, the Superfund Reinvestment Act was enacted in the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act in 2021 and the Inflation Reduction Act in 2022. Polluters are now once again required to pay to clean up the environmental devastation they have left behind.

# WANTY FAR Biden Can't Keep Putting Off a Climate Emergency Declaration, Says One Democrat Leading the Charge

By: Eric Lutz August 29, 2023



Rep. Earl Blumenauer speaks at an "End Fossil Fuel" rally near the U.S. Capitol on June 29, 2021 in Washington, DC. Organized by Our Revolution, demonstrators called on Congress to take action in ending fossil fuels subsidies.

"How are you doing?" I asked Congressman Earl Blumenauer when I got him on the phone. "Other than the fact," the Oregon Democrat replied, "that the world is burning up and falling apart?"

As of this writing, Hawaii is still surveying the damage from some of the deadliest wildfires in modern American history; a large swath of the US is baking under extreme heat; California and parts of the southwest are recovering from a tropical storm; and Florida is now bracing for yet another hurricane. The dangers of climate change have long been clear. But the summer of 2023, with its smoke-filled skies and a July that checked in as Earth's hottest month on record, made that reality impossible for Americans to ignore-and renewed calls for President Joe Biden to formally declare a climate emergency.

Blumenauer, a Portland progressive, has been one of the loudest voices urging the move, and has introduced measures to push the president to finally declare a formal climate emergency. Biden has thus understand. Which is why I want him to far resisted those calls. But in an interview, which has been edited for clarity and length, Blumenauer told me that the escalating crisis will soon leave the administration with no choice. "It just is stunning," the representative said. "If you were writing a script for a guide to declare a climate emergency, I think the last two or three months could not be more compelling-and it's not fiction."

Earl Blumenauer: We are facing unprecedented, overlapping crises. And we need to have all our available tools. We need to be able to give the president and the federal government tools to deal with how we assist climate-vulnerable communities, which are growing by leaps and bounds as the vulnerability becomes evermore acute. I don't doubt the president's commitment to the climate. But this will give him tools to help

communities prepare for and respond to this reality. It will unlock powers and federal resources to help them respond to this new reality. This is something that we've watched for the last several years become worse. What's happening in terms of the oceans, the forest-the notion of what our communities are being subjected to would be unfathomable, even a year or two ago, and it continues to get worse. I think this is not just symbolic.

What did you make of President Biden saying a couple of weeks ago that he "practically" declared an emergency already?

I love it. Let's finish the job. He teed it up. And now this is what is necessary to have all of those tools at his disposal, and the administration's hands on some he doesn't have to dance around on some of these things. This will be a clear map.

Why do you think that he hasn't declared one formally yet?

It would raise expectations, which I do that. I don't understate the practical problem he's got, with a closely-divided Congress. There's a practical reality with one or two Democrats and uniform Republican opposition-although it is fascinating that the Republicans, for example, that were against the Inflation Reduction Act are there for the groundbreaking successes. So I think the reality is setting in. But this is a way for the president to take it up a notch. I mean, I've been dealing with shortcomings with FEMA: I did not realize, until I made a deeper dive a year and a half ago, that FEMA didn't have authority for extreme heat; there are gaps in terms of what agencies can do. This is a way to signal the intent of being able to put it on an emergency basis.

What kind of response have you gotten from the White House in response to

your resolutions and in the calls for this emergency?

Well, in the past, it's been polite interest -and that it wasn't quite right, and that they have competing demands. But [the devastation] is unbelievable. As somebody who's been pretty climate savvy, I have been deeply concerned. But this exceeds my worst fear for the intermediate term. I've had no doubt that this is where we're going. But it's happened much more rapidly and much more intensely. And I think that there's an opportunity here, if the president makes that declaration, to capitalize on it. It'll make his job easier, not harder.

I did want to ask about the "competing concerns." The Supreme Court has tied climate initiatives. We're also heading into an election year that could determine how the US addresses-or does not address-climate change at a really critical window for reversing this or mitigating it. What do you see as the practical limitations or the political risks that the president has to maneuver, and how do you navigate those?

That's where the declaration of the climate emergency comes in, because it does unlock broader powers-and makes it less likely that they will be torpedoed by the Supreme Court or get bogged down in understandable legislative morass. I think giving him that clarity of purpose, enhanced powers, will give him what he needs to be able to contend with these come competing, overlapping, accelerating challenges. I don't know what the challenge is going to be next month. But I'll bet it's going to be something that we are going to need more resources for, more tools-and there will be greater urgency. The president has an unimaginable job-the competing interests, a war in Ukraine, a challenge with China, these are existential threats. But having a climate emergency



declaration will help him meet these impossible demands, because they've never been more important, they've never been more compelling, they've never been more complex.

I don't want to use the word "hopeful," but just what is your sense of how the public pressure is going to build as these things just become more and more in-your-face and difficult to overlook?

I think that's the reality for the president. It is going to build. I appreciate you referencing the politics. I think it should not be bound up in politics. But I think that emergency speaks to reinforcing some of the political dynamic for the president, because as you know, some of his supporters have been disappointed, to be charitable. People for whom this disaster has been building and building, and who can't fathom why the federal government is not pulling out all the stops—I think this helps cut through that. I think it simplifies things for the president. And, as I said, we're seeing every week, there's some new metric about extreme heat, about what's happening with the oceans, with fire, smoke, air quality—it is truly beyond my comprehension, in terms of how these overlapping crises are descending with greater frequency and greater intensity. I think it is something that is not going to be possible to ignore.

There's still people who deny climate change, who think it's a hoax. But we're talking about a minority of the population, and I think the group we need to focus on are those who are persuadable, the folks in the middle, the folks who didn't believe that it would ever get to be this bad. I think there is a mindset developing that will reward government action. There are people who are depending on government action as never before. Look no further than what's happening with Hawaii. I think the number of people who care about this is growing. And I think the people who are climate deniers or who feel that there's no role for the federal government are people who haven't had their community catch fire—and it's just a matter of time before that circle of need expands.

# POLITICO Blumenauer: 'Make sure mitigation is not just for the rich'

#### The Oregon Democrat discusses his new bill to make heat waves a federal disaster.

By: Thomas Frank February 16, 2022

CLIMATEWIRE | Rep. Earl Blumenauer (D-Ore.) recently introduced legislation that would revise federal disaster policy by expanding the type of events that trigger a disaster declaration.

Blumenauer's "Climate RESILIENCE Act" would add heat waves and freezes to the list of events that would be eligible for disaster aid from the Federal Emergency Management Agency. Events that are currently eligible include those that cause property damage such as floods, tornadoes, earthquakes, droughts and fire.

Blumenauer's bill also would expand the types of disadvantaged communities that are eligible for increased funding under FEMA's Building Resilient Infrastructure and Communities (BRIC) program, which awards funding for local hazard-mitigation projects. Current law restricts the increased funding to low-income communities with up to 3,000 people.

Blumenauer's bill would include rural communities of up to 30,000 people and give the FEMA administrator discretion to increase grant funding for any community based on factors such as the size of the homeless population, racial characteristics and transportation access.

The bill is supported by groups including the League of Conservation Voters, the Union of Concerned Scientists, Earthjustice, the National Urban League and the Coalition of



Communities of Color. It is pending in the House Transportation and Infrastructure Committee.

Blumenauer has a long history of trying to reform the nation's disaster laws and is a co-author of the Flood Insurance Reform Act of 2004, which aimed to help mitigate properties that have been flooded multiple times.

Blumenauer, 73, has represented his Portland district since 1997 and spoke with E&E News about his legislation. The interview has been edited for brevity and clarity.

What prompted you to put this bill together? What brought everything to a head was this last year where we had the climate crisis, drought, wildfire, floods all coming in upon the Pacific Northwest in ways that were just absolutely unimaginable.

Heat waves don't destroy property. What would communities get out of having a heat wave declared a major disaster? For me, it would be a shopping list of things that would help people survive extreme heat.

# POLITICO

It would give an opportunity for at least temporary investments in misting, cooling stations, redesign and enabling communities to have the resources that are lavished sometimes on things that are damaged from floods and winds.

You want to revise the types of communities that can get increased funding for hazard mitigation grants under BRIC. What problem would this solve?

What we have seen is that low-income communities, communities of color, places that have been historically disadvantaged have the greatest difficulty accessing resources.

We want to be able to reform some of these programs that either overtly or inadvertently have severe consequences for people of color, who have historically been marginalized.

I'm trying to raise these issues, spotlight those who are most in need and make sure mitigation is not just available for the rich.

There was a lot of fanfare about the infrastructure bill [signed by President Biden in November]. But we'll spend more on disaster-related expenses. It's our biggest infrastructure program, but it's not managed in a way to make it more sustainable, to be able to help people who are too poor to take advantage of these programs.

Your bill has 44 co-sponsors. All are Democrats. Did you try to get Republican co-sponsors?

I'm planning on having a conversation with Republican colleagues. We've had some interest from Republicans who understand some of the aspects [of the bill].

I'm optimistic that this is an area where we can find some common ground because the case is so compelling, the need is so great.

This is an area that doesn't have to be intensely partisan.

Congress passed a disaster law in late 2018 [the Disaster Recovery Reform Act]. What are the prospects for this bill becoming law in this Congress?

We've been in consultation with people in the [House] Financial Services Committee. I'm quite confident we're going into another season of natural disasters. There will be supplementals coming forward; there will be exposés about how programs aren't working as intended. And there will be desperate people. We're getting very strong support from some national organizations.

I'm a very patient guy. I've been working on this for 25 years, and I will work on this for the next 25 months in Congress.

# **The Return of Superfund**

June 27, 2010

Superfund  $\boxtimes$  which cleans up abandoned hazardous waste sites  $\boxtimes$  is one of the country's most important environmental programs. It has been struggling since 1995, when a Republican Congress refused to renew the corporate taxes that gave it a steady source of financing. The pace of cleanups has dropped markedly.

The Environmental Protection Agency has now asked Congress to reinstate Superfund taxes. Representative Earl Blumenauer, Democrat of Oregon, has introduced a bill that would raise about \$19 billion over 10 years by imposing excise taxes on oil producers, refineries, chemical manufacturers and a few other industries.

Mr. Blumenauer's bill stands a good chance in the House. But industry is expected to push back hard in the Senate, where Frank Lautenberg, a New Jersey Democrat, has offered a similar measure.

Superfund was enacted under President Jimmy Carter in 1980 to clean up thousands of the country's most contaminated waste sites that were polluting local water supplies and causing health problems. Its core principle was that polluters should pay for the messes they had caused. Companies that were clearly responsible for the pollution would have to foot the entire cleanup bill  $\boxtimes$  just as G.E. is now paying for cleaning up the PCBs it deposited in the Hudson River decades ago.

In some cases, however, it was hard to pinpoint responsibility because sites had changed hands over the years or the owners had gone bankrupt. So Congress created an "orphan fund" financed by corporate excise taxes to clean sites where the polluter could not be clearly identified.

Before it ran out of cash, the orphan fund had paid for cleanups at more than a third of the 1,000 or so sites Superfund has so far dealt with. But as the program came to depend increasingly on uncertain Congressional appropriations, the pace of cleanup slowed  $\boxtimes$  19 total sites last year, compared with 89 a decade before that.

Every year, new sites are added to the list. There are now about 1,200 sites waiting to be cleaned up, of which roughly half are orphan sites. Congress needs to reinstate the excise taxes so Superfund can get back to doing its job.

# By: Monica Samayoa Dec. 8, 2021 **Oregon congressman wants US** military held accountable for contaminated sites, including Portland Harbor

A condition in the military's annual budget could require it to take its fair share of responsibility for cleaning up Superfund toxic cleanup sites, including the Portland Harbor, for the first time.

The Department of Defense budget bill, approved Tuesday night by the U.S. House and now heading to the Senate, includes a provision from Rep. Earl Blumenauer, D-Ore., that acknowledges the Department of Defense's role in polluting the environment. It would also hold the military accountable for contamination at hazardous waste cleanups around the nation, which are known as Superfund sites. Blumenauer's provision would require the Department of Defense to come up with thorough plans detailing its contribution to the up the sites, and how it will conduct outreach with affected communities.

Blumenauer said in an interview Wednesday that requiring the U.S. military to pay its share of cleaning up

"The Department of Defense has never

really acknowledged their responsibility," he said. "They haven't put any resources into it and they're not setting aside anything to help us and if the federal government doesn't acknowledge and undertake its responsibility that means that it's a lot higher cost for the rest of the people that can't avoid it."

About 73 million people live within three miles of a Superfund site, including 28% of the United States' people of color.

Oregon has 13 Superfund sites. One of the sites that would benefit from this provision would be the Portland Harbor Superfund site. The area covers almost 11 miles of the Willamette River from the Broadway Bridge north to the Columbia Slough. It was an area utilized for pollution, what steps it will take to clean building and scrapping ships throughout World War I, World War II and up to the Korean War. It's been highly contaminated with dozens of pollutants from more than a century of industrial use.

contamination to the environment would The area is significant for five tribes that be a game-changer — as well as a way to used that river for thousands of years for reduce local governments' cleanup costs. fishing and hunting. Those tribes are: the Confederated Tribes of Grand Ronde, the Confederated Tribes of Siletz Indians,

the Confederated Tribes of Warm Springs, the Confederated Tribes of Umatilla Indian Reservation and the Nez Perce Tribe.

"There's impact for people up and down the river," Blumenauer said. "It affects Native people, it affects certain neighborhoods where people didn't have access to the river in their backyard or front yard."

The Environmental Protection Agency oversees the cleanup for Superfund sites and partners with responsible agencies. It has recently finalized cleanup agreements for the Portland Harbor Superfund site with 12 responsible parties. The agency estimates it will take roughly 13 years and \$1 billion to clean up the site.

"This provides some certainty, some action in terms of the cleanup, protecting the health of people who live along the river and being able to meet our obligations to Native Americans who have treaty rights to being able to have the rivers condition restored."

The legislation now awaits action in the Senate before it can reach President Joe Biden for final approval.

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- **1999:** To direct the Secretary of the Army to include primary flood damages avoided as benefits for cost-benefit analyses for Federal nonstructural flood damage reduction projects, and for other purposes Amends the Water Resources Development Act of: (1) 1990 to direct the Secretary of the Army to include primary flood damages avoided within a benefit analysis for justifying Federal non-structural flood damage reduction projects; and (2) 1986 to require the Secretary to pay additional costs for such projects when non-Federal contributions exceed 35 percent.
- 1998, 2000, 2001: To provide further protections for the watershed of the Little Sandy River as part of the Bull Run Watershed Management Unit, Oregon, and for other purposes Requires the Secretaries of Agriculture and of the Interior to identify: (1) any Oregon and California Railroad land (O&C lands) within the Unit that is subject to certain annual funds distribution requirements; and (2) public domain land within specified Bureau of Land Management Districts in Oregon that is approximately equal in acreage and condition as such O&C land. *Enacted on August 20, 2001.*
- 2000: To direct the Secretary of the Army to conduct studies and ecosystem restoration projects within the Lower Columbia River and Tillamook Bay Estuaries, Oregon and Washington – To use conservation and management plans as guides for estuary restoration projects
- 2007: H.Res.725 Recognizing the 35th anniversary of the Clean Water Act, and for other purposes: Recommits to restoring and maintaining the chemical, physical, and biological integrity of the nation's waters and expresses dedication to working toward a sustainable, a long-term solution to address the nation's decaying water infrastructure. Encourages the public and all levels of government to renew commitment to restoring and protecting the nation's rivers, lakers, streams, marine waters, and wetlands for future generations. *Agreed to in House on October 16, 2007.*
- 2007: H.Amdt.819 to the Flood Insurance Reform and Modernization Act of 2007 -Requires FEMA to take into consideration the impacts of global warming, current and future, when updating and maintaining flood insurance program rate maps. *Agreed to in House on September 27, 2007*
- 2009: Amendment to the National Water Research and Development Initiative Act Adds a new section creating a stormwater reuse and recycling technology demonstration program within the Environmental Protection Agency. *Agreed to in House on April 23, 2009.*
- 2010, 2014, 2015: Columbia River Basin Restoration Act Columbia River Basin Restoration Act of 2014 - Amends the Federal Water Pollution Control Act (commonly known as the Clean Water Act) to require the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) to

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establish a Columbia River Basin Restoration Program to reduce toxic contamination and clean up contaminated sites.

- 2011: H.Amdt.635 to the Clean Water Cooperative Federalism Act Seeks to exclude from coverage under the bill, any waters that EPA determines provide flood protection for communities, are a valuable fish and wildlife habitat that provides benefits to the economy, or are coastal recreational waters.
- 2007, 2009, 2011, 2013, 2015, 2017, 2019, 2021: Superfund Reinvestment Act Amends the Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation, and Liability Act of 1980 (CERCLA) to authorize the use of amounts in the Hazardous Substance Superfund for environmental cleanup costs authorized by such Act.
- 2013: Expressing the sense of Congress that there is a climate emergency which demands a massive-scale mobilization to halt, reverse, and address its consequences and causes
- 2013: H.Amdt.10 to H.Amdt.5 to H.R. 152 (Making supplemental appropriations for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2013, to improve and streamline disaster assistance for Hurricane Sandy, and for other purposes) Clarifies that the Corps of Engineers construction projects receiving funds in this legislation will be at full Federal expense only with respect to the funds provided by this legislation. *Agreed to in House by voice vote on January 15, 2013.*
- 2014: H.Amdt.885 to the Department of Defense Appropriations Act, 2015 Increases funding for Environmental Restoration, Formerly Used Defense Sites, by \$3,400,000 and reduces funds for Research, Development, Test and Evaluation, Air Force, by the same amount.
- 2015, 2016, 2017, 2019: Water Infrastructure Trust Fund Act The bill establishes a Water Infrastructure Trust Fund for the Environmental Protection Agency to use for capitalization grants under the clean water state revolving fund or drinking water state revolving fund.
- 2018, 2019, 2021, 2023: Saving America's Pollinators Act This bill addresses the use of certain pesticides and the health and status of native bees and other pollinators.
- 2018: Promoting Flood Risk Mitigation Act Directs the Government Accountability Office (GAO) to conduct a study to assess: (1) the efficacy of practices or programs under which the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) provides assistance to state and local governments to acquire flood-damaged properties committed to open space use in perpetuity (buyout practices), and (2) ways to streamline the buyout practices to provide more timely assistance. *Passed House on July 16, 2018.*

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- 2019, 2021: Repeatedly Flooded Communities Preparation Act This bill requires a community that participates in the National Flood Insurance Program and has been repeatedly flooded, as specified by the bill, to (1) assess the continuing risks to community areas repeatedly damaged by floods; and (2) develop and implement a publicly available, community-specific plan for mitigating continuing flood risks to such areas.
- 2019: Expressing the sense of Congress that there is a climate emergency which demands a massive-scale mobilization to halt, reverse, and address its consequences and causes.
- 2019: CLEANUP Act This bill includes petroleum products under the definition of hazardous substances for purposes of Superfund, the program that directs and funds the cleanup of sites contaminated with hazardous substances. Additionally, the release of a petroleum product shall be considered as a release under Superfund if liability for such release is established by any other federal law.
- 2021: Climate Emergency Act of 2021 This bill directs the President to declare a national emergency with respect to climate change.
- 2021: CERCLA Liability Expansion and Accountability for Negligent and Unjust Pollution Act This bill includes petroleum products under the definition of hazardous substances for purposes of Superfund, the program that directs and funds the cleanup of sites contaminated with hazardous substances.
- 2021: Climate RESILIENCE Act This bill makes changes to the Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act to take into account climate change.
- 2023: Expressing the sense of Congress that there is a climate emergency which demands a massive-scale mobilization to halt, reverse, and address its consequences and causes.

# FOOD & FARM

Since coming to Congress, Earl has been involved in five Farm Bill reauthorizations. Hopelessly complex and expensive, the Farm Bill is one of the most important yet underappreciated pieces of legislation that Congress regularly acts on.

The current Farm Bill gives away millions to big agribusiness, incentivizes the production of unhealthy foods, fails to support small and mid-size farmers, and prioritizes process over outcomes when it comes to clean air, clean water, and healthy soil. Simply put, the federal government pays too much, to the wrong people, to grow the wrong food in the wrong places.

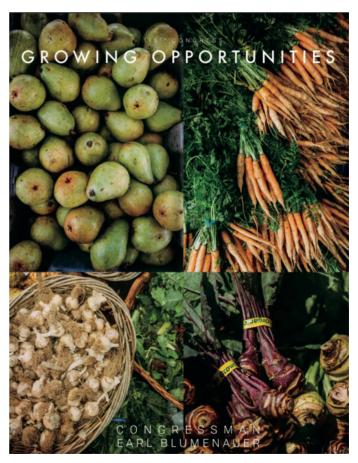
Earl believes there is a better way. He has long championed the effort to reimagine the trillion-dollar Farm Bill.

In 2015, Earl initiated a project called Sing Your Own Farm Bill. He traveled Oregon to meet with small and mid-sized farmers, ranchers, winemakers, and environmentalists to learn what the Farm Bill would look like if it met their needs. At each meeting he asked, "What would the Farm Bill look like if it were written just for Oregon?" The answer was radically different from the status quo.

In 2017 he released a report, called "Growing Opportunities," detailing the challenges with the current approach to the Farm Bill and common-sense, broad-based ideas for reform. The report laid the groundwork for Earl's Food and Farm Act, which he introduced in 2017 and again in 2023.

The Food and Farm Act is as comprehensive as the Farm Bill, but instead of subsidizing a diet that makes Americans sick, it refocuses federal resources on those who need it most.

The legislation advances four principles of agricultural reform: (1) focusing resources on those who need it most; (2) fostering innovation; (3) encouraging investments in people and the planet; and (4) ensuring access to healthy foods.



Earl has left many marks on the Farm Bill, but chief among them is his ability to draw connections between its many – often siloed – titles. Historically, these programs were siloed by design to keep rural (often conservative) votes for ag policies and urban (often liberal) votes for nutrition policies. Through five Farm Bill cycles, Earl has exposed the link between the misallocated farm safety net, heinous animal welfare standards, environmental degradation, the hallowing out of rural America, and failing nutrition outcomes. He has done this by bringing together a diverse coalition of reform-minded advocates ranging from fiscal conservatives to "anyone who eats" to push for a better Farm Bill.

The scope of policy challenges in the Farm Bill makes for a wide variety of legislative opportunities. Earl has worked to improve the Farm Bill in the following areas:

#### Farm Safety Net

The philosophy of "get big or get out" has defined Farm Bill policy since Earl's time in Congress but has always been at odds with Oregon's agricultural legacy and economy. Rather than a handful of commodity crops that receive the lion's share of federal support, Oregon producers grow nuts, berries, winegrapes, Christmas trees, and other "specialty crops" that get pennies on the dollar from the Farm Bill. Earl has worked to reform the failed farm safety net that funnels taxpayer dollars to the wealthiest agribusinesses instead of smaller, diversified producers who need the help.

Earl's Food and Farm Act provides a blueprint for how to rightsize the farm safety net. It does so by moving the farm safety net away from income-support for select commodity crops by cutting and capping excessive subsidy programs and expanding crop insurance options for diverse farms.

Earl has been particularly active on crop insurance reform. His focus on shifting resources toward those who need them most aligned with fiscal conservative calls to root out waste in the Farm Bill. Few titles are guiltier of wasting taxpayer dollars than the crop insurance program, which imposes no income limits or payments caps on crop insurance subsidies – which cover more than 60% of the premium cost. This work has historically been bipartisan, and Earl even joined forces with former Republican Speaker Paul Ryan to call for Congress to reject the Farm Bill when it failed to make meaningful reform in 2008. He co-led standalone legislation (the AFFIRM Act) to cut, cap, and clarify crop insurance subsidies during the 2018 Farm Bill cycle and reintroduced the bill in the 118th Congress. He has also supported calls to make the program more transparent, including by asking the Government Accountability Office (GAO)

to conduct a review of crop insurance payments and shed some light on how much of the payments go to wealthy individuals and families.

Earl continued to advance his reform agenda by offering a series of amendments to the 2018 House Farm Bill. The farm safety net reform amendment would reduce the Adjusted Gross Income limit for commodity payments to \$500,000 per year per recipient and would create a crop insurance premium subsidy payment limit of \$125,000 per year per recipient. The amendment would also close the peanut loophole that currently allows farmers to double the amount of commodity subsidies they receive if they grow both peanuts and another commodity. Additionally, the amendment would strike new loopholes created by the current House farm bill that would allow wealthy farmers to get around payment limits for commodity subsidies, including the loophole created for S corporations and the addition of nieces, nephews, and cousins to the definition of "family members."

After commodity payments were shown to dramatically exceed their anticipated cost, Earl also worked with Rep. Burgess and the Heritage Foundation on another amendment to cap total spending on the Agriculture Risk Coverage and Price Loss Coverage programs at 110% of the projected CBO score, ensuring that they are kept in line with their projections.

Earl has long been an outspoken critic of the hypocrisy in how farm subsidy recipients and nutrition assistance recipients are treated. During the 2023 debt limit debate, Earl brought the issue to the House floor, where he lambasted Republican efforts to tighten restrictions on food assistance programs while refusing to engage on reining in farm subsidies.

#### Animal Welfare

A leading voice in Congress for animal welfare policy and the co-founder of the Animal Protection Caucus, Earl has long viewed the Farm Bill as a vehicle to make progress for animals. Excluded from the Animal Welfare Act, farm animals enjoy very few federal protections, prompting Earl to include the first-ever Farm Bill animal welfare title in his Food and Farm Act. Earl has advocated for restrictions on the amount of federal funding that can go toward concentrated animal feeding operations – "CAFOs" – that compromise the wellbeing of animals and the environment in the service of industrial agriculture.

In 2018, Earl mobilized opposition against the King amendment - an extraordinarily harmful provision that would prevent states and local governments from being able to establish their own protections for agriculture, food, and the environment. Joined by more than 100 of his colleagues from both sides of the aisle, Earl and the anti-King amendment coalition successfully stripped it from the final Farm Bill. That same year, he championed the Parity in Animal Cruelty Enforcement Act (HR 4202), an anti-animal fighting provision which was ultimately included in the final Farm Bill.

Following the success of California's Prop 12 humane treatment law, the King amendment resurfaced in 2023 as the so-called Exposing Agricultural Trade Suppression ("EATS") Act which would undo Prop 12 and state laws like it. In response, Earl has organized another strong, bipartisan coalition to urge the Agriculture Committee to keep the revived King amendment out of the Farm Bill and uphold state-level animal welfare wins.

#### Environment

Earl's voice has been among the loudest and most consistent in pushing for the Farm Bill to be a climate bill. He has made the case for a progressive Farm Bill that presents a major opportunity to invest in a future of food and farming that is more sustainable, responsible, and equitable. Given agriculture's significant contributions to greenhouse gas emissions, Earl has pushed for policies that invest in sustainable farming practices that reduce emissions and restore the land. His 2013 Balancing Food, Farm, and Environment Act laid out his early vision for a conservation title that truly met the needs of the climate crisis by shifting Title 2 programs to improve water quality and watershed restoration, protect critical wildlife habitat, and transition to less antibiotic and pesticide intensive farming practices.

Incentivizing less input and chemical-intensive farming has long been a priority of Earl's. Heavy pesticide use threatens pollinator populations, degrades water quality, and can harm human health. Earl co-led the Saving America's Pollinators Act (SAPA) starting in the 113th Congress and sent multiple letters to the EPA in this space. Earl also held several events in this space, briefing people on the impacts of these chemicals on pollinators and on their potential impacts on human health. During the 2023 Farm Bill, Earl expanded the focus of SAPA so that it banned the use of neonicotinoid-treated seeds, which grow into plants that retain neonicotinoid residue in their pollen and nectar, which is detrimental to pollinator populations.

Earl has also used the Farm Bill as an opportunity to make global progress on the environment. In 2007, Earl's legislation, the Legal Timber Protection Act, was included in the Farm Bill. The Act bans the import, export or sale of timber illegally sold in violation of a foreign or domestic law or international environmental treaty.

#### Sugar

Most people don't recognize that sugar is getting one sweet deal in the Farm Bill. Like the crop insurance program, the Farm Bill's sugar program is a costly corporate giveaway to a few large sugar processors that forces taxpayers to foot the bill. Most independent experts concur that the sugar program is wasteful, expensive, and has a variety of unintended consequences beyond just the politics and economics of sugar. Earl agrees, and has been a vocal critic of the taxpayer-funded price supports and federal supply management structure that shield domestically-produced sugar from fair global competition.

This has been a decades-long focus for Earl. In 2006 and 2007, Earl worked with then-Representative Jeff Flake to offer an amendment to the Agriculture Appropriations Bills, which would have reduced the sugar loan rates by 6%.

During the 2018 Farm Bill, he fought hard to reform the current sugar program to be market based by offering an amendment to reduce price supports, repeal domestic marketing allotments, and reduce the impacts of sugar import quotas on sugar prices.

He has also worked to bring more transparency into the program and encourage analysis of the economic distortions that it produces. Leading up to the 2023 Farm Bill, Earl urged the Government Accountability Office to investigate how sugar trade restrictions may limit the benefits to consumers of trade in sugar goods by increasing the price of imports; encourage the

offshoring of jobs by incentivizing imports of finished goods containing cheaper foreign sugar; and complicate efforts to increase U.S. exports of other agricultural products when negotiating with other nations.

Beyond the Farm Bill, Earl has worked to improve conditions for Haitian and Dominican sugarcane workers in the Dominican Republic, whose labor produces significant quantities of sugar imported into the United States. In 2022, he led a congressional delegation to the Dominican Republic to examine credible allegations of forced labor in the sugarcane fields of a major multinational sugar producer. Before Earl's engagement in the issue, a complaint of forced labor against this company languished for more than a decade. After Earl visited the Dominican Republic himself and repeatedly pressured the administration to act, U.S. Customs and Border Protection issued a Withhold Release Order to prohibit all imports of Dominican Sugar producers to improve working conditions at the sugarcane fields.

#### Nutrition

The Farm Bill subsidizes a diet that makes Americans sick. Earl has long advocated for better nutrition policy that goes beyond asking whether people have enough to eat and poses the question: enough of what?

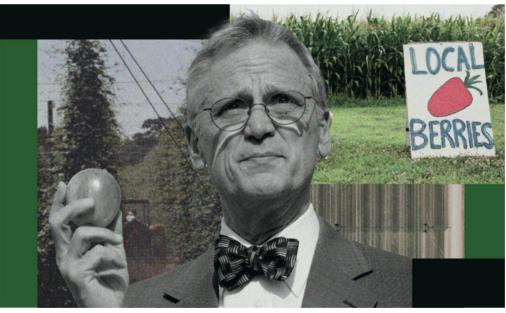
Concerned about the proliferation of highly processed foods, in 2010 Earl urged the Food and Drug Administration to resist industry appeals to re-label high fructose corn syrup as "corn sugar," citing studies that showed high fructose corn syrup consumption may be linked with increased obesity rates, measurably higher amounts of mercury in the bloodstream, liver scarring and fatty liver disease.

Earl has pushed for healthier, more locally-based school meal programs, and championed legislation to recognize August as "National Farm to School Month" (H.R. 1655, 111th Congress). During the 111th Congress, Earl was a co-lead of the Healthy Food Financing Initiative, a bipartisan solution to food deserts that are plaguing both rural and urban America by authorizing a loan and grant program to improve access to healthy foods in underserved communities and creating and preserving jobs that stimulate local economic development. During the 2018 Farm Bill, Earl worked to strengthen the Healthy Food Financing Initiative, by increasing funding and expanding it to link farmers, ranchers, and fisheries with local and

regional food supply networks serving these areas, further improving access to healthy food and opening new markets for producers.

He has also worked to raise the profile of innovative food is medicine and produce prescription programs. The Food and Farm Act would support farmers markets in accepting SNAP, expand the food is medicine pilot program authorized in 2018, and increase funding for the Food Insecurity Nutrition Incentives program which allows SNAP dollars to stretch farther when used to purchase healthy produce.

# **A Democrat's obsessive quest** to change the way America is farmed and fed



A Democrat's obsessive quest to change the way America is farmed and fed

Earl Blumenauer has been on a 26-year quest to pass a bill to reform farming to center people, animals and the environment

# The Guardian

Each year for the last 26 years – nearly his entire tenure in the US Congress – Earl Blumenauer has advocated for a law that would utterly transform US agriculture.

Nearly every time, though, his proposals have been shut down. Even so, he persists.

Blumenauer, a Democrat from Oregon, wants to see a version of US agriculture that centers people, animals and the environment, rather than the large-scale, energy-intensive commodity crop farms that currently receive billions of dollars in subsidies. In effect, he has a completely different vision for how 40% of the country's land looks and works.

"Every year is an uphill battle. We're up against entrenched, wealthy, strong interests," said Blumenauer, known for his signature bowtie, circular glasses and bicycle enamel pin. He's the spitting image of a progressive environmentalist and doesn't shy from discussing some of agriculture's most divisive issues.

But he remains optimistic and steadfast in his vision for the American food system. Now more than ever, he feels momentum and support surrounding the future of farming and food production. People care about where their food comes from and what kind of impact their food is having on the climate, he says.

Blumenauer's newest plan, the Food and Farm Act, was introduced earlier this year, as an alternative to the farm bill – the package of food and agricultural policies passed every five years that is up for renewal this fall. His proposal would redirect billions of dollars away from subsidies for commodity farms towards programs that support small farmers, climatefriendly agriculture and increasing healthy food access. The bill also prioritizes food waste management and animal welfare – areas that have been completely neglected by previous iterations of the farm bill.

"We simply pay too much to the wrong people, to grow the wrong foods the wrong way, in the wrong places," Blumenauer said.

While unlikely to pass, Blumenauer's bill, which has been introduced and referred to the agriculture committee, has

won endorsements from prominent food writers such as Marion Nestle and Mark Bittman, as well as dozens of environmental, animal welfare and food justice organizations – representing the growing desire for change in US agriculture.

At the heart of Blumenauer's bill is farm subsidy reform. In the most recent iteration of the farm bill, approximately \$63bn was dedicated to subsidies. These mostly benefited the largest farms and agribusinesses, with 70% of subsidy payments going to just 10% of farms, most of which produce commodity crops like soy, corn and wheat, which are often used to make animal feed, processed foods and even fuel for cars.

This means that taxpayers are subsidizing processed food, but not the fruits and vegetables you buy in the grocery store – and that commodity farms have little incentive to switch to more sustainable modes of production or more nutritious foods that people will actually eat.

"Most of us don't even know that the public dollars initially designed to protect farmers and keep supply managed to feed a hungry nation in the Great Depression are now reinforcing wealthy agribusiness corporations to grow commodities that are not even meant for human consumption," said Joshua Sewell, a policy analyst at the nonpartisan watchdog group Taxpayers for Common Sense.

Farmers that grow what are called "specialty crops", which include fruits and vegetables, usually don't qualify for subsidies. Most of the farms excluded from subsidy payments are those using sustainable growing methods that preserve soil and benefit the climate in the long term.

"It's just maddening to me that the me n and women who are working hard producing food, and particularly those that are doing so in a sustainable fashion, or who want to be involved with organics, they're shortchanged," Blumenauer said.

In developing the bill, Blumenauer spent the last five years interviewing and engaging with agricultural producers in Oregon, a state that mostly produces milk, grass seed and wheat. He asked about their needs and wants, what's working for them and what's not. He always asks the same question: "What would a farm bill look like if it was just for you?"

# The Guardian

He found that many farmers and ranchers want to see a redirection of resources from the largest producers to small-scale farmers.

"There is a pretty strong consensus that we're not meeting the needs of farmers and ranchers and we're not meeting the needs of the American public," Blumenauer said. Blumenauer's bill also considers agriculture's impact on the environment.

"Agriculture is one of the most environmentally destructive activities," Blumenauer said. "There is an increasing awareness of how much carbon is produced and how much carbon we could save and sequester by making relatively modest changes in agricultural practices."

Many of the 2018 farm bill's conservation programs, including the Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP), pay money to the largest agricultural operations, even though their practices are often harmful to the environment, explains Sophie Ackoff, farm bill campaign director at the Union of Concerned Scientists. Large producers are paid to make their operations more sustainable; however, much of that funding has been used for things like land clearing and road building, which provide little value to conservation.

In 2019, 10% of the program's funding went to Concentrated Animal Feeding Operations (CAFOs), which have negative impacts on water quality, animal welfare and human health.

Factory farming and animal agriculture contribute nearly 15% of all greenhouse gas emissions worldwide and previous farm bills haven't acknowledged the impact of factory farms on the climate, says Alexandra Bookis of Farm Sanctuary.

"As a system, it has a direct impact on the climate crisis that we haven't addressed head on," she said.

Blumenauer's bill would instead end all payments to CAFOs and factory farms, as well as ensure more funding goes toward sustainable farming practices and operations that "demonstrably improve the quality of the environment". It also mandates that any farm receiving a subsidy payment must comply with certain environmental standards. Nutrition assistance and the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (Snap) is a point of political contention every farm bill cycle, as the title accounts for nearly 80% of the farm bill's budget. In May, Republicans proposed expanding work requirements for recipients of Snap, which would make it more difficult for people experiencing food insecurity to qualify for the program.

Blumenauer's bill would not only expand Snap's funding and eligibility, but it would also provide more funding for local food systems in urban and rural food deserts, as well as increase fresh fruit and vegetable consumption in schools. "It's a win for people on food assistance, but also farmers selling locally. So many of the farmers I've worked with get into it because they want to feed their communities, they don't want to just sell really expensive food," Ackoff said.

A significant portion of the bill is also dedicated to supporting new and beginning farmers – who often face barriers to entry, like lack of capital. It's an area of untapped potential, and many young farmers are eager to grow food to feed their communities, they just need the resources to do so, Blumenauer says.

"Frankly, these are appeals that really touch American citizens," Blumenauer said. "The support for family farms, for resiliency, access for younger people – these are themes that are extraordinarily popular, and very important."

# **COULTERS** A Radical Farm Bill is Born

# Oregon Rep. Earl Blumenauer's 'alternative farm bill' aims to spend more tax dollars on farms that produce food, and less on those growing animal feed and fuel.

By: Leah Douglas November 16, 2017

Congressman Earl Blumenauer (D-OR) stands out in the drab halls of his Capitol Hill office building. When we meet, he's wearing a neon green bicycle lapel pin, a nod to his longtime enthusiasm for biking and his membership in the Congressional Bike Caucus. His staffer sports a neon orange one. Blumenauer's omnipresent bow tie and hip, clear-framed glasses are more signs that he is not your typical Beltway politician. Outside his office on Capitol Hill, a rainbow flag hangs beside the American flag.

The representative from Portland also stands out for his interest in agriculture policy, uncommon for a politician from an urban district. A longtime advocate for sustainable agriculture and an outspoken critic of the current administration's environmental policies, Blumenauer has worked for years to move the needle on food and farm policy. In June of this year, along with Rep. John Conyers, Jr. (D-MI), he introduced legislation to protect pollinator bees and support diversity in the food supply. The legislation was supported by dozens of environmental groups.

Now, Blumenauer is taking on the policy that most shapes our nation's food and agriculture landscapes: the farm bill. The next version of the trillion-dollar omnibus bill is due for reauthorization in 2018, and discussion is already well underway. The farm bill funds nutrition programs such as the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) (around 79 percent of the bill); as well as all major agricultural programs such as crop subsidies and insurance (around 14 percent); conservation programs (around 6 percent); and research.

The massive bill is also ripe for improvement, Blumenauer says. Today, he is introducing the Food and Farm Act, proposed legislation that would constitute a major departure from many of the bill's core elements. If passed, the Act would implement many of the food-policy reforms that sustainable agriculture policy advocates have long supported. "We continue to pay too much to the wrong people to grow the wrong food in the wrong places," Blumenauer explained in his office on Capitol Hill recently. "We don't have [enough] incentives for innovation, for helping new, beginning, and small farmers. We don't put enough emphasis on the opportunities for good nutrition. So, for me, [the Food and Farm Act] is an opportunity to pull out of the shadows a bill that has so much importance that people don't appreciate."

Blumenauer has been working on this legislation since 2015, when he began talking to his constituents and food-policy stakeholders in Oregon with an initiative called "Sing Your Own Farm Bill." He solicited suggestions from thousands of people for how to improve upon the existing legislation. His findings from those conversations have been distilled into a report, Growing Opportunities, which lays out many of the ideas that are included in his new legislation.



#### Reimagining Farm Support

Some of Blumenauer's major proposals involve reform to crop subsidies and reformed insurance programs. His legislation would expand conservation requirements for farmers receiving federal crop insurance; make it easier for farmers with diverse crops to receive insurance; and cap crop insurance premium subsidies to \$50,000. He also proposes capping annual subsidy benefits at \$125,000 per farm in order to more equitably distribute federal funds.

# CIVIL EATS

"Around 95 percent of the current subsidies are going to crops that are then turned into animal feed, fuel, or processed food," says Kari Hamerschlag, deputy director of the food and technology program at Friends of the Earth, an advocacy group that worked with Blumenauer to shape the bill. "That's not what America needs. This bill would really shift a lot of resources and still provide support to farmers that are growing those crops." Currently, she says, the top 1 percent of farmers by size and farm income receive27 percent of the subsidies, averaging \$1.7 million per farm.

"Those are not farmers that need the subsidies the most," Hamerschlag says. "Those farmers are very successful and will be successful without taxpayer funds. And we could redirect those resources to support investments in rural infrastructure so that we can get all of the local, grassfed, organic meat that consumers are demanding, for instance."

The focus on boosting sustainable meat is not a random example. Blumenauer's bill includes two different programs that would support farmer and rancher practices to reduce the use of routine antibiotics. Within a large conservation program called the Environmental Quality Incentives Program, or EQIP, for instance, the bill would create a pool of funds specifically for pasture-based animal farms, so they would be on a level playing field with industrial-scale farms receiving federal support.

It also proposes a program geared toward increasing support for infrastructure loans and technical support for processing high-value, sustainable meat, poultry, and dairy products to make it more viable for farms that want to sell in local and regional markets.

And, says Hamerschlag, it also includes a section requiring "factory farms to have to report their greenhouse gas emissions" and reduces subsidies for the large animal-waste facilities that factory farms often require in order to be profitable. She adds, "there's a lot of attention to animal welfare"—a piece of the discussion that has mainly been left out of past farm bills.

Additionally, Blumenauer proposes expanding support for beginning farmers and ranchers. The 2014 Farm Bill allocated about \$100 million to the Beginning Farmer and Rancher Development Program, but Blumenauer suggests adding more granularity to existing programs, including incentivizing farmers to participate in existing successionplanning programs, and funding new farmers to attend business-planning courses.

#### A Farm Bill for the Environment

One important element of Blumenauer's approach is boldly re-framing the farm bill as a matter of environmental protection. "This is going to be the most important environmental bill that this Congress will consider," he says.

For example, within the Conservation Stewardship Program (CSP), the bill proposes a major focus on pesticide production. According to Hamerschlag, "60 percent of the CSP program would go to basically water protection, pest management, and soil conservation—three of the most important environmental issues on our radar."

The last farm bill included a \$6 billion cut to conservation efforts, which give farmers financial incentives to use more sustainable practices and retire environmentally sensitive land from production.

Author and journalist Michael Pollan, who is giving the keynote talk at the launch of the Food and Farm Act today in Washington, D.C., commended Blumenauer's commitment to food and farm policy issues. "Historically, [the farm bill has] been treated as a very parochial, special-interest piece of legislation," Pollan says. But, he adds, that it "is the most important piece of health legislation likely to pass next year and probably the most important piece of environmental legislation likely to pass next year." As a consequence, "anyone who's concerned about climate change, anyone who's concerned about public health, has a stake."

Pollan also notes that because Blumenauer isn't on a Congressional agriculture committee, he has a unique vantage point from which to effect change. "Earl is one of the few outsiders who has taken the trouble, title by title, to understand [the farm bill]," he says. "That in itself is sending a message that the ag committees can't be trusted with the [bill]."

The lawmakers on the ag committees receive lobbying dollars that likely influence their approach to the bill. According to Investigate Midwest, "At least 600 companies spent roughly a half billion dollars in total lobbying during the two years the 2014 Farm Bill was moving on Capitol Hill."

As Pollan puts it, the committees "have had these playpens to themselves for too long," and "the key to changing the food system is getting other people involved."

There has traditionally been a division between rural and urban interests in farm bill debates, but Blumenauer says, "We're trying to have people understand that we all benefit from a farm bill that is more effective, that helps more Americans." He adds that in farm-rich states outside the Midwest, such as New York, Massachusetts, and Pennsylvania, people "don't have vast amounts of commodities, [but] they



are engaged in value-added agriculture. There are people who care about animal welfare, people who are fighting against hunger, who are concerned about obesity, who want to protect wildlife habitat. So, this is potentially a very significant coalition."

Even so, the Food and Farm Act must be met with a great deal of campaigning if it's going to impact the final bill. And because Blumenauer and his fellow reformers are working outside the committees, the bill will most likely be broken down into bite-sized parts and introduced as amendments to the more official bill. It's an opportunity "to both educate and mobilize and show Congress and the ag committee that there are a lot of stakeholders out there that care a lot about our food and farming system want to see alternatives to the farm bill," says Hamerschlag.

In the coming months, Blumenauer plans to build broader support for the bill, and keep pushing for farm bill reform on the Hill. He emphasizes that for the Act and similar reforms to pass, "[it's] going to be driven by people. It's going to be the increasingly well-organized people dealing with the specialty crops, organics—people who are dealing with everything from community gardens to farmers' markets. These people are getting better organized. I think there's a really broad potential coalition that is going to play a larger role than the various bureaucracies."



# Earl Blumenauer introduces tax credit for struggling restaurants

Oregon U.S. Rep. Earl Blumenauer has introduced a bill to extend aid to restaurants left out of the industry relief package he helped author almost three years ago.

Blumenauer, a Portland Democrat, is a sponsor of the Restaurant Revitalization Tax Credit, introduced in the U.S. House this week with co-sponsor Dean Phillips, D-Minn. The bill would create a tax credit for qualifying restaurants' payroll tax liabilities of up to \$25,000 per quarter in 2023.

To receive the credit, restaurants would have to have applied for but not received money through the Restaurant Revitalization Act in 2021.

Blumenauer helped get the previous \$28.6 billion restaurant act into a broad pandemic relief package, but the money was not enough to cover all businesses that applied for relief, leaving out 177,000 restaurants according to Blumenauer's office.

"The Restaurant Revitalization Fund was a transformative program that saved more than 100,000 restaurants, many of them the independent restaurants that are cornerstones of their communities," Blumenauer said in a news release. "But we need to finish the job for the nearly 200,000 restaurants that received absolutely no help. Our Restaurant Revitalization Fund Tax Credit Act will deliver much needed relief for these restaurants, many of which are still dealing with the effects of pandemic-induced economic shutdown."

Aside from being left out of the previous funding, restaurants would have to have experienced a revenue decline of at least 50% in 2020 or 2022 compared with 2019 or a 30% loss in both of the pandemic years.

Blumenauer said many restaurants are still dealing with heavy debt from working to stay open during Covid. In Portland, restaurants face high rates of vandalism and other crime, according to a recent survey.

"The introduction of the RRTC comes at a pivotal moment for the restaurant and bar industry, which lost over \$280 billion in the first year of the pandemic alone and received a mere \$28.6 billion in dedicated RRF relief," said Independent Restaurant Coalition Executive Director Erika Polmar in the news release.

Polmar, an Oregon food entrepreneur, helped launch the IRC, a major proponent of the restaurant funding in 2020.

# U.S. Senate Passes Restaurant Relief Plan Crafted by Rep. Earl Blumenauer

# Part of the Senate's \$1.9 trillion COVID-19 relief package is earmarked specifically for the beleaguered restaurant industry.

By: Matthew Singer March 07, 2021

U.S. Rep. Earl Blumenauer (D-Ore.) did it.

On Saturday, the U.S. Senate passed a \$1.9 trillion COVID-19 relief package, \$28.6 billion of which is earmarked specifically for the beleaguered restaurant industry—a provision based on legislation introduced by Blumenauer last year.

The bill is expected to receive final approval by the House of Representatives on Sunday and be signed by President Joe Biden ahead of the March 14 deadline to renew unemployment aid programs.

Blumenauer drafted the original Restaurants Act in June, which would have created a \$120 billion grant program to help struggling restaurants. Aspects of the bill were folded into the Restaurant Rescue Plan, a bipartisan budget amendment proposed by Sens. Roger Wicker (R-Miss.) and Kyrsten Sinema (D-Ariz.), which lawmakers passed last month.

"Even when this proposal was stuck in Mitch McConnell's legislative graveyard, we refused to give up, because we knew it was the best opportunity to save independent restaurants," Blumenauer said in a statement. "With today's successful vote in the Senate, urgently needed aid will soon finally be on its way."

The grant money will help cover payroll, mortgages, rent, utilities and other operating expenses for approved restaurants.

Although the dollar amount is less than originally proposed, representatives from the restaurant industry welcomed the bill's passage.

"This is a decisive moment for the independent restaurant and bar community," said Erika Polmar, executive director of the Independent Restaurant Coalition, in a statement. "Independent restaurants and bars came together at the beginning of the pandemic with the hope that by working together for the first time, our industry could make a big impact—and that's what we did."

The industry could use the boost: In Oregon, the pandemic knocked out 25 years of employment gains in the hospitality sector.

#### Appendix

- 2001: H.Amdt.335 to the Farm Security and Rural Investment Act prohibits the interstate movement of animals for animal fighting. Agreed to by voice vote on October 4, 2001.
- 2001: H.Amdt.337 to the Farm Security and Rural Investment Act prohibits the shipment of fighting dogs or birds from the United States to foreign countries; and increases the penalties for promoting illegal animal fighting venues. Agreed to by voice vote on October 4, 2001.
- 2002, 2003: H.Amdt.541 to the Interior and Related Agencies Appropriations Act, 2003 none of the funds in the bill may be used to enter into any new commercial agricultural lease on the Lower Klamath and Tule Lake National Wildlife Refuges in the States of Oregon and California that permits the growing of row crops or alfalfa.
- 2003: H.Amdt.224 to the Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2004 increases funding for the Office of the Inspector General by \$800,000 for enforcement of animal fighting statutes. Agreed to by a recorded vote (222-179) on July 14, 2003.
- 2004: H.Amdt.676 to the Agriculture, Rural Development, Food and Drug Administration, and Related Agencies Appropriations Act, 2005 increases funding for the USDA Inspector General to improve the enforcement of Federal animal fighting laws. Agreed to by voice vote on July 13, 2004.
- 2007: Pollinator Habitat Protection Act requires that conservation programs, except the farmland protection program, establish a priority and provide incentives for: (1) increasing habitat for native and managed pollinators; and (2) establishing cropping systems, integrated pest management regimes, and other practices to protect native and managed pollinators.
- 2007: Local Food and Farm Support Act directs the Secretary of Agriculture to establish a grant program to support value-added agricultural products which shall include a socially disadvantaged farmer and rancher component and may include a small and individual producer grant component.
- 2011: H.Amdt.124 to Disaster Relief Appropriations Act, 2013 Prohibits USDA from providing agricultural subsidies greater than \$250,000 to any farmer.
- 2011: H.Amdt.460 to Consolidated and Further Continuing Appropriations Act, 2012 Prohibits USDA from providing agricultural subsidies greater than \$125,000 to any farmer.
- 2012: Conservation for the 21st Century consolidates the twenty-three current conservation programs into four: an easement program, a Conservation Assistance Program, a modified Conservation Reserve Program, and a performance-based program. The bill emphasizes regional cooperation by bringing the Conservation Reserve Program into the partnership program.

### Food & Farm

- 2013: Balancing Food, Farm, and the Environment Act updates the Farm Bill's conservation title to reflect the needs of a changing agricultural system and a new set of federal government priorities. It streamlines twenty-three conservation programs into eleven and prioritizes long-term results to protect the taxpayers' investment.
- 2013: H.Amdt.185 to Federal Agricultural Reform and Risk Management Act, 2013 reforms the Environmental Quality Incentives Program to increase access for farmers, and eliminate payments to projects that do not show strong conservation benefits.
- 2013: H.Amdt.184 to Federal Agricultural Reform and Risk Management Act, 2013 requires that twenty percent of the acreage enrolled in the Conservation Reserve Program be set aside for the Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program and the Continuous Conservation Reserve Program, which allows states to target high priority and environmentally sensitive land, and to continuously re-enroll that land in CRP.
- 2015: Animal Welfare in Agricultural Research Endeavors (AWARE) Act amends the Animal Welfare Act to apply standards for humane treatment to farm animals at federal research or laboratory animal facilities.
- 2017: Sustainable Farmland for the Future Act modifies the conservation compliance provisions that apply to farmers who receive certain Department of Agriculture (USDA) benefits and have land that is highly erodible or a wetland.
- 2017: Animal Welfare Accountability and Transparency Act requires the Department of Agriculture (USDA) to maintain and publicly disclose records relating to the administration of the Animal Welfare Act and the Horse Protection Act, including specified details regarding inspections, enforcement actions, regulations, registrations, and licenses under the two laws.
- 2017, 2019, 2021, 2023: Saving America's Pollinators Act suspends the use of neonicotinoids and other pesticides harmful to bees and other pollinators until experts determine that they are safe to use, based on science.
- 2023: Crop Insurance Transparency Act requires the Department of Agriculture (USDA) to publicly disclose specific information about farmers and insurance providers participating in the federal crop insurance program.
- 2023: Assisting Family Farmers through Insurance Reform Measures (AFFIRM) Act caps crop insurance subsidies for high-earning farmers, creates an income threshold above which farmers are ineligible for crop insurance subsidies, reduces administrative and operating subsidies for crop insurance companies.
- 2017, 2023: Food and Farm Act sets forth a comprehensive alternative Farm Bill that advances four principles of agricultural reform: (1) focusing resources on those who need it most; (2) fostering innovation; (3) encouraging investments in people and the planet; and (4) ensuring access to healthy foods.

## HEALTH CARE

In his nearly three decades in federal office, Congressman Earl Blumenauer's health care priories can be distilled down to one concept: we should be rewarding the quality of care, and the quality of a patient's life, over the quantity of care. Recent reporting shows that the United States spends more per person per year, at nearly \$13,000, than other comparable countries but has the lowest life expectancy and other questionable outcomes. Most distressing is that institutions are moving in the wrong direction. Spending nearly one-fifth of the United States' GDP on health care without seeing better outcomes than other countries underscores the failure of our system. Americans spend more to get sick more often, take longer to get well, and die sooner. Earl has consistently pushed for changes to incentivize prevention and commonsense solutions so that providers can offer high-quality care at lower costs-not just for the patient but for the system as a whole.

America is losing the battle to keep our country healthy. Life expectancy is declining, exposing a huge divide between the haves and have nots based on income, race, and, sadly, politics. We're seeing a tragic increase in deaths of despair. Over the years, resistance to commonsense reforms wasted lives and dollars. From environmental risks and subsidizing a diet that makes Americans sick to gun violence and auto deaths, a myriad of policy failures have contributed to this problem. Failure to implement meaningful reforms doesn't just put more Americans at risk of disease and premature death, it is exposing the strains and flaws within the system itself. Workforce shortages and burnout, behavioral health crises, and a rapidly aging population without a strong safety net are all a result of our patchwork attempt at health care delivery.

We struggle with spiraling costs and practice models that leave practitioners feeling stressed and unable to meet the needs they feel ethically, professionally, morally to be able to address. They are caught in a system that has increasingly marginalized the individual provider as corporations purchase practices and impose systems that squeeze providers in ways that are uncomfortable, unhealthy, and dangerous to patients. This is only getting worse as private equity eats up more share of the health care market, leaving us in a situation where providers are forced to be beholden to shareholders not the health of the community they serve. Across the country, we're seeing everything from doctors only being able to spend a few minutes with a patient to hospitals being shut down. Addressing these issues and promoting models of care that achieve better outcomes without breaking the bank is critical to the future of the health care infrastructure of this country. The state of our health care system is a threat to the government itself.

In 2007, Earl joined the Ways and Means Committee, which oversees many aspects of United States health care policy. In that role, he has become the leader for a host of health care related issues, including including hospice and end of life care, end state renal disease (ESRD), Medicare Advantage (MA), and more. As a member of the committee, Earl played a central role in the passage of the Affordable Care Act (ACA) in 2010. Over the past 15 years, Earl focused on establishing a more rational, equitable, and transparent insurance market; reforming Medicare both for its own sustainability and to lead by example in driving larger delivery system improvements; and enhancing the quality, value, and patient-centeredness of health care for all consumers.

Serving on the Ways and Means Committee during the creation of the Affordable Care Act meant that Earl was able to shape health care policy in a hands on way. The ACA has been one of the most consequential pieces of health care legislation in modern history and while many of its popular provisions are wellknown, it includes critical fixes that Earl championed like Medicare reform regarding geographic variation. Earl fought to ensure that the groundwork for more aggressive payment and delivery reform would be put in motion, informed by studies conducted by the Institute of Medicine. Earl also championed efforts to support doctors and hospitals in more cost-efficient regions, to ensure that

doctors and hospitals weren't being punished for better outcomes as a result of thoughtful and intentional treatment.

In 2012, Oregon expanded and completely transformed their state Medicaid program, creating the Coordinated Care Organization (CCO) model. CCOs are networks of providers who work together in their local communities to serve people who receive health care coverage under the Oregon Health Plan (Medicaid) The CCO model builds off of Oregon's reputation for innovation and medical cost savings by allowing for more local and regional control, as well as flexibility to adapt services to the needs of the community. CCOs work with providers, hospitals, and local community groups to provide care and often will provide additional support services, like housing, nutrition, or transportation referrals. Oregon submitted a waiver to CMS that would make CCOs accountable for quality of care and care coordination. Earl worked closely with then-Governor John Kitzhaber to develop the "Oregon experiment" and bring together key stakeholders to advance the CCO model and help Oregon obtain the federal permissions it needed to implement the new approach.

Reining in MA payments was a major pay-for during the ACA, but the methodology championed by Ways and Means Committee staff—moving all payments to 100% of fee-forservice—was hugely problematic for Oregon's

Third District in particular where more than half of our Medicare beneficiaries are enrolled in MA. Earl fought against "baking in" the geographic variation inequities of traditional Medicare into the Medicare Advantage payment rates. The evening before the Committee marked up the health reform bill, Earl negotiated an 8% quality bonus for high quality plans in low-spending areas. Ultimately, the Senate bill rejected the principle of reducing payments to 100% of FFS and final MA payment policies didn't harm Oregon's beneficiaries.

Earl's leadership on Medicare Advantage was not limited to health reform. He has been a champion for MA both because of the high rates in Oregon as well as the promise of bringing a value alternative to fee for service's high spending. Historically, he has been the Ways and Means Democratic lead on the annual House letter to CMS advocating for the program. Understanding that Medicare Advantage is here to stay and is a popular option for millions of seniors, Earl has focused on making the most of the program and ensuring that it continues to deliver savings for both beneficiaries and the federal government.

In addition to other cost-savings efforts, Earl was heavily involved in the overhauling of the Sustainable Growth Rate (SGR) through MACRA. Now, he remains committed to improving payment policies and making sure that we're continuing to move towards a valuebased system. He joined a bipartisan group of members in leading a Request for Information on how to improve MACRA and in leading a legislative effort to improve the alternative payment models established by MACRA to see further innovation in paying for and incentivizing value.

In 2015, Earl started working on Value-Based Insurance Design (V-BID) within Medicare Advantage. The principle of V-BID is structuring insurance in a way that incentivizes delivering care to improve outcomes for the patient. For example, structuring cost-sharing for prescription drugs in a way that's actually affordable, instead of a one-size-fits-all manner, will lead to better adherence and lower long-term costs. Earl's legislation to test V-BID models in MA passed the House and became the foundation for a demonstration run by CMS. He later successfully expanded the demonstration through the Bipartisan Budget Act of 2018 and worked with CMS to give high-quality MA plans more flexibility with benefit design.

Since then, Earl has advanced legislation to apply V-BID concepts to the high deductible health plan (HDHP) and health savings account (HSA) space. HDHPs are plans with low premiums but high deductibles and can be paired with HSAs which allow employees and employers to set aside money on a pre-tax basis to pay for health expenses. These plans

have been on the rise in recent years. In 2022, nearly 30% of employers offered coverage through an HDHP with a savings option, and the number of employees covered by these plans increased from 19% in 2012 to 29% in 2022.

Ensuring that the cost structure of these plans does not disincentivize beneficiaries from getting needed care is critical to controlling costs in the long term and improving outcomes. Approximately 6 in 10 Americans struggle with chronic conditions and nearly 90% of health expenditures are spent on treating these diseases. However, preventive care services can save 100,000 lives each year. While the ACA guaranteed preventive services would be available without co-pays or coinsurance, current IRS rules don't allow this safe harbor to apply to services that prevent the progression of chronic illness. With more people enrolling in HDHPs, extending V-BID principles to these plans is critical. Earl is working to allow HDHPs to cover some secondary preventive services before enrollees have met their deductible to encourage beneficiaries to adhere to care plans and prevent progression.

Similarly, increasing enrollment in HDHPs has made reducing barriers to HSAs a priority. Earl was the Democratic lead on the Bipartisan HSA Improvement Act which passed the House in 2018. This bill included provisions Earl continues to champion, such

as ensuring that workers can access health clinics at or near work and remain eligible for HSAs. Earl has also been a proponent of ensuring that Direct Primary Care (DPC) patients can access HSAs as well. Direct Primary Care is an innovative delivery model in which patients pay a fixed monthly fee instead of paying for each service. Being able to manage a smaller number of patients not subject to the dictates of insurance companies or corporate overlords, gives higher satisfaction to the physicians, better quality of care to the individual while retaining the autonomy that was once the hallmark of the family doctor who made house calls, worked for the individuals, and was not screened by financial bureaucracy. This model allows primary care providers to spend more time with their patients and build relationships that lead to fewer hospital admissions for patients and more satisfaction for providers. However, the IRS incorrectly views DPC as a form of insurance making patients ineligible for HSAs. Earl has fought to clarify the tax code to ensure that patients don't have to choose between affording their health insurance and accessing this care model. The proposal has garnered bipartisan, bicameral support including from Chairman Smith. With the spread of HDHPs and HSAs, it's imperative that we protect services that meet patients where they are and help them adhere to their care plans.

Earl's commitment to delivery systems that prioritize value can also be seen in his championing of the Program for All-Inclusive Care for the Elderly (PACE). PACE is a comprehensive health plan that provides highquality care for individuals with chronic illness and functional disabilities, some of the most vulnerable people in our communities. By allowing beneficiaries to age in the community instead of being moved to a nursing home, PACE programs offer a better quality of life and better outcomes and reduced costs. For example, PACE participants have lower rates of preventable hospitalizations and mortality compared to nursing home residents. Oregon has one of the largest PACE programs in the country. In November 2015, President Obama signed the PACE Innovation Act into law. This bipartisan legislation, co-authored by Earl, expanded PACE to allow more individuals to enroll in the program and promote highquality, community-based care.

Earl's commitment to the model has led him to work to make PACE type programs affordable for Medicare-only beneficiaries. While only a small subset of the PACE population, Medicare-only beneficiaries face high-cost sharing for prescription drugs because of the all-encompassing nature of PACE. Earl is leading an effort to allow these patients to opt out of PACE drug coverage and instead get a Part D plan. Removing this financial barrier would allow these patients to afford to age in the community and avoid moving to a nursing home. Kidney health has also been a major priority for Earl, both from personal experience and through his work in Congress. His long-time Chief of Staff, Julia Pomeroy, donated a kidney to her sister some 30 years ago. Julia and her sister Rachel continue to mark the anniversary of the successful transplant which gave her sister a full life, career accomplishments and with zero negative effects for Julia. The process was eye-opening both in that it highlighted the risks of giving up a vital organ, and it was transformative because of the life that it gave Rachel and a sense of satisfaction and purpose for Julia. On the other hand, Earl watched his stepfather in the last years of his life struggle with his limited mobility and access to make necessary dialysis appointments.

The kidney is such an essential part of our being and few people really appreciate the role it plays with human health and the steps we take to promote it. It is a problem that has much greater of an impact than people recognize. Medicare spending for chronic kidney disease (CKD) patients exceeded \$70 billion in 2018, representing 23.8% of Medicare spending for those 66 and older. Medicare expenditures for beneficiaries with end-stage renal disease (ESRD) totaled nearly \$50 billion in 2018; adjusting for inflation, this is a 20.3% increase since 2009. Looking at the impact on individuals, the government, and he health care system, it was clear to Earl that we haven't done all we can to improve the continuum of care.

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From prevention to transplantation to improving dialysis, ESRD requires a holistic approach. Medicare and Medicaid should do everything possible to help people avoid the need for dialysis, and when it becomes necessary it should be as part of a holistic treatment approach.

Late-stage renal failure is debilitating. It's a slow death without the ability of the kidney to cleanse toxins from blood. Absent of a functioning kidney, dialysis is needed to filter the blood supply. Hundreds of thousands of American every week use this procedure. Hemodialysis takes about four hours per session, three times a week, making it a life saver that's draining both literally and figuratively.

Earl wanted that experience to be better utilized for the time spent by patients as well as for the investment of the federal government. Was there a way to help some of the most fragile patients to be able to treat them better and to more effectively utilize the time spent in dialysis? Earl developed the PATIENTS Act in 2015 which would create a pilot project to be able to utilize that time more effectively by including other health related activities for the dialysis patient. ESRD has a number of comorbidities and other risks-why couldn't we use this time patients are stationary to better address those issues? The idea was to address the entire range of primary care needs by integrating it into the kidney health experience.

For several years, Earl convened groups in the kidney community to secure their counsel and ultimately their support for the pilot project to show what was possible.

There's a very fierce divide within the kidney community between the for-profit giants, the non-profit centers, and other providers. It could have been a relatively simple, straightforward test of the ability to use that time more effectively, concentrating treatment along and around dialysis experience. It proved to be much more difficult. This is very high stakes, and there was deep concern that this would become a mechanism for the dialysis giants to carve out a larger share of the market at the expense of the smaller non-profit providers who felt that they were providing a different quality of experience, not hampered by the profit-making motive and some of the pretty aggressive behaviors of the industry giants. In the following years, the legislation was modified to address the concerns of smaller providers, leading to the more current BETTER Kidney Care Act.

One of the foremost challenges in health care in recent years has of course been the COVID-19 pandemic. The last few years decimated our health care system, but the emergency waivers provided an opportunity to test new ways of delivering care. The most well-known example of this is the expansion of telehealth, but there were a number of efforts that have been extended beyond the public health emergency. One of these included the Acute Care at

Home, or Hospital at Home, waiver. Earl championed this program that allowed hospitals to provide certain inpatient services at home if patients were stable enough. This was proposed to increase capacity at hospitals but gave hospitals an opportunity to keep patients at home where they often recover faster, better, and more comfortably. As part of the Fiscal Year 2023 omnibus, this program was extended through the end of 2024.

In addition to pandemic relief, the CARES Act moved other policies including legislation Earl authored to better care for patients with substance use disorder. Privacy records for related to substance use treatment were governed by an antiquated law from 1972 that prevented medical providers from knowing a patient's full history. For example, if a patient in recovery arrived in the emergency room unconscious, the provider treating them wouldn't be able to access that history and could inadvertently give them opioids. Earl championed a policy that was enacted in 2020 to align substance use privacy records with with the privacy protections under HIPAA, ensuring substance use records are treated as all other medical records. As our health care delivery system moves toward more robust, integrated care models, every member of a patient's treatment team needs to understand a patient's full medical history and promote whole-person care.

The COVID-19 pandemic created additional challenges as it exacerbated existing gaps in

Oregon's health infrastructure. During the pandemic, Oregon saw a marked increase in rates of adults and youths experiencing mental health issues and increased rates of suicide. This increase was not accompanied by an increase in services- in fact, Oregon saw many mental health providers leaving the profession, with many citing low pay and increased patient acuity as their reason for leaving.

In response to the lack of leadership and collaboration in the face of Oregon's mental health crisis, Earl convened a group of 40 leaders in mental health and public policy. This group consisted of mental health advocates, providers, hospitals, members of law enforcement, judicial experts, and elected officials- including Governor Tina Kotek, Mayor Ted Wheeler, District Attorney Mike Schmidt, and Chair Jessica Vega Peterson. The attendees were joined by Judge Steve Leifman of Miami-Dade County and Norm Ornstein. Earl was inspired by the work Judge Leifman and Norm did to keep people experiencing mental illness out of jails and off the streets, while still putting them through appropriate treatment. The convening agreed that Oregon lacked leadership and widespread, efficient action was needed. Multiple working groups came out of Earl's convening that are working to develop 90-day plans of action. Earl continues to partner with Governor Kotek to push the City of Portland and Multnomah County to use the resources available to them.

Earl also continued his advocacy around Oregon's 1115 waiver and the expansion of

Medicaid services available to Oregonians. During the 2022 waiver renewal, Earl joined the rest of the congressional delegation in calling for CMS to quickly approve Oregon's new Medicaid model. The 1115 waiver would now allow for continuous enrollment. ensuring that children under six don't get kicked off Medicaid, and include services related to social determinants of health. Members of the Oregon Health Plan could receive services to address the effects of climate change, nutrition assistance, and up to six months of rental assistance. These services will be available to transitional populations including youth leaving foster care, people at risk of homelessness, and people set to leave jail or an institutional setting.

Earl's health care work continues to evolve and respond, focused on the questions of how we treat people better, give them more choice, and reduce the overall cost of treatment. Making the correct investments to drive down costs and improve outcomes continues to be the overarching theme in Earl's health care work.

#### Legislative Accomplishments

- Earl consistently fights for ways to deliver compassionate care to the ill in a way that respects their wishes and doesn't put unnecessary burden on our health care system. He's prioritized working across the aisle that has allowed him to make inroads on important issues like end of life care, ESRD, and value-based care.
- Earl authored the Overdose Prevention and Safety Act, enacted in 2020, which reformed privacy records for substance use so patients receive appropriate care, a policy that local leaders and providers have pointed to as a necessary change to fix current challenges.
- Earl is the Democratic champion of the Hospital at Home program, a model that allows some hospital services to be delivered in a patient's home, and fought to get it extended through 2024.

#### E-Newsletter - August 5th, 2017

Dear Friends,

It is the eighth day of my email series, "Beyond Resistance: The things we should do to make us safer, healthier, and more economically secure." Today's topic: reducing health care costs and improving care through innovation. As we debate changes to our overall health care system, there are things that we can do now to bring health care costs down and improve care.

How we deliver care to patients with kidney disease – specifically end-stage renal disease (ESRD) – can be improved. Most patients suffering from kidney failure visit dialysis clinics three times a week. These visits are time-consuming, and typically are not the only medical services dialysis patients require on a weekly basis. I've introduced bipartisan legislation to let kidney disease patients receive primary care and other necessary health services while they're at dialysis clinics – improving their care while saving valuable time and money for patients and providers.

Often, it's not necessary to spend more money to deliver care. Rather, we need to spend our dollars more wisely to improve the value of care delivered. I've introduced 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. It is an efficient, common-sense way to provide an economic incentive to help more people receive the care they need.

Congress needs to challenge conventional thinking to develop innovative, cost-effective, and compassionate policies that make a real difference for patients across the country. Kidney care and Value-Based Insurance Design are just two examples and a good start.

I welcome your thoughts, ideas, and opinions. You can connect with me here.

Courage,

Earl Blumenauer Member of Congress

- 2007: (House Resolution) Resolving to address the costly obesity epidemic by identifying opportunities to increase access to and promotion of nutrition, physical activity, and health care in all of Congress' work.
- 2007, 2009: Life Sustaining Treatment Preferences Act Amends title XVIII of the Social Security Act to provide coverage under Medicare for consultations regarding orders for life sustaining treatment, and provides grants for programs for such orders
- 2009: Empowering Medicare Patient Choices Act Amends title XVIII of the Social Security Act to provide for the establishment of shared decision-making standards and requirements and establishes a pilot program for the implementation of shared decision making under the Medicare Program
- 2009, 2012, 2014: Medicare Transitional Care Act Amends title XVIII of the Social Security Act to cover transitional care services to improve the quality and cost effectiveness of care under the Medicare Program
- 2009: Advance Planning and Compassionate Care Act Comprehensive reforms to improve end-of-life care planning
- 2009: Health Care Reality Check Act Makes a Member of Congress ineligible for any government-administered health care benefit until the first day of the first month following the date on which comprehensive health reform legislation is signed into law.
- 2009: Medicare Efficiency Incentive Act Provides a 5% efficiency bonus in Medicare to the lowest cost counties. (Amends part B of title XVIII of the Social Security Act to provide Medicare physician incentive payments for efficient areas.)
- 2009: HR 2921 Amends MedPAC's statutory mandate to include geographic evaluations of access, quality, and volume of services provided under Medicare. (Amends title XVIII of the Social Security Act to provide for an annual review by the Medicare Payment Advisory Commission on geographic access to services.)
- 2010: National Nurse Act of 2010 Amends the Public Health Service Act to establish the Office of the National Nurse.
- 2010, 2011, 2013: Personalize Your Care Act Provides Medicare and Medicaid coverage for voluntary consultations between patients and their doctors about advance care planning.
- 2012: H.Amdt.1158 to the Military Construction and Veterans Affairs and Related Agencies Appropriations Act, 2013 Requires that not less than \$35 million go to the Medical Prosthetic Research Account for PTSD. *Agreed to by voice vote on May 31, 2012*.
- 2013: States' Medical Marijuana Patient Protection Act Allows medical marijuana patients and businesses who are complying with state law the ability to access and distribute marijuana free from federal interference.

- 2015: PACE Innovation Act Allows CMS to test the PACE model with new populations. *Enacted on November 5, 2015.*
- 2016: Personalize Your Care Act 2.0 Amends titles XVIII and XIX of the Social Security Act to improve end-of-life care and advanced illness management
- 2016, 2017, 2019, 2021, 2023: Primary Care Enhancement Act Amends the tax code to clarify that Direct Primary Care is not insurance coverage, allowing patients to remain HSA-eligible. *Passed the House as part of H.R. 6199 on July 25, 2018.*
- 2017, 2019: H.Res.204 and 209 Declares support for Brain Awareness Week and calls upon Americans to recognize and support brain and spinal cord research.
- 2017: Patient Choice and Quality Care Act Amend title XVIII of the Social Security Act to provide for advanced illness care coordination services for Medicare beneficiaries.
- 2018, 2019: Overdose Prevention and Patient Safety Act Amends the Public Health Service Act to protect the confidentiality of substance use disorder patient records. *Enacted as part of the CARES Act on March 27, 2020.*
- 2019: Comprehensive Care for Seniors Act Directs the Secretary of Health and Human Services to issue a final regulation based on the proposed regulation relating to the Programs of All-Inclusive Care for the Elderly (PACE) under the Medicare and Medicaid programs.
- 2019, 2021, 2023: Promoting Access to Diabetic Shoes Act Amends title XVIII of the Social Security Act to permit nurse practitioners and physician assistants to satisfy the documentation requirement under the Medicare program for coverage of certain shoes for individuals with diabetes.
- 2019, 2021: Medicare IVIG Access Enhancement Act Provides for a demonstration project to further examine the benefits of providing coverage and payment for items and services necessary to administer intravenous immune globulin (IVIG) in the home, and for other purposes.
- 2019, 2021: Medical Marijuana Research Act Amends the Controlled Substances Act to make marijuana accessible for use by qualified marijuana researchers for medical purposes, and for other purposes.
- **2020**, **2021**: BETTER Kidney Care Act Establishes a demonstration program to provide integrated care for Medicare beneficiaries with end-stage renal disease.
- 2021, 2023: PACE Part D Choice Act of 2021 To amend title XVIII of the Social Security Act to ensure Medicare-only PACE program enrollees have a choice of prescription drug plans under Medicare part D.
- 2021: BRAIN Act- Requires the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) to establish the Neuroscience Center of Excellence and the Neuroscience Translation Working Group.

- 2022, 2023: H.Res.1069 Expressing support for the designation of May 7 each year as "Brain Donation Awareness Day" to raise awareness of postmortem brain donation and its importance in scientific research on neurological conditions.
- 2022, 2023: Right to Try Clarification Act Specifies that investigational drugs that are provided directly to individuals from manufacturers without the need for federal regulatory approval are exempt from restrictions that would otherwise apply under the Controlled Substances Act
- **2022:** H.Res.1348 Supports the designation of "National Brain Health Day" and efforts to study and improve treatments for brain health.
- 2022: Improving Access to Advanced Care Planning Act Amends title XVIII of the Social Security Act to waive cost-sharing for advance care planning services, allows such services to be provided by clinical social workers, and waives the coinsurance and deductible for such services.
- **2022:** Affordable and Accessible Infant Formula Act Provides for the temporary duty-free importation of certain infant formula products, and for other purposes.
- 2022: FORMULA Act Amends the Harmonized Tariff Schedule of the United States to suspend temporarily rates of duty on imports of certain infant formula products. *Enacted July 21, 2022.*
- 2023: Chronic Disease Flexibility Act Codifies a 2019 IRS Guidance allowing certain secondary preventive services to be covered pre-deductible for high deductible health plan beneficiaries.

# INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

First elected to Congress in 1996, Congressman Earl Blumenauer served for several years on the House International Relations Committee where he developed national leadership on issues of war and peace. From the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan to the Russian invasion of Ukraine, Earl has provided thoughtful leadership on the most vexing challenges of our time.

Earl is one of Congress' top leaders on cleaning up landmines and unexploded ordnance (UXO). The United States is still discovering UXO around the world because of our extensive military operations, training, and bases. The terrible record of managing this toxic legacy was not just an environmental threat, but it also exposed our own soldiers and their families to toxic hazards. UXO aren't confined to sites abroad. In 1993, a backhoe operator digging a trench in the Spring Valley neighborhood of Northwest Washington, D.C. uncovered unexploded mortar and artillery shells. Since the discovery, Earl has championed efforts to raise awareness and accelerate the cleanup of millions of discarded bombs and munitions domestically.

In the 107th Congress, Earl enacted the Ordnance and Explosives Risk Management Act outlining policy guidelines for the Department of Defense to address UXO. Earl also founded the bipartisan Congressional Unexploded Ordnance Caucus to continue to raise awareness of the issue. The caucus has since served as an invaluable tool for members of Congress and staff to strategize and secure funding to quicken the pace of UXO cleanup efforts.

In much of his international affairs work, Earl has specialized in areas that don't get the attention they deserve despite their tremendous impact. One of these areas is the power of therapeutic food to stop children from starving. Earl has taken up this cause in Congress pushing USAID to significantly expand its purchases of Ready-to-Use Therapeutic Food (RUTF). This proved particularly powerful in 2022, with the Russian invasion in Ukraine throttling global grain supplies, and a historic fourth consecutive failed rainy season decimating local agriculture in the Horn of Africa. The nutritional aid that was provided because of Earl's advocacy treated around 4 million severely malnourished children, and according to USAID it likely prevented a famine from occurring during summer 2022.

Another example of under the radar issues with outsized impact is Earl's work on international water. His engagement with global water, sanitation, and hygiene (WASH) started in 2002, when he attended the Johannesburg World Summit on Sustainable Development. Upon returning home, he introduced the Clean Water and Sanitation Resolution (H.Res.782), affirming the commitments made by the United States at the World Summit to improve worldwide access to safe drinking water and basic sanitation services. In 2007, Earl introduced a resolution supporting the goals and ideals of World Water Day (H.Res.196).

The resolution highlighted not only the importance of increasing access to safe drinking water and sanitation, but the conservation and sustainable management of freshwater resources and ecosystems. It also urged the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) and State Department to provide more sustainable and equitable access to safe drinking water and sanitation for the poor. The resolution passed with broad bipartisan support. In 2009, Earl first secured hundreds of millions of dollars for the WASH account and USAID Development Credit Authority to establish water infrastructure financing mechanisms in high priority countries. \$300 million in funding was provided, with \$125 million specifically targeted to sub-Saharan Africa. Since then, Earl has led the funding request letter every year consistently delivering robust funding for this bipartisan and humanitarian issue.

Building on his success in securing WASH funding, Earl authored the Senator Paul Simon Water for the World Act (H.R. 2030) in April 2009. This legislation was the most comprehensive piece of international water policy to date, directing the USAID Administrator to establish the Office of Water to use a set of criteria to designate ten high priority countries and implement country- specific water strategies for each country.

Finally, Earl has been an outspoken critic of the random sanctions policy employed by the United States. While there is one glorious example of multilateral sanctions forcing a change to the apartheid regime in South Africa, he has long criticized that sanctions are easy to impose and difficult to remove. As a member of the House International Relations Committee, Earl advocated for revising and reforming U.S. sanctions policy.

#### Legislative Accomplishments

- Earl wrote key provisions in our UXO statute and has ensured that addressing this legacy of U.S. military presence at home and abroad continues to be given attention in Congress.
- Earl helped lead the work so that the 2022 Ukraine Supplemental provided a boost in RUTF funding and increased access to the treatment from 25% of the need to 50% of the need in 2023.

#### Floor Speech - April 3, 2001: The Threat of Unexploded Ordnances

Mr. Speaker, I have just returned from the campus of American University in the exclusive Spring Valley residential community here in Washington, D.C.

From a distance one could not imagine, but it is actually one of over a thousand sites around the country where war is being continued; 26 years after the Vietnam War, 56 years after the conclusion of World War II, 83 years after World War I, there is still a battle taking place right here on American soil. It involves mines, nerve gases, and toxics and explosive shells. It has claimed at least 65 lives, and has maimed and injured many more. Sadly, it continues every day, and if we are not careful, it will continue for another thousand years.

Toxic explosive waste of our military activities in the United States, unexploded ordnances on formerly used defense installations probably contaminates 20 to 25 million acres in the United States, and the number could be as high as 50 million acres. Sadly, no one can give us an accurate appraisal of the problem. What we do know is at the current rate of spending, it will take centuries, maybe even a thousand years or more, to return this land to safe and productive use. Some may be so damaged, we may not attempt to clean it up.

Unexploded ordnances are a serious problem today. Human activity and wildlife are encroaching on more and more of these sites as our neighborhoods grow and sprawl. At the same time, the natural rhythms of nature, flooding, earthquakes, and landslides, aided and abetted by human activity, exposes these dangers. Today, across America, we are finding lost and forgotten unexploded ordnance that was intentionally buried in a feeble attempt to dispose of it, or a shell that missed its mark and did not explode as intended.

There are many targets toward which citizens can direct their frustrations and in some cases anger: the Department of Defense, the Army Corps of Engineers or EPA. People have some legitimate concerns about what these and other agencies have done in the past and what they are doing now. But there is one participant that is missing in action, and that is the United States Congress. Only we in Congress can set adequate funding levels, budget clearly, and then make sure that enough money is appropriated to do the job right. Congress can pinpoint managerial responsibility and establish the rules of the game.

It is not acceptable to me for Congress to occasionally step in from the sidelines, complain, protest, and then shift inadequate funding from one high-priority project to another high-priority project. This ability to find an unexploded ordnance, decontaminate sites and have the infrastructure is going to be a zero-sum game if we do not properly advance the goal of protection. Mr. Speaker, Congress needs to report for duty, and needs to provide the administrative and financial tools that are necessary. What I am talking about will not affect active ranges and readiness. That is a separate topic with its own set of issues. My concern is the closed, transferred and transferring ranges where the public is exposed or soon will be.

More than 1,000 years to clean up these sites is not an appropriate timetable when people are at risk every day. In the 1980s, three boys in San Diego were playing in a field next to a subdivision that they lived in, and they found a shell. It exploded and killed two of them. American University campus that I just left has a child care center that is now closed down because of high levels of arsenic contamination because this area during World War I was a test ground for poison and chemical warfare.

Mr. Speaker, we must make sure that whether it is in suburban Washington, D.C., on Martha's Vineyard or in Camp Bonneville in my community that we get the job done, and it is not appropriate to take a millennium or even a century to do it. We need to step up and do the job.

#### The Threat of Unexploded Ordnances

#### Earls Floor Statements, House of Representatives - April 3, 2001

Mr. Speaker, my goal in Congress is to make sure that every Member understands what is going on in their State because there are these toxic waste dumps, chemical and weapons disposal in every State. We can make sure that somebody is in charge, that there is enough funding, and we get the job done so that no child will be at risk for death, dismemberment or serious illness as a result of the United States Government not cleaning up after itself.

#### **DOD** Exemptions and UXO

#### Editorial - March 27th, 2003

In the wake of our march to war with Iraq, too little attention has been placed on the rush to exempt the Department of Defense from most of America's major environmental laws. This is more than another misguided assault on the environment by the Bush administration; it is a significant missed opportunity for the military.

The US Department of Defense is the nation's largest polluter and generator of Superfund in America. From the radioactive legacy at Hanford, WA to the toxic residue of our chemical weapons testing and manufacturing around the American University campus in Washington, DC, every state struggles with the problem. More exemptions are not going to help. A lack of controls created this toxic legacy across America in the first place.

These exemptions will cost money. Much of the tens of billions of dollars spent to clean up after the Department of Defense are the result of delay and lack of commitment. States will be forced to step in where the Federal Government has left off. Failure to invest in the technologies of clean-up will put lives at risk; land mines and unexploded ordnance kill people at home and abroad each day.

The sprawl that vexes communities around the country hits hard at the military. Isolated areas that were once perfect for testing weapons and training soldiers are now victims of our headlong rush for urban development. Sprawl is one of the greatest challenges to military readiness as civilian uses encroach upon and around military ranges and bases. For too long, Congress has been missing in action in this critical area. It should not just reject the Bush administration's ill-conceived, but cleverly timed effort.

Now is the time for Congress to help the military fulfill its environmental obligations. As the finest fighting force in the world, our military achieves astounding results. All they need are direct orders and adequate resources. Why not put them to work to enhance and protect the environment rather than to create more environmental threats in the future while we ignore the current challenges of today?

Since I came to Congress, I've been fighting to at least inventory the areas that are blighted by unexploded ordnance, to put somebody in charge and to incrementally increase funding for clean-up and research. As a gusher of money flows to defense, just half the budget slated for the ill-conceived National Missile Defense program could revolutionize military cleanup. Instead of a rate of spending that will take centuries, we could finish the job in a few decades.

In the long-term, investing in clean up can actually save substantial amounts of money. As technologies develop and economies of scale are achieved in environmental clean-up efforts, there will be a wide-range of civilian contractors willing, able and indeed eager to expand their business. Additional money for research will do far more than merely hasten clean-up and lower costs. It will have profound implications not just for soldiers, but for children and farmers who are killed and maimed as a result of unexploded ordinance and land minds. This doesn't just happen overseas; it is a little known fact that over 60 American civilians, including children, have been victims. At a time when we are deeply concerned about our economy, these investments will provide tens of thousands of family-wage jobs. Accelerated clean up will speed the return of some of America's most interesting, scenic and valuable properties to productive use.

It is not just fear of job loss that keeps between a quarter and a third of domestic bases surpluses to our military needs in operation. Communities fear that they will lose economic security and be left with a "white elephant" surrounded by barbed wire and a cyclone fence. The Fort Ord base on the California coast contains some of the world's most spectacular landscapes. After thirteen years and hundreds of millions of dollars spent since its closure, the land has still not been fully returned to productive use.

#### **DOD** Exemptions and UXO

#### Editorial - March 27th, 2003

Twenty years ago, a bipartisan coalition of "cheap hawks" helped make some significant reforms of military weapons procurement. Today, "hawks" who care about the environment, the budget, and military readiness should embrace bold, environmental military action. Congress should firmly reject the anti-environmental, unnecessary initiative of the administration, and instead give the money and the instructions for the Department of Defense to clean-up after itself. It will boost the economy, save taxpayer money and enhance the environment. It will improve military readiness at home while it enhances the safety of soldiers and civilians around the world.

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#### **PRESS RELEASE:** Congressmen Announce Bipartisan **UXO** Caucus

#### July 27th, 2005

Washington, DC –Congressmen Earl Blumenauer (D – Ore.), Don Manzullo (R – Ill.), Sam Farr (D – Calif.), and Gary Miller (R – Calif.), announced today the formation of a bipartisan Unexploded Ordnance (UXO) Caucus. As part of their ongoing efforts to increase congressional awareness of the UXO issue, the Congressmen started this caucus to raise awareness about the health, safety, and environmental risks of UXO and to highlight the challenges faced by communities and the federal government in the clean up of UXO and redevelopment of former military properties.

"I am excited that the UXO Caucus will bring a new level of attention to our bipartisan efforts to deal with the problem of unexploded ordnance," Congressman Earl Blumenauer said. "This is one of those common sense issues where the federal government can make a big difference for our communities with only a small investment. The federal government is the largest land-owner in the country and should take this opportunity to lead by example. Cleaning up UXO is important not only for public safety and environmental reasons, but can provide a real economic boost at home."

UXO is the unexploded bombs and military munitions that failed to explode during military training or testing. These munitions may be found on or buried under the surface of more than 39 million acres of former military properties.

"Several years ago, the Army wanted to fence off thousands of acres of land in the district I represent because it was loaded with Unexploded Ordnance (UXO). The former Savanna Army Depot -- a munitions testing site -- is now a national wildlife refuge open to the public because of teamwork between my office, the Army, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and the Environmental Protection Agency to seek alternative ways to clean up the site and provide public access," House Small Business Committee Chairman Don Manzullo said. "It is this type of teamwork and information sharing we hope to provide through the Unexploded Ordnance Caucus to speed up UXO clean-up sites so the land can again be productive."

Congressman Sam Farr added, "Having dealt with the conundrum of UXO clean up at Fort Ord, I know as well as anybody about the challenges of removing this contamination from our neighborhoods and communities. I am proud to be a co-chair of the new UXO Caucus and hope to really energize Congress to concentrate appropriate resources to resolving this environmental threat. I especially thank Congressman Blumenauer for being the impetus behind this effort and look forward to working with him and the other members of the caucus."

"The Army Corps of Engineers have worked hard to remove unexploded ordnance in our communities. For example, in Orange County, California, they have helped ensure the public can fully access O'Neil Park, a 1,700acre, heavily wooded sanctuary with unprecedented views of the Pacific Ocean and towering Santa Ana Mountains," said Congressman Gary Miller. "However, there are still millions of acres across the country that need the Army Corps' attention. I hope the new caucus will highlight the Army Corps' efforts to open up these lands, while helping us learn about innovative strategies to make sure all of our communities are free from the dangers of UXOs.'

Over the next year, the caucus plans to host briefings on the many issues associated with UXO – from unexploded ordnance being turned into the improvised explosive devices (IEDs) that threaten American troops in Iraq to the way that new clean-up technologies can free up millions of acres of land at home for economic development, housing, recreation, or open space. The caucus will also work to facilitate Congressional funding and legislative action on UXO cleanup to increase investment in technology, create business opportunities at home, and reduce the health and safety risk for local communities.

#### E-Newsletter - June 7th, 2017

#### Nukes make us less secure, not safer

Dear Friends,

Our costly, redundant nuclear expansion is already draining resources – the latest 30-year price tag for this overhaul is set at more than \$1.2 trillion dollars! And now, with someone who I feel is unpredictable and reckless in charge of the nuclear button, I believe there is a renewed need for reassessing the U.S. nuclear posture. Throughout my career, I've worked to reduce the development and threat of nuclear weapons. It's critical to our safety and fiscal sanity, and for that of future generations.

The United States already has more than enough of these weapons to destroy the earth multiple times, and they do not help us face our strategic challenges. It makes no sense and it's irresponsible.

For one, the decision to use a nuclear weapon should never be made by one person alone. Earlier this year, I joined Representative Ted Lieu to introduce H.R. 669, legislation prohibiting any president—including the present one—from conducting a first-use nuclear strike without prior authorization from Congress. This legislation is more critical than ever. (Twitter, in my view, does not provide the best forum for serious national security policy.)

The United States also faces budgetary constraints. I'd argue that the \$1.2 trillion we're going to spend to upgrade the entire nuclear arsenal would be better spent on other defense priorities and our veterans, to say nothing of roads, bridges and schools.

That's why I'm working on three legislative proposals with my colleagues to cut unnecessary spending:

- I've reintroduced my Smarter Approach to Nuclear Expenditures (SANE) Act to save the United States more than \$100 billion over the next 10 years by reducing or eliminating redundant nuclear weapons programs.
- I've also introduced legislation that would limit funding for the Air Force's new nuclear air-launched cruise missile. We can maintain an effective bomber component of our arsenal without such a weapon, but the Air Force plans to replace 575 existing air-launched cruise missiles with 1,000 or more of these new weapons.
- Finally, I'm working with Senator Ed Markey on legislation that would cancel the Ground-Based Strategic Deterrent program, the replacement system for our land-based leg of the nuclear triad. We have more than 400 intercontinental ballistic missile systems across the country. While these forces may have provided accuracy that the rest of our arsenal did not during the Cold War, this is no longer the case.

We are robbing America's future to pay for weapons of the past that we can't afford and that make us less secure, not safer. A more rational nuclear posture is the best expression of American leadership for a more peaceful future.

Courage,

Earl Blumenauer Member of Congress

#### Appendix

- 2001-2002 -H.R.2605 Ordnance and Explosives Risk Management Act
- June 3, 2003 Earl together with Congresswoman Ellen Tauscher (D-Calif.), Congressman Sam Farr (D-Calif.), and Aimée Houghton from the Center for Public Environmental Oversight announced the release of the inventory of Department of Defense (DoD) sites nationwide with known or suspected unexploded ordnance (UXO). At a press conference, Earl argued for increased funding for clean up of these dangerous sites.
- 2004 Earl presented at a Department of Defense sponsored symposium on "Meeting the DoD's Environmental Challenges," the largest gathering of military experts and concerned citizens devoted to unexploded ordnance (UXO) and military base cleanup.
  2006 <u>H.R.5172</u> Earl introduced the Military Range Legacy Act of 2006 which expressed the sense of Congress that the Secretary of Defense should fully implement, as soon as possible, Department of Defense (DOD) requirements regarding unexploded ordnance, discarded military munitions, and munitions constituents (substances) at defense sites.
- 2008 <u>- H.R.5658</u> Earl sponsored an amendment, which was offered to the 2009 Defense Authorization Bill, that would require the Secretary of Defense to prioritize the research and development of technology used to detect unexploded ordinances (UXOs). It would also require the Department of Defense (DOD) to support the training and use of this new technology in the field. H.R.5658 passed by a vote of 384-23.
- 2009 Earl drafted two amendments aimed at cleaning up UXOs. The first amendment would require the Secretary of Defense to develop methods to account for the full life-cycle costs of munitions, including cost of disposal. The Defense Department would be required to report to Congress recommendations for reducing these costs, unexploded ordnance, and munitions-constituent contamination. This amendment is the first time the DoD will be required to take a look at how munitions are developed and how they are used, in order to reduce the very real and very serious environmental contamination and danger to civilians.
- 2014 -The House passed Earl's amendment to the Department of Defense Appropriations Bill for Fiscal Year 2015 that would have prevented a \$3.4 million down payment on a new nuclear-armed air-launched cruise missile (ALCM) and redirect that funding towards the cleanup and removal of unexploded military ordinance that litters every state in the country.

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## INTERNATIONAL TRADE

Oregon's Third Congressional District has long had a complex relationship with international trade. Oregon's economy depends on trade, is home to many multinational companies, and has an overall trade surplus. Conversely, international trade is often blamed for environmental degradation and the displacement of workers in certain industries. This has led to a deep skepticism about free trade policies from some Oregonians. Through thoughtful and pragmatic leadership, Congressman Earl Blumenauer has successfully staked out a position in Congress as someone committed to effective and humane trade policies. He both recognizes the benefits of international trade for the United States and developing countries, and sees them as an opportunity to raise global environmental, labor, and human rights standards so that U.S. workers and companies can compete on a level playing field.

Throughout his congressional career, Earl has stood out as one of Congress' foremost advocates for robust trade enforcement. Even before being elected to Congress in 1996, Earl heard strong criticisms about the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) and its failure to provide enforceable environmental and labor protections. These criticisms informed his leadership when it comes to making trade agreements enforceable, especially when U.S. trading partners violate environmental and labor protections.

In November 2001, when House Republicans and George W. Bush pursued "fast track" authority for future trade agreements, Earl opposed the effort to pass a partisan Trade Promotion Authority. Earl ultimately opposed the legislation because it lacked adequate enforcement for worker's rights and the environment. In what has become known as the "May 10th Agreement," a deal reached between a Democratic Congress and the Bush Administration, Earl helped to secure the first ever fully enforceable labor and environmental protections in a trade agreement. As a result of this agreement, if a country fails to adhere to certain labor and environmental standards, the United States can impose trade sanctions on them until they changed course. This agreement has led to meaningful reforms in other countries, and has served as the template for future trade agreements. The May 10th agreement also allowed a deal to move forward that ensured that critical pharmaceuticals would remain affordable for developing and emerging markets.

In 2015, Earl built on this work to partner with Paul Ryan to enact legislation establishing a Trade Enforcement Trust Fund to provide new resources to the federal government for trade enforcement efforts. The Fund was modeled after successful precedents of the Migratory Bird Conservation Fund, the Sport Fish Restoration & Boating Trust Fund, and others that rely on a small portion of tariff-related revenue for the enforcement and implementation of U.S. trade agreements. The Trust Fund monitors and enforces U.S. free trade agreements and World Trade Organization (WTO) commitments, supports trade capacity-building assistance to help partner countries meet their free trade agreement obligations and commitments and investigates petitions concerning unfair trade practices.

Representing a community that is rightly concerned with the health of the planet, Earl has made sustainable trade one of his top priorities in Congress. As mentioned, Earl voted against the U.S.-Singapore Free Trade Agreement due to concerns over Singapore's inability to monitor trade in environmentally sensitive commodities like illegally harvested timber and endangered wildlife species. In 2007, Earl introduced the Legal Timber Protection Act to ban the use of illegally harvested timber and wood products. He was able to advance this policy through the Timber Annex to the U.S.-Peru Free Trade Agreement. This enforceable Annex requires Peru to conduct audits of timber producers and exporters and verify shipments of wood products to combat illegal logging. The enforceable components of the Timber Annex have been used on multiple occasions to keep illegal timber out of the United States and enforce U.S. trade agreements.

Following the U.S.-Peru Free Trade Agreement, Earl assembled a bipartisan coalition of members of Congress and supporters from environmental, industry, and labor groups to advance the Legal Timber Protection Act, in order to stop imports of illegally harvested timber from around the world into the United States. The legislation was included in the Lacey Act Amendments of 2008, making the United States the first country to ban trafficking of products containing illegally sourced wood. Earl's legislation was adopted with bipartisan support and contributed to a nearly 50 percent reduction in imports of illegally sourced wood products. It also served as a model for other countries' efforts to reduce global deforestation, sparking similar laws in the European Union, Japan, and Australia.

When members of Congress attempted to weaken significant portions of the Lacey Act in 2012, including Earl's legislation to ban imports of illegally harvested wood products, Earl led the campaign in the House against any changes to the Lacey Act. Testifying before the House Natural Resources Committee, Earl called out the companies behind this misguided effort saying "[w]e have representatives from the American timber industry sitting down with environmental advocates and government regulators. They are all committed to making the Lacey Act work rather than undermining its effectiveness. Everyone's on the same page, except for the very fringe who don't want to play by the rules under any circumstances." After Earl's testimony, the efforts to undermine the Lacey Act subsided and Earl's protections against illegal logging remained in place.

Earl's work on sustainable trade has not been confined to illegal logging, however. He has advocated to expand the boundaries of Section 301 of the Trade Act of 1974, a piece of trade law that permits the Administration to investigate and enforce against certain unfair trade practices, and to include environmental considerations and allow penalties, including tariffs, against countries that fail to effectively enforce their environmental laws.

During the Obama Administration, Earl was one of the most engaged members of Congress on the Trans-Pacific Partnership (TPP) negotiations. As a member of the Ways and Means Committee, he supported Trade Promotion Authority for President Obama, including strong standards for the President's final negotiations of the TPP. These standards made sure there were strong and enforceable labor and environmental protections in any potential trade negotiations. Earl also helped secure unprecedented levels of transparency for the process, guaranteeing that the full text of any trade agreement would be public for months before a vote in Congress. During TPP negotiations, Earl led efforts to reform the investor-state dispute provisions, ensure affordable and timely access to medicines for all TPP countries, pressed for stronger environmental provisions and kept pressure on negotiators to bolster labor protections. While Donald Trump and Hillary Clinton's opposition to TPP doomed its fate, Earl continued to work to improve the product through the final days of the Obama Administration.

When Democrats took control of the House after the 2018 midterm elections, Earl's colleagues elected him to serve as the chairman of the Ways and Means Trade Subcommittee – a powerful position overseeing Congress' role in U.S. trade policy. Earl's first meeting as the chairman was with the heads of international labor unions, a recognition of the powerful role trade policy has over raising labor standards around the globe. In that meeting, he expressed a desire to work closely with organized labor to advance a worker-centered trade policy (two years before that phrase would be used by President Biden and United States Trade Representative Katherine Tai). Earl spoke about his belief that trade policy could be used to improve labor conditions for workers at home and abroad. He talked about his record in supporting some trade agreements with strong labor standards and his opposition to others, like the Central American Free Trade Agreement and the U.S.-Colombia Free Trade Agreement, due to weak labor standards and violence against union members and labor organizers. His close working relationship with organized labor proved pivotal when Trump announced his intention to renegotiate the North American Free Trade Agreement.

Named by Speaker Pelosi as one of eight members of the House Democratic working group tasked with improving Trump's NAFTA 2.0 agreement, Earl successfully improved the agreement by providing enforcement resources for environmental protections, stripping the agreement of patent protections for big pharma, and enacting a first-of-its-kind Rapid-Response labor enforcement Mechanism. The final agreement garnered the support of nearly 90 percent of the House of Representatives, including more Democrats than Republicans, due to the improvements made by Earl and the House Democrats. Since enactment, the Rapid Response Mechanism has been used on 11 separate occasions to provide expedited enforcement of workers' free association and collective bargaining rights at the facility level.

The Mechanism has already produced tangible results for workers on the ground in Mexico, including new collective bargaining agreements, backpay for dismissed workers, higher wages, and better workplace policies.

Outside of comprehensive Free Trade Agreements, Earl has also fought against forced labor around the world. In 2022, he led a congressional delegation to the Dominican Republic to examine credible allegations of forced labor in the sugarcane fields of a major multinational sugar producer. Before Earl's engagement in the issue, a complaint of forced labor against this company languished for more than a decade. After Earl visited the Dominican Republic himself and repeatedly pressured the administration to act, U.S. Customs and Border Protection issued a Withhold Release Order to prohibit all imports of Dominican Sugar produced by the offending company. By prohibiting imports due to forced labor, producers around the world have a strong incentive to rid their supply chains of all forms of forced labor. Following this success, Earl continued to highlight the necessity of improving labor standards at home and addressing substandard labor practices abroad, responding to crises like the persecution of the Uyghur people in Xinjiang, forced labor in the international fishing industry, and, more recently, the war in Ukraine.

The day following Russia's unprovoked, unwarranted invasion of Ukraine Congressman Earl announced with Representative Lloyd Doggett that he would introduce legislation to end Permanent Normal Trade Relations (PNTR) with the Russian Federation and initiate a process to formally deny Russia access to the World Trade Organization. Earl and Doggett were the first members of Congress to call to revoke PNTR for Russia and Earl pledged to use his position as chairman of the Ways and Means Trade Subcommittee to help protect Ukraine's independence. Responding to Belarus' support of Russia's invasion, Earl and Doggett revised their legislation to also revoke PNTR for Belarus. Their legislation overwhelmingly passed the House and Senate and was signed into law by President Biden on April 8, 2022. With its enactment, Russian imports no longer receive the same tariff treatment as imports from countries with which we have normal trade relations. The average tariff rate on Russian products increased from 3 percent to 32 percent and overall Russian imports into the U.S. have dropped precipitously.

The war in Ukraine is not the only crisis Earl has addressed using his position as the leader of the Ways and Means Trade Subcommittee.

After unsanitary conditions and contaminated products led to a product recall and temporary shut down of operations at an infant formula production facility, the United States began to experience significant infant formula shortages from coast to coast.

Out of stock rates averaged 31% in April 2022, 45% in mid-May 2022, and 74% in late May 2022. At the height of the crisis, ten states and fourteen metropolitan areas had out-of-stock rates higher than 90%. The Food and Drug Administration began to exercise enforcement discretion to increase infant formula imports from abroad and reduce out of stock rates. These imports, however, had tariffs that increased the cost of the formula by approximately 27% on average. In response, Earl used his position as chairman of the Trade Subcommittee to enact two pieces of legislation to temporarily suspend tariffs on imported infant formula through the duration of the crisis. The Affordable and Accessible Infant Formula Act and the Bulk Infant Formula to Retail Shelves Act passed the House and Senate by overwhelming margins and helped to ease the dire shortage faced by so many parents.

Following the supply chain shortages during the COVID-19 pandemic, trade policymakers have largely diverged into two opposed poles. One advocates for open, unfettered free trade to build in supply chain resilience and the other advocates for the end of the neoliberal era of free trade agreements. But these positions provide a false choice. Earl, alongside his former Ways and Means Chief Trade Counsel-turned-United States Trade Representative Katherine Tai, worked to occupy a middle ground that brings people together.

Following enactment of the U.S.-Mexico-Canada-Agreement and the end of the COVID-19 pandemic, Earl turned his attention to trade policies that are worker-centered, build supply chain resilience, strengthen U.S. competitiveness with China, and are sensitive to the urgency of the climate crisis.

Earl crafted a pro-worker trade package in the America COMPETES Act in 2022. This package passed the House of Representatives and included several provisions first introduced by Earl: Trade Adjustment Assistance (TAA), Generalized System of Preferences (GSP), Miscellaneous Tariff Bill (MTB), and the Import Security and Fairness Act.

After receiving compelling testimony before the Ways and Means Trade Subcommittee about a little-noticed loophole in trade law, Earl convened domestic manufacturers, organized labor, and civil society to examine de minimis. Since 1938, the intention of de minimis in U.S. trade law has been to ease the burden on the U.S. government related to processing imports – the revenue collected from imports of low value simply wasn't worth the effort. Instead of going through a formal process, these low-value imports enjoyed simplified import processes and didn't have to pay any duties, taxes, or fees due to the U.S. government. The original limit for such low value de minimis shipments was \$1.

The federal government has significantly raised this limit since 1938, most recently to \$800 in 2016. The latest increase has coincided with an explosion in e-commerce packages that use the

de minimis provision to enter the United States. This influx of imports that do not pay duties, taxes, and fees and provide less data to the U.S. government has created a wide-ranging set of unaddressed issues, including noncompliance with U.S. laws related to forced labor and consumer product safety, while harming U.S. competitiveness. Earl's Import Security and Fairness Act would close the de minimis loophole for China, thereby requiring that imports from China cannot skirt duties, taxes, and fees, or other safeguards in U.S. law. This legislation was introduced with a bipartisan, bicameral coalition of members of Congress in the 118th Congress.

While the details of international trade policy can often feel removed from the day-to-day experiences of the American people, Earl has used trade as a force for good: improving the environment, raising standards abroad, supporting workers at home, and responding to crises effectively.

#### Legislative Accomplishments

- In 2007, Earl authored the Timber Annex to the U.S.-Peru Free Trade Agreement to ban the use of illegally harvested timber and wood products. Following the U.S.-Peru Free Trade Agreement, Earl enacted the Legal Timber Protection Act (H.R. 1497, 110th Cong.) in the Lacey Act Amendments of 2008 (<u>Pub. L. 110-246</u>). The legislation made the United States the first country to ban trafficking of products containing illegally sourced wood, contributed to a nearly 50 percent reduction in imports of illegally sourced wood products, and served as a model for other countries' efforts to reduce global deforestation, sparking similar laws in the European Union, Japan, and Australia.
- In 2015, Earl enacted legislation to establish a Trade Enforcement Trust Fund (H.R. 1947, 115th Cong.) in the Trade Facilitation and Trade Enforcement Act (<u>Pub.L. 114-125</u>) to provide new resources to the federal government for trade enforcement efforts. The Trust Fund monitors and enforces U.S. free trade agreements and World Trade Organization (WTO) commitments, supports trade capacity-building assistance to help partner countries meet their free trade agreement obligations and commitments and investigates petitions concerning unfair trade practices.
- Named by Speaker Pelosi as one of eight members of the House Democratic working group tasked with improving Trump's NAFTA 2.0 agreement, Earl successfully improved the agreement by providing enforcement resources for environmental protections, stripping the agreement of patent protections for big pharma, and enacting a first-of-its-kind Rapid-Response labor enforcement Mechanism. Today, the U.S.-Mexico-Canada Agreement (USMCA) is consider the gold standard of trade agreements because of these provisions.

# The New York Eimes

#### **Bipartisan Proposals Would Hit E-Commerce Like Fast Fashion**

By Jorydn Holman June 15, 2023

Two bipartisan bills introduced in Congress this week aim to change a nearly 100-year-old trade rule that allows imported packages that fall under a certain price threshold to receive less oversight in the U.S. customs process. The trade rule is called "de minimis," and critics say it gives an unfair advantage to foreign e-commerce companies, including some where forced labor is an issue. Currently, companies importing packages valued under \$800 are not charged duties, taxes or fees by the U.S. government.

A bill introduced Thursday looks to bar countries such as China and Russia, which are considered "nonmarket economies," from being eligible to use this trade law. It also seeks to have U.S. Customs and Border Protection collect more information on all shipments under the \$800 threshold. That information would include a description of the article, the article's country of origin, and the identity of the shipper and importer.

That bill was introduced by Senators Marco Rubio, a Republican from Florida, and Sherrod Brown, an Ohio Democrat, and Representatives Earl Blumenauer, Democrat from Oregon, and Neal Dunn, a Florida Republican. Its sponsors argue that a change to the trade law would eliminate a loophole that allows companies to get products into the United States that may have been made with forced labor, and would level the playing field for American companies that face the fees associated with importing goods made for them in other countries.

"I think our legislation is targeted very narrowly in areas of abuse, and this has the potential of getting very strong bipartisan support," Mr. Blumenauer said in an interview.



Why It Matters: The law affects prices for ecommerce companies.

In 2016, the de minimis limit was raised to \$800 from \$200. That move relieved burdens on the customs department. Then the pandemic hit, and online shopping boomed. Some online retailers have benefited financially from the law because they ship small batches of orders directly to shoppers from overseas. That differs from the practice of many traditional retailers, which usually import large batches of apparel into the United States — paying the requisite fees — and then deliver online orders from warehouses.

Shein, an online clothing retailer founded in China, is one of the companies the bill would affect. Shein has become popular among U.S. shoppers for its ultralow prices and sophisticated mobile app and website. Its \$11 smock dresses and \$6 floral print bikinis are shipped directly to shoppers, allowing it to bypass import fees.

In recent months, Shein has opened U.S. distribution centers to send merchandise to American shoppers. That could lead to more fees at customs as it directs large quantities of goods to its warehouses first.

But Shein has faced scrutiny for some of its business practices, such as claims that it has copied designs and used cotton in its clothes from Xinjiang, a region in China where, U.S. officials say, the government has abused Uyghurs. Investors anticipate an initial public offering from Shein this year, which has only increased questions about the company. The bill introduced Thursday does not mention the company by name, but "Shein is probably the most obvious example of a company that has exploited the de minimis loophole the most," Mr. Blumenauer said.

"Maybe there's a modest financial savings to consumers, but at what price?" he said about Shein's affordable product line. "I just think that we've made a determination that we're going to respect environment, human rights and product safety, even if it's a cost of a few more pennies."

Shein said in a statement that it had "zero

# The New York Times

tolerance for forced labor" and had created a system to comply with the Uyghur Forced Labor Prevention Act. The system includes a "code of conduct, independent audits, robust tracing technology and third-party testing," a Shein spokeswoman said. "We have no manufacturers in the Xinjiang region."

She added, "Since entering the U.S. market in 2012, Shein has been compliant with U.S. tax and customs laws."



Background: The U.S. is becoming more critical of Chinese companies.

A second bill, introduced Wednesday, is the latest sign of the U.S. government seeking to assert more oversight on companies with ties to China.

That legislation, sponsored by Senators Bill Cassidy, a Louisiana Republican, and Tammy Baldwin, a Wisconsin Democrat, called for barring Chinese companies from using the de minimis rule and requiring more information on packages that enter the United States.

In March, U.S. lawmakers questioned TikTok's chief executive for five hours about the platform's ties to China. Other companies, like the ecommerce retailer Temu, have also faced scrutiny about their ties to the country. This month, Mr. Rubio sent a letter to other lawmakers warning them of Shein's business practices and lobbying efforts.

In 2016, when the rule was last adjusted, "people were less concerned about China then than they are now," said William Reinsch, senior adviser at Kelley, Drye & Warren and former president of the National Foreign Trade Council.

What's Next: The bills are a long way from passage.

The two bills need to be considered separately in the House and Senate, and are likely to face a long road to passage. In recent months, Shein has gone on the charm offensive, becoming more vocal about its sustainability practices and its work with independent designers — two areas where it faces lots of questions.

# POLITICOPRO

#### Blumenauer was 'flat out wrong' on China, but still has hope for trade

The retiring lawmaker has been involved in most of the debates that have shaped the United States' trade architecture in recent decades. By: Doug Palmer - 11/13/2023

Rep. Earl Blumenauer (D-Ore.) has some regrets after 26 years at the center of the national trade debate, like voting to establish permanent normal trade relations with China and allowing it to join the World Trade Organization in 2001.

"I truly believed there would be a civilizing impact on the Chinese and that would sort of get them in with the rest of the post-World War II order," the 75-year-old politician said in a nearly hour-long interview. "And I was just flat out wrong."

That admission from Blumenauer, who recently announced plans to retire at the end of next year, is another sign of how far U.S. attitudes toward China have shifted as President Joe Biden prepares to meet with Chinese President Xi Jinping this week.

Final goals: The top-ranking Democrat on the House Ways and Means Trade Subcommittee also said the Biden administration is making a mistake by not working closer with Congress to advance its trade agenda — as difficult as that is sometimes to figure out.

"I think not engaging, though the Ways and Means Committee, people in both parties is a lost opportunity," Blumenauer said, objecting in particular to the administration's decision to unilaterally redefine what constitutes a free trade agreement. "They would be better served to engage Congresspeople on both sides of the aisle."

That's important to the lawmaker, who has some things he'd like to accomplish over the next 14 months. Those include renewing and revamping a number of trade programs that benefit developing countries and U.S. importers.

He's also still pursuing his most recent trade passion to essentially exclude China from a customs program that allows consumers to order up to \$800 worth of goods from overseas sellers without paying any duties on the imports. That's creating angst among big shipping companies who say criticism of the provision is exaggerated.

"I think the de minimis is very important because it is such a graphic example of how the United States has been played" on the trade front, Blumenauer said, using the Latin shorthand for the customs program he wants to change.

Ironically, the term loosely means "something not very important," but the duty exemption for low-value imports has stirred strong feelings on both sides of the debate.

Congress raised the de minimis cap to \$800, from \$200 previously, just eight years ago, before concerns about China reached their current fever pitch.

A trade battle veteran: First elected to Congress in 1996, Blumenauer has been involved in most of the debates that have shaped the United States' trade architecture in recent decades. The former Portland City Council member also has been in the House more than twice as long as most of his colleagues, racking up far more trade votes in the process.

Blumenauer backed China PNTR and trade deals with Chile, Singapore, Morocco, Australia, Bahrain, Peru, Panama and South Korea that many other Democrats opposed during the Bill Clinton, George W. Bush and Barack Obama administrations.

But he sided with the bulk of the Democratic party to vote against more controversial pacts with Oman and Colombia, and the CAFTA-DR agreement with five Central American countries and the Dominican Republic.

He also opposed what he described as a Republican effort to "jam through a partisan trade promotion authority" bill in 2002 by the razor-thin margin of 215-214. Bush's team rounded up only 21 Democrats to vote for that bill and failed to persuade Blumenauer.

Then five years later, when Democrats controlled the House, Blumenauer and other Ways and Means Democrats struck what came to be known as the "May 10th Agreement" with the Bush administration. That gave labor and environmental provisions equal standing with commercial provisions in free trade agreements for the first time.

The agreement swiftly led to the approval of a trade deal with Peru that included a new provision to combat illegal logging — one of Blumenauer's proudest accomplishments that has not been as effective as he hoped. "But it has made a difference, and we're not done with it yet," he said.

However, three other trade deals with Panama, Colombia and South Korea languished for four years after the May 10th deal, until the Obama administration agreed to Democratic demands for further changes.

Obama's missed opportunity: In 2015, Blumenauer

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was just one of 28 Democrats to "walk the plank" and vote to give Obama trade promotion authority to finish talks on the controversial Trans-Pacific Partnership agreement with Japan, Vietnam, Malaysia and eight other countries in the Asia-Pacific region.

That time Blumenauer withstood a fierce effort by labor union and civil society groups to persuade him to oppose giving Obama the legislation.

He faults the Obama administration — and then-U.S. Trade Representative Michael Froman — for not taking concerns that Democrats had about the TPP's labor provisions more seriously and working with lawmakers to broaden support.

"I was one of the last people in the building with the Obama administration that hadn't yet given up on TPP. I never endorsed it. I fought with Froman. I mean, 'Michael, let's talk about enforcement for heaven's sakes,' and he just wouldn't do it."

In contrast, he credits former President Donald Trump's trade chief, Robert Lighthizer, for engaging in May 10th-type talks with House Democrats to save the U.S.-Mexico- Canada Agreement, which replaced NAFTA in 2020.

But he disdains Trump's overall "go-it-alone" approach, which alienated friends and allies on the international scene and helped transform the Republican Party from one that mostly supported trade agreements into a much more skeptical bunch.

"I mean, some of our key trading partners are scratching their heads wondering where we are and how we got here," Blumenauer said.

Trump's 'toxic' legacy: In the aftermath of Trump, the Biden administration has treaded cautiously on trade, leaving his tariffs on China in place, but negotiating deals with the European Union, the United Kingdom and Japan to soften the aluminum and steel duties that Trump imposed.

"The Biden administration is dealing with this Trump legacy. I don't think people understand how toxic it was," Blumenauer said. Trump's tariffs "are hard to unwind, particularly when there isn't a political consensus anymore dealing with international trade."

Adding to that, the Republican party is so "shell shocked" by its leadership battles this year that it appears to be hard for it to focus on other areas, such as trade, he said.

Legislation "ought to be roaring out of the gate" to reform the de minimis provision and modernize programs such as the Miscellaneous Tariff Bill, the Generalized System of Preferences and the African Growth and Opportunity Act, Blumenauer said.

Instead, House Ways and Means Chair Jason Smith (R-Mo.) appears to still be "getting his sea legs" on trade, Blumenauer said. That's an area close to Trump's heart, and where the former president's campaign rhetoric could easily upset any Republican initiative.

"I think there is deep concern by people not wanting to get out there and have their ground cut out from underneath," Blumenauer said, adding that Republican preoccupation with finding a reason to impeach Biden could be another reason trade bills are stalled.

But there's an opportunity for the two parties to work together this Congress to pass trade legislation, if Republicans want to seize it, he said.

Rep. Mike Gallagher (R-Wisc.), chair of the House Select Committee on the Chinese Communist Party, "can give my de minimis speech better than I can," Blumenauer said.

Biden's puzzling approach: This week, the Biden administration is expected to announce at least the partial conclusion of negotiations on the Indo-Pacific Economic Framework with 13 other countries in the fast-growing region.

In deference to trade-wary Democrats, the agreement avoids any tariff cuts that might rattle their base and give union members a reason to back Trump.

Blumenauer, who stands by his votes for tariff-cutting agreements in the Bush and the Obama administration, said he's still struggling to understand what IPEF is all about. "I've sat through several briefings, kind of scratching my head," he said.

On another front, he objects to the Biden administration's decision to redefine what constitutes a free trade agreement in order to broaden the number of countries whose critical minerals can be used to make batteries for electric vehicles that are eligible for tax credits under the Inflation Reduction Act.

"I don't think it's wise to sidestep Congress in pretending that these [critical mineral agreements] are FTAs," Blumenauer said. Lawmakers also don't like that the Biden administration has decided that IPEF is an "executive agreement" that doesn't require congressional approval. In a display of that concern, Congress took it upon itself to vote on an initial trade deal USTR struck with Taiwan, even though the administration also considered that an executive pact.

That signals what could happen to the IPEF agreement and potential critical mineral agreements with the EU, U.K. and other trading partners, Blumenauer said.

Despite those misgivings, Blumenauer praised the Biden administration for repairing badly tattered international relations left by its predecessor and was reluctant to criticize the White House for not pursuing free trade agreements.

When it comes to trade legislation, "I believe in small, discrete pieces that we can work through and sort of build consensus," Blumenauer said. "It doesn't have to be partisan."

## **POLITICO** Blumenauer wins top trade spot on Ways and Means

By Adam Behsudi - 1/16/2019



Earl Blumenauer (D-Ore.) was elected Tuesday to lead the House Ways and Means Trade Subcommittee.

The Oregon lawmaker won the spot over Bill Pascrell (D-N.J.), who was the subcommittee's ranking Democrat for the last two years and made a major push to sway committee members to support his bid for the gavel.

Blumenauer was the most senior Ways and Means member with an interest in the trade spot, which meant he was granted the first up-or-down vote from other committee members on the position.

The trade subcommittee chairman will be central to oversight of President Donald Trump's trade agenda, which includes getting a revamped NAFTA deal passed in Congress this year. Pascrell had promised to bring new transparency to the White House's trade policy.

"We'll think about it," Pascrell said when asked if he would appeal the selection to the Democratic House Steering and Policy Committee.

He added that "the committee is more important than any individual person. I keep that in mind all the time. But there were certain things in the process that I absolutely did not like, so I'll think about that."

Blumenauer has been supportive of certain trade deals and voted in 2015 to grant the White House authority to expedite

passage of trade agreements through Congress. His position on the so-called trade promotion authority bill drew major rebuke from labor unions, which actively worked in past weeks to get panel members to support Pascrell.

In addition to playing a key role as Congress considers the new U.S.-Mexico-Canada Agreement in coming months, Blumenauer will be in a position to influence upcoming trade negotiations with Japan, the European Union and the United Kingdom.

Dan Kildee (D-Mich.), a Democrat who was added to the subcommittee for the 116th Congress, said the panel's focus should be defending Congress' constitutional authority over trade and not being "in a position of seeing trade deals negotiated [and] determine the guideposts after the deals are negotiated." He did not say who he supported for the subcommittee leadership post.

Ways and Means Chairman Richard Neal (D-Mass.) also announced full Democratic membership of the trade subcommittee. In addition to Blumenauer and Pascrell, the panel will include: Reps. Ron Kind (Wis.), Danny Davis (Ill.), and Brian Higgins (N.Y.), along with new members Terri Sewell (Ala.), Suzan DelBene (Wash.), Don Beyer (Va.), Jimmy Panetta (Calif.), Stephanie Murphy (Fla.) and Kildee.

"With these members at the helm of our subcommittees, the American people can rest assured their priorities will receive much-needed attention and care," Neal said in a statement. The Washington Post

## This has been a

## **bipartisan failure**<sup>2</sup>: In their joint statement, lawmakers did not identify any company by name. Blumenauer said the committee will work with Katherine Tai, the US, trade representative state with Katherine Tai, the US, trade representative state sta

#### **'Lawmakers call for investigation of Dominican Republic sugar industry**

By Debbie Cenziper and Will Fitzgibbon November 13, 2021

Congressional Democrats are calling on the Biden administration to investigate the mistreatment of sugar cane workers in the Dominican Republic, saying "inhumane conditions" must not be tolerated in the U.S. supply chain.

In a joint statement, 15 members of the House Ways and Means subcommittee on trade said recent media reports have raised concerns about continued abuses in the industry eight years after a Labor Department investigation found evidence of low wages, child labor and substandard housing and medical care.

"These are desperately poor people, and there is an industry that's willing to exploit them," Rep. Earl Blumenauer (D-Ore.), who chairs the subcommittee, said in an interview last week. "It's really appalling that this has not been addressed. ... This has been a bipartisan failure."

The lawmakers cited an investigation by The Washington Post and the International Consortium of Investigative Journalists that described how the family of the late former president of one of the Dominican Republic's largest sugar companies turned to South Dakota in 2019 to finalize four new trusts. The trusts contained shares of the sugar company, Central Romana and personal wealth worth \$14 million.

The stories were published as part of the Pandora Papers, an international investigation based on nearly 11.9 million financial records that documented how the wealthy and powerful secretly move money around the world.

Central Romana has for years been accused of exploiting laborers and forcibly evicting families from their homes. During a late-night raid in 2016, the company tore down makeshift shacks built by 60 impoverished families living without electricity or running water alongside Central Romana's fields.

In a previous statement to The Post and ICIJ, the company said it created more than 20,000 jobs and built more than 5,000 homes. The company said it works closely with a labor union to address wages and working conditions and denied that it illegally evicted the families, arguing the company has defended its property from "illegal land invasion."

Blumenauer and the other lawmakers also cited a September story by Mother Jones, published with the Center for

Investigative Reporting, that described allegations of chronic debt, low wages and dangerous working conditions among Central Romana workers.

In their joint statement, lawmakers did not identify any company by name. Blumenauer said the committee will seek to work with Katherine Tai, the U.S. trade representative and a member of Biden's Cabinet who serves as the principal adviser and negotiator on U.S. trade policy. Her office did not respond to a request for comment.

Reached earlier this week, Central Romana said some members of the House subcommittee "have always been against the U.S. sugar program" and that media reports about forced labor are "based on false accusations."

Andrew Samet, a spokesperson for the Dominican Sugar Industry, said in an email that companies "welcome further engagement between the Biden Administration and the Dominican Government."

The companies "have transparently and publicly reported on labor conditions in the sector for near a decade," Samet said, adding that "allegations of trafficking, forced and child labor against them are unfounded" and play no part in the "operations of the private companies in 2021."

Advocates for Dominican families and sugar workers said an investigation is badly needed. "This is a clear message to the companies that they cannot abuse human rights and export their sugar to the United States in total impunity," said Laurence Blattmer, program coordinator at the Geneva-based Dominicans for Justice and Peace, which is working with the evicted families.

The push by Blumenauer's committee is the third call for action in Congress in the weeks following the Pandora Papers. Earlier this month, the chairs of three congressional committees cited the Pandora Papers investigation in a letter to Treasury Secretary Janet L. Yellen that called for the rapid implementation of legislation, signed into law this year, requiring limited liability companies to disclose their owners to a federal database.

"The value and urgency of these efforts are reinforced by the revelations of wrongdoing emerging from the latest leak of financial documents, the Pandora Papers," said Rep. Maxine Waters (D-Calif.), Sen. Sherrod Brown (D-Ohio) and Rep. Carolyn B. Maloney (D-NY).

Last month, a bipartisan group of lawmakers proposed the most sweeping changes to anti-money laundering laws since 9/11, calling for stricter requirements on trust companies, law firms, art dealers and other so-called enablers that provide services to foreign clients.

Outside the United States, members of the European Parliament — citing the Pandora Papers — approved a resolution critical of South Dakota, Alaska, Wyoming, Delaware and Nevada for being "hubs of financial and corporate secrecy."

## The Oregonian

### Congress must end trade loophole allowing packages of fentanyl into U.S. without inspection, Blumenauer says

By Maxine Berstein, Apr. 03, 2024

Calling it his No. 1 goal before leaving Congress, U.S. Rep. Earl Blumenauer on Wednesday pushed for lawmakers to close a trade loophole that allows millions of packages into the U.S. without inspection or tariffs – many believed to contain fentanyl and fentanyl-making chemicals from China.

The international mail floods the country under what's known as the "de minimis" rule of the Tariff Act of 1930 that says individual packages can be shipped directly to American consumers if the contents are worth \$800 or less. The mail faces virtually no inspection, documentation and is free of duties, taxes or fees.

Blumenauer, D-Ore., is working to pass the Import Security and Fairness Act, which would require federal customs officials to collect more information on de minimis shipments and strip China from benefiting from the trade law.

"We've got a crisis on the street," he said, speaking at a news conference in Portland along with labor, police and business representatives who support his legislation. "We need to take every step we need to be able to protect our families."

According to U.S. Customs and Border Protection, imports using the loophole include "high-risk shipments that may contain narcotics, merchandise that pose a risk to public safety, counterfeits, or other contraband." Almost two-thirds of de minimis shipments come from China, the customs agency says.

The de minimis exception was fueled by e-commerce firms, such as Amazon, that wanted to bring in goods from China either to their warehouses or have them shipped to customers without taxes or tariffs. The use of the trade rule increased during the pandemic, when online purchases exploded.

In fiscal 2016, 150 million packages entered the U.S. tariff free under the policy; that grew to more than 1 billion in 2023, according to Customs and Border Protection.

Under Blumenauer's legislation, the Treasury Department would create regulations to require information about de minimis imports, including a description of the product, a tariff classification and schedule, the country of origin, identities of the shipper and the importer and product value.

Blumenauer introduced the bill two years ago and it was approved in the House, but didn't get any further, he said.



He also said Customs and Border Protection needs more money to expand its ability to intercept and inspect suspicious packages.

"It's time that we take every step we can to be able to disrupt this deadly traffic," Blumenauer said. "This is a growing menace."

Removing China from the de minimis program would drastically reduce the volume of packages shipped and help customs agents do their jobs, he said. Portland police Sgt. Aaron Schmautz, president of the Portland Police Association, spoke in support of the bill, considering the strains on local police in stopping drug traffickers while investigating a rising number of drug overdose deaths.

"We know that fentanyl is pernicious. It is sneaking into the bedrooms of our children," he said. "I think so many people look at narcotics and addiction as somebody else's issue. But the reality is we're seeing more and more children, people from all walks of life, suffering from this issue because fentanyl is not just a drug of abuse ... It's a poison and it's coming from all of these different outlets."

Police and Blumenauer said they don't know how much fentanyl or fentanyl chemicals are arriving by package to the U.S. because the packages aren't tracked or inspected.

Robert Hammer, special agent in charge of Homeland Security Investigations' operations in the Pacific Northwest, said Mexican-manufactured fentanyl is primarily made with precursor chemicals from China.

His agency continues to see large volumes of fentanyl flowing into the Pacific Northwest from Mexico, he said. "To date however, we have not seen a significant flow of fentanyl (either powder or pill form) through the mail" or imported by someone operating a commercial courier service, he said.

Yet Henry Koffie, a Pennsylvania man dubbed, "NarcoBoss," who sold fentanyl powder that led to the overdose deaths of two men in Portland and one near-fatal overdose of a Portland State University freshman, imported a potent form of fentanyl called furanyl fentanyl from China and then shipped packages to customers across the country, according to court testimony.

People made orders on a dark net site called AlphaBay and paid



with the digital currency Bitcoin to avoid detection. He was sentenced to life in prison in December in federal court in Portland.

Two Oregon women who lost their sons to fentanyl poisoning attended the news conference, holding photos of their children.

Jackie Thomas of Hillsboro, whose 22-year-old son Jacob died of a fentanyl overdose on June 15, 2020, after selfmedicating for depression and anxiety, asked why certain packages can be shipped without scrutiny when people must have proper IDs and get their carry-on bags and luggage inspected before boarding a plane.

"This needs to stop," she said. "Fentanyl needs to stop coming into the U.S. of A., period."

Graham Trainor, president of Oregon's AFL-CIO, which represents manufacturing workers, called the de minimis rule a "misguided policy" that "tilts the playing field" against domestic producers and retail employees "who have to follow the rules when importing goods, including customs inspections, and paying for tariffs." The rule has led to lost market share and jobs, he said.

The bill has bipartisan support and has been endorsed by Alliance for American Manufacturing, Citizens Trade Campaign, Coalition for a Prosperous America, Communications Workers of America, IBEW, International Association of Machinists and Aerospace Workers, National Council of Textile Organizations, PeopleForBikes, Public Citizen, ReThink Trade, U.S. Footwear Manufacturers Association, United Brotherhood of Carpenters and Joiners of America and United Steelworkers.

Blumenauer announced last fall that he won't seek reelection. He plans to end his congressional career in about 40 weeks after nearly three decades.

In related developments, Multnomah County commissioners on Tuesday voiced support to better fund the Portland Police Bureau's Narcotics and Organized Crime Unit, after learning that the eight-member unit dedicates 90% of its time responding to and investigating overdose deaths, leaving about 10% for drug interdiction.

Most of the fentanyl that Portland police seize is manufactured in Mexico and transported up the Interstate 5 corridor, said Sgt. Erik Strohmeyer, a supervisor of the unit.

The unit is much smaller than it was four years ago, when the bureau's then-Drug and Vice Division had four sergeants and about 14 officers. The narcotics unit now has two detectives, two officers and three police dog handlers. The unit works closely with two full-time and one half-time federal agents from Homeland Security Investigations.

Commissioner Julia Brim-Edward asked police, "What is needed at the city, county and state level in terms of funding and staffing to have a much more robust" enforcement of large-scale drug traffickers to help shut down the supply? She said she hopes that the recent 90-day fentanyl emergency declaration by the county, city and state would result in recommendations to expand police enforcement as the three governments prepare future budgets.

Portland police Lt. Craig Morgan said more staffing would help. Robert King, a retired Portland police supervisor now working as an executive assistant to Police Chief Bob Day, said the chief is aware of the need for more narcotics investigators but also has to balance other demands in the Police Bureau.

"Even one or two, or three or four additional people into a unit can have an impact," King said.

## **WORLD TRADE ONLINE**

#### Pelosi assigns USMCA working group leaders

By Isabelle Icso / June 13, 2019

House Speaker Nancy Pelosi (D-CA) this week assigned Democratic leaders to address key areas of concern with the U.S.-Mexico-Canada Agreement, including drug prices and labor, environment and enforcement provisions.

House Ways & Means Chairman Richard Neal (D-MA) will lead the overall 'trade working group,' a task force focused on negotiating with Trump administration officials on USMCA elements.

The working group assignments were first reported by Politico. A spokesman for House Ways & Means trade subcommittee chairman Earl Blumenauer (D-OR) confirmed the roster to Inside U.S. Trade. Blumenauer and Rep. Jan Schakowsky (D-IL) will head the biologics team. California Reps. Jimmy Gomez and Mike Thompson will lead the labor group and Reps. Suzanne Bonamici (D-OR) and John Larson (D-CT) will focus on environmental issues.

Meanwhile, Reps. Terri Sewell (D-AL) and Rosa DeLauro (D-CT) will tackle enforcement issues, which are at the center of most Democrats' concerns.

The working groups, which Inside U.S. Trade previewed last month, will discuss USMCA solutions with U.S. Trade Representative Robert Lighthizer.

The assignments were lauded by the Business Roundtable, which said it was time to "get USMCA across the finish line."

"Business Roundtable is encouraged that Speaker Pelosi has appointed members of Congress to a working group dedicated to the USMCA," it said in a June 13 statement. "This is a positive step toward strengthening our critical trading relationships with Canada and Mexico, which support over 12 million American jobs and keep prices low for American consumers. We urge members of the working group and the Office of the U.S. Trade Representative to work together on constructive solutions and build bipartisan support for USMCA. Business Roundtable will continue to work with Democrats and Republicans in Congress, as well as the Administration, to get USMCA across the finish line."

In its draft statement of administrative action sent to Congress last month, USTR left open areas "for discussion" with Congress, including language on de minimis, long-haul trucking, labor, environment and pharmaceuticals.

"USTR intends to continue consultations with Congress" to consider if U.S. laws must be amended to implement USMCA provisions in those areas, the draft SAA states.

National Economic Council Director Larry Kudlow on Thursday said Pelosi had been very "accommodating" on USMCA, though some GOP lawmakers have blamed her for holding it up. President Trump said the deal was "going along well." -- Isabelle Hoagland (ihoagland@iwpnews.com)



## REUTERS

## U.S. Congress Democrats target palm oil, beef trade in deforestation bill

By Richard Cowan and Fathin Ungku October 6, 2021

WASHINGTON/SINGAPORE, Oct 6 (Reuters) -Democrats in the U.S. Congress on Wednesday were set to unveil legislation to reduce illegal deforestation globally by restricting the trade of certain agricultural commodities, such as palm oil and cattle, produced with those methods.

The "FOREST Act of 2021," introduced simultaneously in the Senate and House of Representatives by Democratic Senator Brian Schatz and Representative Earl Blumenauer, could have a major impact on trade from nations such as Brazil and Indonesia, but faces a difficult climb in the deeply divided Congress.

Under the Democrats' bill, companies would have to improve their tracking of supply chains for certain commodities, especially palm oil, cocoa, soy and cattle products, as well as rubber and wood pulp, to prove they come from areas that have not been illegally logged. Imports falling short of the standard would be blocked and companies would face U.S. legal action and fines.

"Deforestation is continuing to accelerate," Schatz said in a telephone interview, adding, "It's time to use the economic and political power in the possession of the United States" to reverse that trend.

The legislation is intended in part to provide a model for world governments to tackle deforestation, shortly before November's U.N. climate conference in Glasgow. Experts estimate that deforestation accounts for about 10% of global greenhouse gas emissions.

"If deforestation were a country it would be the third-largest emitter" of greenhouse gases, Schatz said.

Although Schatz is a member of a Senate climate change panel and Blumenauer chairs a powerful House trade subcommittee, the two lawmakers so far have been unable to generate much support from Republicans, who could prevent the bill from advancing, especially in the Senate.

Schatz said no Republican senators have signed onto the measure, while one Republican out of 212 in the House so far is supportive, a Blumenauer aide said.

But the bill, which is also pitched as encouraging fair trade, could also make an "interesting political coalition", Schatz said.

"We want to have a level playing field because obviously none of our commodities are grown as a result of illegal deforestation," he said.

There are no plans to incorporate the FOREST Act into Democratic President Joe Biden's sweeping legislation still under negotiation that includes major new investments in other initiatives to reduce the carbon emissions responsible for global climate change.

Nearly half of all tropical deforestation is estimated to be the result of illegal conversion of forest for commercial agriculture. Four commodities - beef, soy, palm oil, and wood products — drive most of this tropical deforestation.

Blumenauer said the legislation would focus on areas where there is the greatest risk of "inappropriately harvested product" reaching the United States and help those countries develop sophisticated tracking systems by providing financial aid and technical know-how.

The bill also seeks to include deforestation in financial crime laws, allowing the U.S. to prosecute individuals who use proceeds from deforestation to fund criminal activity.

"We have some real challenges dealing with Brazil," Blumenauer said, noting a "pretty hard-edged" government there.

"There will come a time when there will be a new administration in Brazil. But in meantime, we cannot look the other way as they are removing vast swaths of the Amazon Basin," he said.

#### PRESS RELEASE: House Passes U.S.-Peru Free Trade Agreement

#### November 8th, 2007

WASHINGTON, D.C. – Today the House of Representatives passed the U.S.-Peru Free Trade Agreement, the first U.S. trade agreement to contain fully enforceable labor and environmental standards that Congressman Earl Blumenauer (D-Ore) and other Ways and Means Committee members worked to include. After the 2006 elections, Congressional Democrats said no more trade deals that neglect long-standing demands on workers' rights and the environment. After months of negotiations on the U.S.-Peru FTA, the Bush Administration gave in to these Democratic demands. Congressman Blumenauer, who for years has been fighting irresponsible trade policy and for trade that meets the needs of working families, the environment and poor people at home and abroad, issued the following statement:

"For the first time, Congress has passed a trade agreement with real, enforceable labor and environmental standards that protect workers and the planet," said Congressman Blumenauer. "In my new position on the Ways and Means Committee, I worked to include these landmark provisions because I am committed to advancing a new type of trade that addresses Oregon's concerns about workers and the environment. The U.S.-Peru FTA is a groundbreaking agreement that sets a new standard for how this Congress will craft future trade deals."

#### The U.S.-Peru Free Trade Agreement:

- Requires that both the United States and Peru enforce the core International Labor Organization standards.
- Requires that both the United States and Peru enforce key multilateral environmental agreements.
- Prohibits the United States and Peru from weakening their labor or environmental laws to attract trade or investment in a race to the bottom.
- Prohibits trade in illegally-logged wood and wood products.
- Protects the United States' and Peru's rights to pass laws and regulations for the public welfare, in areas such as public health, food safety, and the environment.
- Levels the playing field for U.S. firms that create jobs through exports.

#### The Peru Trade Agreement is a Win for Labor and the Environment:

"The Peru Free Trade Agreement marks an important step toward a trade model that will benefit working people in both countries." – AFL-CIO

"No union "has identified members' jobs that would be threatened by this trade deal... The UAW strongly supports the provisions on worker rights and the environment that have been included." – United Auto Workers

"The environmental provisions included in the final text of the Peru Free Trade Agreement mark a significant step forward, and we commend the Democratic leadership for this achievement." - Center for International Environmental Law, Defenders of Wildlife, Earthjustice, Environmental Investigation Agency, Friends of the Earth, Natural Resources Defense Council, and Sierra Club

#### **PRESS RELEASE:** Blumenauer Testifies on Importance of Maintaining Strong Lacey Act

#### May 8th, 2012

WASHINGTON, DC – Today, Congressman Earl Blumenauer testified before the Committee on Natural Resources Subcommittee on Fisheries, Wildlife, Oceans and Insular Affairs on two bills that would repeal significant portions of the Lacey Act.

The Lacey Act, originally passed in 1900, prohibits trade in products that were illegally harvested in their country of origin. In 2008, the Act was amended to add provisions of the Legal Timber Protection Act, legislation authored by Congressman Blumenauer, which would include wood and wood products in this prohibition. Illegal logging threatens not only ecologically important forests around the world but also subjects the U.S. forest products industry – including many in Oregon - to unfair and illegal competition. The two bills that are under consideration today, the RELIEF Act (H.R. 3210) and the FOCUS Act (H.R. 4171), would devastate these protections by reducing financial penalties for violators, gutting longstanding forfeiture requirements, exempting non-solid wood products, removing many of the enforcement mechanisms needed to carry out the law, and removing the requirement that U.S. companies comply with certain foreign laws.

"There is so much that's broken in our government," said Congressman Blumenauer, "that it seems a terrible shame to take the Lacey Act, one of the best examples of effective legislation we have, and smash it into pieces. The Lacey Act not only protects the resources of developing nations from exploitation, but jobs here at home. With the RELIEF and FOCUS Acts, we're talking about no longer requiring U.S. companies to follow the laws of other countries in which they do business."

The amendments to the Lacey Act in 2008 were developed by a broad coalition including the timber industry, consumers, importers, labor unions, and conservationists, and they passed with the support of Democrats and Republicans in the House and Senate as well as the Bush administration. Opposition to the RELIEF and FOCUS Acts is also broad, including the League of Conservation Voters, the Hardwood Federation, the American Forest and Paper Association, the Sierra Club, and the United Steelworkers.

"We have representatives from the American timber industry sitting down with environmental advocates and government regulators," continued Blumenauer. "They are all committed to making the Lacey Act work rather than undermining its effectiveness. Everyone's on the same page, except for the very fringe who don't want to play by the rules under any circumstances."

#### E-Newsletter - February 15th, 2024

Dear Friends,

From wine to footwear to semiconductors, Oregon makes some of the finest products in the world. As a result, much of what we produce is in high demand all over the globe. We rely on international trade to make our products, companies, and workers more competitive. I have been heavily engaged in trade policy in Congress not just because 95% of the global economy is outside of the United States, but because trade has the power to raise environmental, labor, and human rights standards around the world.

I am proud of my work leading House Democrats on international trade issues, working to level the playing field for American workers and consumers, and fighting to improve the environment through trade. We made major advances, for example, to reduce illegal logging by more than 40% through my legislation that has become a model for other countries to help stem this damaging practice. Through negotiations with the Bush Administration, we made labor and environmental standards fully enforceable, on equal footing with other provisions in our trade agreements. I helped lead the effort to revise the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) to strengthen its environmental and worker protections and the enforcement of agreements to protect these advances. I am

proud this effort earned bipartisan support, which is in short supply these days. I hope these NAFTA revisions will start a new era of trade policy.

This new era of trade must include leveling the playing field for American workers and pushing back against China's blatant disregard for human rights and labor standards. I have a special concern about what is known as the de minimis loophole, a provision that allows packages valued at \$800 or less to be shipped directly to American

consumers untaxed and uninspected. China is the most egregious offender, abusing the de minimis loophole to flood the U.S. market with shoddy products that are dangerous to consumers, often made with slave labor, and even shipping chemicals used to make fentanyl. It is time to stop that practice and protect American businesses.

My legislation to close the loophole is supported by lawmakers across the political spectrum. It will protect American businesses and their workers, consumers, public safety, and human rights. It is time to usher in a new era of worker-centered, sustainable trade. Doing so would be a powerful signal of our values and raise standards amongst our trading partners. The world is depending on the United States to lead on trade and we must meet that challenge.

Courage,

Earl Blumenauer

Member of Congress



#### Rep. Earl Blumenauer on why he's behind the TPP



By Matthew Kish – Staff Reporter, Portland Business Journal May 15, 2015

AP



By The Associated Press

FEB. 25, 2016

#### **POLITICO**PRO

Blumenauer: USMCA review could lead to trade 'reset'

BY: DOUG PALMER | 06/20/2019 09:58 AM EDT



### Blumenauer, Doggett Seek End to 'Normal' Trade Relations With Russia

March 1, 2022 by Dan McCue

#### Appendix

- 2000- To liquidate certain U.S. Customs Service duty drawback claims as filed.
- 2002, 2005- To provide for the duty-free entry of certain tramway cars and associated spare parts for use by the city of Portland, Oregon Requires the Commissioner of the Bureau of Customs and Border Protection of the Department of Homeland Security to provide the duty-free entry of certain tramway cars and associated spare parts for use by the city of Portland, Oregon
- 2005- H.R. 2477, H.R. 2478, H.R. 2479, H.R. 2480, H.R. 2481, H.R. 2482, H.R. 2483 To suspend temporarily the duty on certain bicycle parts, including [speedometers], [baby carriers, chain adjustors, chain covers, mechanical grips with 7/8" internal diameter, air horns, wide-angle reflectors, plastic saddle covers, safety pads, chain tensioners, toe clips, head sets, seat posts], [unicycles], [cut steel tubing used in the assembly of bike frames], [wheel rims], [crank gears], [bike brakes].
- 2007- Legal Timber Protection Act Amends the Lacey Act Amendments of 1981 to redefine "plant" to mean any wild member of the plant kingdom, including roots, seeds, parts, and products thereof, excluding any common food crop or cultivar that is a species not listed in the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora or an endangered or threatened species under the Endangered Species Act of 1973. Redefines "take" under such Act to include the harvesting, cutting, logging, or removing of a plant. Enacted as Part of 2008 Farm Bill.
- 2008- HR 4937, HR 4938, HR 4939, HR 4940, HR 4941, HR 4942, HR 4943, HR 4944, HR 4945, HR 4946 To suspend temporarily the duty on certain bicycle parts, including [speedometers], [ chain adjustors, chain covers, plastic saddle covers, safety pads, chain tensioners, toe clips, head sets, seat posts], [unicycles], [cut steel tubing used in the assembly of bike frames], [wheel rims], [crank gears], [bike brakes]. [Nesoi hubs], [variable speed hubs], [bells].
- 2008, 2009, 2012- Recreational Performance Outerwear Apparel Act of 2008 (United States Optimal Use of Trade to Develop Outerwear and Outdoor Recreation Act) Amends the Harmonized Tariff Schedule of the United States to provide for the duty-free treatment of certain recreational performance outerwear.
- 2008, 2013, 2015- Trade and Environment Enforcement (Green 301) Act to amend the Trade Act of 1974 to identify foreign country trade practices that negatively affect the environment and to take actions to address such practices.
- 2010- To amend the Trade Act of 1974 to authorize the United States Trade Representative to take discretionary action if a foreign country is engaging in unreasonable acts, policies, or practices relating to the environment, and for other purposes.

- 2012- HR 4984, HR 4985, HR 4986 To suspend temporarily the duty on clothing made of stretch fabric with textile or polymer-based electrodes knit into or attached to the fabric and that incorporate connectors designed to secure an electronic transmitter that transmits physiological information from the electrodes to compatible monitor, including [women's sports bras], [knit tank tops], [knit garments], [Sports footwear, tennis shoes, basketball shoes, gym shoes, training shoes], [Sports footwear \$6.50- \$12], [Sports footwear \$10- \$13], [women's ports footwear \$6.50- \$10], [Boys' knitted or crocheted shirts], [open toed footwear].
- 2012- HR 5557. HR 5558, HR 5559, HR 5560, HR 5561, HR 5562, HR 5563, HR 5564 To reduce temporarily the rate of duty on clothing, including [Girls' knitted or crocheted shorts], [Girls' knitted or crocheted trousers and breeches],
- 2012- HR 4986, HR 4987, HR 4988, HR 4989, HR 4990, HR 4991 To suspend temporarily the duty on certain bicycle parts, including [child carriers], [wide angle reflectors], [speedometers], [speedometer parts], [bike brakes], [wheel rims].
- 2012- To suspend temporarily the rate of duty on certain sports footwear.
- 2012- To reduce temporarily the rate of duty on certain boys' shirts.
- 2015- STRONGER act Establishes in the U.S. Treasury the Trade Agreements Enforcement Trust Fund. Enacted on February 24, 2016 in the Trade Facilitation and Trade Enforcement Act.
- 2020- To amend the Trade Act of 1974 to modify and extend the Generalized System of Preferences, and for other purposes adds human rights, environmental, and other criteria for designation as a beneficiary developing country, and it requires a review of laws relating to internationally recognized worker rights.
- 2021- Trade Adjustment Assistance Modernization Act revises the Trade Adjustment Assistance Program, including by expanding program eligibility to additional workers, increasing relocation and job search allowances, establishing a child care allowance, and expanding eligibility for and increasing the maximum benefit of wage insurance. The bill also permanently extends the tax credit for health insurance costs and increases the percentage of such credit. Passed the House on February 24, 2022 in the America COMPETES Act.
- 2021- Generalized System of Preferences and Miscellaneous Tariff Bill Modernization Act of 2021 This bill reauthorizes and revises specified U.S. trade programs and provisions. Passed the House on February 24, 2022 in the America COMPETES Act.
- **2021-** FOREST Act the bill prohibits the importation of any product made wholly or in part of a covered commodity produced from illegally deforested land.

- 2022- Formula Act Temporary suspends tariffs on imported infant formula. Enacted on July 21, 2022.
- 2023- American Worker and Trade Competitiveness Act To reauthorize Trade Adjustment Assistance programs, extend and reform the Generalized System of Preferences, amend the Harmonized Tariff Schedule of the United States to modify certain rates of duty temporarily, and for other purposes.
- 2022, 2023- Import Security and Fairness Act This bill excludes imported articles from nonmarket economy countries or countries on the priority watch list from receiving de minimis treatment. De minimis treatment allows imported articles valued under \$800 to enter the United States without paying duties, fees, taxes, or interest.

## INTERNATIONAL WATER AND SANITATION

Congressman Earl Blumenauer's work on international water stems from his commitment to livable communities and his belief that the United States has an obligation to support international basic humanitarian assistance. He has continued to advance global water access and sanitation as a central problem that unites people rather than divides them, highlighting the bipartisan nature of the issue and the tangible results that can happen with the right focus, attention, and resources.

Earl's engagement with global water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH) heightened in 2002, when he attended the Johannesburg World Summit on Sustainable Development. There, he saw firsthand the consequences of lack of clean, safe, water access. It was clear that a key aspect of the lack of water and sanitation included gender inequality. Women and girls often spend an estimated 200 million hours carrying water every day, walking almost 4 miles a day to haul 40 lbs of water. For some, this equates to more than 15 hours a week and most are more prone to assault during the journey to retrieve water for their families. Upon returning home, he introduced the Clean Water and Sanitation Resolution (H.Res.782), affirming the commitments made by the United States at the World Summit to improve worldwide access to safe drinking water and basic sanitation services.

Working with advocates for three years, Earl developed the Senator Paul Simon Water for the Poor Act (H.R. 1973), to make access to safe water and sanitation for developing countries a specific policy objective of the United States foreign assistance programs. Inspired by what he saw in South Africa, his legislation also codified into law Millennium Development Goal target 7 — to halve by 2015 the number of people in 1990 living without clean water and basic sanitation and targeted WASH investment in high priority countries. This legislation was named in honor of the late Senator Paul Simon, who devoted much of his career to raising awareness about the global water crisis and is the author of "Running Dry." The Senator Paul Simon Water for the Poor Act was signed into law December 2005.

Earl had quickly made himself a prominent figure in international water, urging Congress to prioritize WASH issues and connecting water with climate change and health initiatives. In 2007, Earl introduced a resolution supporting the goals and ideals of World Water Day (H.Res.196). The resolution also highlighted not only the importance of increasing access to safe drinking water and sanitation, but the conservation and sustainable management of freshwater resources and ecosystems. It also urged federal agencies including USAID and the State Department to provide more sustainable and equitable access to safe drinking water and sanitation for the poor. The resolution passed with broad bipartisan support.

In FY2009, Earl led his first WASH appropriations letter requesting \$400 million for the WASH account in addition to \$10 million for USAID Development Credit Authority to establish water infrastructure

financing mechanisms in high priority countries. \$300 million was appropriated, with \$125 million specifically targeted to sub-Saharan Africa. Since then, he has led the appropriations letter every year for over a decade, consistently providing robust funding for a bipartisan and humanitarian issue. Since this first appropriations letter in 2009, the annual number has risen by 58% of the original amount, representing a significant growth in funding over the last decade.

Earl authored the Senator Paul Simon Water for the World Act (H.R. 2030) in April of 2009. This legislation was the most comprehensive piece of international water policy to date, directing the USAID Administrator to establish the Office of Water to use a set of criteria to designate 10 high priority countries and implement countryspecific water strategies for each country. It directed the Secretary of State to establish a Special Coordinator for International Water to increase the State Department's capacity to address issues of safe water, sanitation, integrated river basin management. It also amends the Water for the Poor Act by creating a program to increase priority country capacity for water and sanitation. It expands the list of activities eligible for funding, requires the water report to include an assessment of political tensions over water resources and expected impact of climate change on water supplies.

Importantly, it provides USAID grants for development and dissemination of

technologies such as household water treatment, hand washing stations, and latrines. The language instructed USAID to develop Global Water Strategies in 2017, 2022, and 2027, laying out comprehensive plans for implementation of clean water and sanitation. This legislation was signed into law in December 2014. The combined power of both laws has provided sustainable water to nearly 65 million people and sanitation to more than 50 million people globally.

A defining moment came on World Water Day in 2010, when then Secretary of State, Hillary Clinton, made a major water presentation at the National Geographic Society, highlighting the Obama Administration's commitment to meeting the needs of water as a fundamental foreign policy as well as a humanitarian objective. Her presentation and such a strong affirmation of commitments to water diplomacy in such a high-profile venue was a testament and high-water mark to Earl's first decade working on the issue.

Earl was honored to work with Secretary Clinton to request that USG conduct a National Intelligence Estimate on water security. In addition to this, an Intelligence Community Assessment on Global Water Security was published in March of 2012. Notably, the report concluded that during the next ten years, many countries important to the US will experience water problems. They will increase the risk of instability and state failure, exacerbate regional tensions, and district from working with the U.S. on

important policy objectives. These two reports solidified WASH issues as critical to U.S. national security and interests abroad. They were the initial reason Republican champions like Rep. Ted Poe became interested in WASH. Later that year, Earl spoke at Clinton's World Water Day 2012 celebration, commending her leadership on WASH.

Almost 10 years ago, Earl focused on the water needs of Israel-Palestine, a region where water could be an engine of conflict or a means for cooperation. He brought people together and held a roundtable to explore opportunities to address water scarcity and poor sanitation in Israel, the West Bank, and especially Gaza. He led a bipartisan call to Israeli Minister of National Infrastructures, Energy and Water Resources and Minister of Defense supporting a long-term approach to supplying energy to the Gaza Strip to address the water crisis. This energy supply was essential to limiting the flow of raw sewage into the Mediterranean, which posed serious health risks to both Israeli and Palestinian communities. The letter was a showcase of the bipartisan support that water and sanitation issues possessed.

Earl's focus on the situation in Gaza particularly represented the crux of water policy; this tiny strip of land is one of the most inexpensive to address. The power of the issue has been illustrated by the ability to bring organizations who are diametrically opposed on many of their views together through the collective fight for water and sanitation. This advocacy toward Gaza provided tangible results when Israel and the Palestinians

reached an agreement to provide much-needed drinking water to severely water-stressed Palestinian communities in 2017.

In 2019, Earl again led a bipartisan appropriations letter requesting a steady \$435 million for the WASH account. Earl also advocated for enhanced monitoring and evaluation of USAID programs and report language declaring SFOPS Committee support for greater integration of WASH services with international nutrition and health programs. They encouraged USAID Administrator to utilize American standards in the design and implementation of relevant water infrastructure development programs and recognizing disproportionate impact on women and girls. His advocacy resulted in an extra \$25 million over the requested amount, funding the program at \$450 million, the greatest amount ever allocated.

Earl co-founded the bipartisan International Water and Sanitation (WASH) Caucus (later renamed the Global Water Security Caucus) in 2020. The purpose was to support stronger coordination and prioritization between the 17 federal agencies that have a hand in managing and protecting international water resources. The caucus supports legislative and administrative initiatives that include or impact measurable WASH goals and improve the effectiveness of WASH.

In 2022, fulfilling the requirement in the Water for the World Act, Vice President

Harris unveiled the 2022 Global Water Strategy. This commits the U.S. to providing 22 million people with access to safe drinking water and sanitation in the next five years, half of whom would never have these services. Months later, USAID designated 22 high priority countries, including three strategypriority countries (Jordan, Lebanon and West Bank Gaza).

# The Oregonian

## Beyond bikes, streetcars and marijuana, Portland Rep. Earl Blumenauer chalks up a win on water

By Jeff Mapes, December 16th, 2014

Rep. Earl Blumenauer, D-Ore., talking with reporters in Portland in early September, won final passage of a bill he sponsored to help make access to clean water a top U.S. foreign policy goal.

Democratic Rep. Earl Blumenauer is known for causes that are as unique and quirky as Portland, the city he represents. It's hard to find a profile of him that doesn't touch on at least some of these themes: his love of bicycles, bow ties, streetcars, fighting suburban sprawl and championing legal marijuana.

One of his less-noted passions is access to clean water, particularly in the world's poorest countries. And he chalked up a big win on that front in the closing days of the lame-duck Congress, which passed the Senator Paul Simon Water for the World Act.

The name of the legislation -- not to mention its details -- may sound sleep-inducing, but it's another part of the long efforts by Blumenauer and his allies to push clean water as a top U.S. foreign policy goal. It makes sense that a guy from Portland, where pure water is sort of a birthright, would latch on to this issue.

"This is something that is sort of the common denominator; it touches everybody," Blumenauer said in a 2012 interview with One, the international aid group established by the rock star Bono. "It is something that actually does not require much investment compared to the other challenges we face. It is an opportunity to have multiple benefits."

At a rally this year, Blumenauer said 1,400 children a day die of water-related diseases and that women and girls spend much of their time fetching water for their families.

"There are more people on this planet with a cellphone than a toilet," Blumenauer added.

The latest legislation is a follow-up to a 2005 law also named for Simon -- the late Illinois senator who attended the University of Oregon and also had a love of bow ties -- and established clean water as a priority for U.S. action.

Blumenauer and a bipartisan group of co-sponsors said the latest legislation was needed to prod the government to ensure that U.S. foreign aid on water is focused on the poorest countries and that water issues are examined in coordination with other development projects.

ecause the legislation is aimed at spending U.S. aid more efficiently, it didn't carry a big price tag that could doom it in Congress. Instead, after repeated tries, Blumenauer and his allies were able to push it through the House last week and the Senate on Monday night.

In a statement, Blumenauer hailed his legislation as a small sign of progress in a politically dismal year in Congress:

As we come to the very final day of the least productive Congress in the history of our country, Americans are searching for something, anything, to show that their leaders on Capitol Hill can find ways to put aside politics and do the right thing when needed.

## WaterWorld.

## Blumenauer, author of Water for Poor Act, secures millions for clean water

July 9, 2009

WASHINGTON, DC, July 9, 2009 -- Congressman Earl Blumenauer (D-Ore) today secured an extra \$25 million that will be used to provide the world's poorest people with access to clean water and sanitation, bringing the total level of this funding for Fiscal Year 2010 to \$335 million.

Blumenauer is the author of the "Water for the Poor Act," which was signed into law in 2005. He has since introduced the bipartisan "Senator Paul Simon Water for the World Act of 2009," which would increase the US Government's ability to extend safe, affordable and sustainable clean water and sanitation to an additional 100 million of the world's poorest by 2015.

Following is a statement from Rep. Blumenauer and other clean water and development advocates: "Access to safe, clean drinking water is a basic right too often denied to the world's poorest," said Rep. Blumenauer. "The additional funding we've secured today will help us meet our commitment to address the world's number one health problem: lack of access to clean water, which impacts more than one billion people. The resulting illness and death is entirely preventable, yet traps countries in poverty and diminishes our own development and security efforts. What we've done today will make an important difference in the lives of the poorest people in the most resource-stressed areas of the world."

David Douglas, President of Water Advocates, hailed the increase, saying, "We greatly appreciate Congressman Blumenauer's longtime leadership on this important issue, and his work to make the Water for the Poor Act even more effective at saving lives and reducing disease in the developing world."

# THE HILL

# Water makes smart politics and policy

by Rep. Earl Blumenauer (D-Ore.), opinion contributor - 03/22/23



March 22, 2023, marks World Water Day with the world is in the middle of a global water crisis. Our most precious resource is being depleted, polluted, and mismanaged. Seven hundred children under five die every day from diarrhea because they lack access to clean water and sanitation. In many countries women and girls must travel for miles to collect water, putting themselves at risk of gender-based violence.

The challenges are severe, even in America. Remember the plight of Jackson, Miss., and Flint, Mich. Around the world nearly 2.2 billion people still lack access to safe drinking water and 3.6 billion lack adequate sanitation. When these basic needs go unfulfilled, people are forced to drink contaminated water. They prepare food, deliver babies, and administer health care without the ability to properly clean and sanitize. They live without the dignity of a toilet.

I know from 20 years of leadership on water that we can solve this crisis with the right focus, attention and resources. Some landmark accomplishments include passing two of my bipartisan bills, the Senator Paul Simon Water for the Poor and Water for the World Acts, into law. These bills made water, sanitation, and hygiene ("WASH") aid an objective of U.S. foreign assistance and dedicated a regular source of public funding for projects in high-need priority countries. U.S. investment is responsible for nearly 60 million people gaining access to safe drinking water and nearly 45 million gaining access to sustainable sanitation. We forged lasting partnerships with civic and faith organizations, schools, nongovernment organizations, and the private sector. Their commitment to help remains strong.

Every pillar of global security improves when people have access to WASH, which prevents a range of medical emergencies from

malnutrition, stunting, maternal and infant mortality to innumerable infections that drastically undermine global health security and economic development.

These investments are extremely economically efficient: each dollar yields a \$21 return in a more resilient future. Increasing WASH access adds over \$60 billion to the world economy annually while helping countries move from aid to trade partners. In fact, low-income countries with adequate WASH access experience annual per capita GDP growth of 3.7 percent, compared to 0.1 percent annual growth among those without adequate WASH.

Despite remarkable progress, it's not enough. That is why I co-founded the Congressional Global Water Security Caucus with Reps. Darin LaHood (R-III.), Grace Meng (D-N.Y.), and the late Jackie Walorski (R-Ind.) to maintain a focus on water and sanitation on Capitol Hill. Our efforts are proudly bipartisan, and proof that not everything Congress does has to be intensely polarized.

Our Caucus is particularly concerned with the role water can play in escalating global conflict. There are nearly 286 river basins that cross national borders, yet remarkably few are governed by a formal resource-sharing agreement. Scarce water resources present opportunities for extremists to destabilize regions and gain leverage by holding water hostage or poisoning drinking sources to sicken entire communities. Severe droughts spur migration, both within and between countries, that weaken alreadyfragile governments and exacerbate the global refugee crisis.

WASH is one of the best ways for the U.S. to practice diplomacy, advance multiple global security goals, and prove our commitment to basic humanitarian values. It is no coincidence that the American people consistently rank water among the most popular foreign assistance categories. It is in our best interest to get this right and end the water and sanitation crisis, a commitment the world made in 2015 when we adopted universal WASH access as a Sustainable Development Goal.

As the world comes together around water this week at the UN Water Conference, let's use this global focus to recommit ourselves to accelerating progress. Together we can make a safer world by treating water security as the human right that it is.

- 2004 Introduced the Clean Water and Sanitation Resolution (H.Res.782), affirming the commitments made by the United States at the World Summit on Sustainable Development in Johannesburg, South Africa, to improve worldwide access to safe drinking water and basic sanitation services. The resolution also called on the President to report WASH progress to Congress, declared House support for the Water for the Poor Initiative, and expressed support for targeting water aid toward countries most in need.
- 2005 Introduced the Senator Paul Simon Water for the Poor Act (H.R. 1973), legislation to make access to safe water and sanitation for developing countries a specific policy objective of the United States foreign assistance programs carried out by the Secretary of State in coordination with other agencies. H.R. 1973 also codified into law Millennium Development Goal target 7 to halve by 2015 the number of people in 1990 living without clean water and basic sanitation and targeted WASH investment in high priority countries.
- 2007 Introduced a resolution supporting the goals and ideals of World Water Day (H.Res.196). The resolution also recognized the importance of increasing access to safe drinking water and sanitation the conservation and sustainable management of water resources. It also urged federal agencies including USAID and the State Department to provide more sustainable and equitable access to safe drinking water and sanitation for the poor.
- 2008 Introduced the Senator Paul Simon Water for the Poor Enhancement Act (H.R. 7180), legislation to create new WASH-oriented offices to implement the Water for the Poor Act in federal agencies, including the Office of Water (USAID) and the Bureau for International Water (State Department). It also amended the Water for the World Act by directing the Secretary of State and USAID Administrator to establish a training program for water and sanitation managers in every priority country, requiring the water report to include likely future political tensions over water and assessment of climate change's impact, and authorizing USAID to provide grants for technology that promotes clean water and sanitation in priority countries.
- 2009 Introduced the Senator Paul Simon Water for the World Act (H.R. 2030). This legislation included many of the same provisions as the Water for the Poor Enhancement Act, including directing the USAID Administrator to establish the Office of Water to implement country-specific water strategies and Secretary of State to establish a Special Coordinator for International Water to increase State Department's capacity to address issues of safe water, sanitation, integrated river basin management. It also amends the Water for the Poor Act by creating a program to increase priority country capacity for

- water and sanitation, expands the list of activities eligible for funding, requires the water report to include an assessment of political tensions over water resources and expected impact of climate change on water supplies in 10, 25 and 50 years, and provides USAID grants for development and dissemination of technologies such as household water treatment, hand washing stations, and latrines.
- 2010 Secretary of State, Hillary Clinton, gives remarks at the National Geographic Society highlighting the administration's commitment to meeting the needs of water as a fundamental foreign policy and humanitarian objective.
- 2012 The State Department published an Intelligence Community Assessment on global water security at Secretary Clinton's urging, after Earl played a key role in elevating the issue to her. The report concludes that during the next ten years, many countries important to the US will experience water problems that will increase the risk of instability and state failure, exacerbate regional tensions, and distract them from working with the US on important policy objectives.
- 2013 Led 34 of his colleagues in an FY2014 appropriations letter to SFOPS Chairwoman Granger and Ranking Member Lowey requesting \$400 million for the WASH account.
   \$365 million was appropriated, a 1.16% increase from FY2013, breaking a four-year flat funding streak.
- 2014 The Senator Paul Simon Water for the World Act (H.R. 2901) was signed into law. Similar to previously introduced versions, this bill codified offices within USAID and State to focus solely on WASH, ensures USAID projects prioritize countries based on proportion using unimproved drinking water/sanitation services, number of children under five who died from diarrheal disease, government's capacity and commitment to work with the US to improve WASH access. It also directs the President to submit a government-wide Global Water Strategy to Congress in 2017, 2022 and 2027 outlining the US plan to increase WASH access in priority countries and requires USAID Administrator to establish and maintain a website to make publicly available information on US WASH foreign assistance programs.
- 2015 Led 25 of his colleagues in an FY2016 appropriations letter to SFOPS Chairwoman Granger and Ranking Member Lowey requesting \$425 million for the WASH account.
  \$400 million was appropriated, a 1.05% percent increase from FY2015. Of this, \$145 million went to sub-Saharan Africa and \$14 million toward the maintenance of safe latrines.
- 2017 USAID and Department of State unveiled their Global Water Strategy, as required under the Paul Simon Water for the World Act. The Strategy laid out USAID's target of providing 15 million people with access to safe drinking water and 8 million people with access to sanitation services.

- 2018 Led 36 of his colleagues in an FY2019 appropriations letter requesting \$410 million for the WASH account. \$435 million was appropriated, a 1.09% percent increase from FY2018, breaking the second streak of flat appropriations. Of this, \$195 million went to sub-Saharan Africa and \$15 million to the maintenance of safe latrines. One of two years when final appropriations exceeded amount requested.
- 2019 Led an FY2020 appropriations letter requesting at least steady funding at \$435 million for the WASH account. The letter also advocated for enhanced monitoring and evaluation of USAID programs and report language declaring SFOPS Committee support for greater integration of WASH services with international nutrition and health programs; encouraging USAID Administrator to utilize American standards in the design and implementation of relevant water infrastructure development programs, and recognizing disproportionate impact on women and girls.
- 2020 Co-founded the International Water and Sanitation (WASH) Caucus to create stronger coordination and prioritization between the 17 federal agencies that have a hand in managing and protecting international water resources. The caucus's first event a virtual briefing entitled "WASH During COVID-19: What We Know So Far" featured remarks by Earl and the other caucus founding Members.
- 2021- The Biden Administration released its FY2020 annual Global Water and Development Report, which recognized that meeting Sustainable Development Goal target 6 – universal access to drinking water, sanitation and hygiene for all people, health care families and school by 2030 – will require that USAID's WASH efforts be accelerated by "between four and seven times."
- 2022 Delivered opening remarks to the Global Water Strategy and International Water and Sanitation Caucus reception following the Biden Administration and USAID's release of the new Global Water Strategy report.

## LIVABILITY

Congressman Earl Blumenauer is sometimes called "the godfather of livability." While he is known for his leadership specifically on bikes, streetcars, transit, greening the tax code, and historic preservation, Earl's true skill is his ability to see the way the policy pieces knit together to create the possibility for a better world.

As a member of Congress, he led the way in helping the federal government think more holistically about its investments and in identifying and changing policies that improve the safety, health, and economic security of our communities. His leadership and visionary thinking led him to be recognized as one of the top 60 urbanists in the history of the world in 2023.

From his time as Portland's Commissioner of Public Works and the Multnomah County Commissioner who led on transportation, Earl took the Portland story national, bringing with him to Congress the lessons learned from Oregon's innovative state land use laws. Smart land use that encourages density, active transportation, and mixed-use development while conserving forest and agricultural land is a prerequisite for livability. Earl served in the state legislature when it passed the nation's first comprehensive land use planning framework, premised on the notion that some land is suitable for residential developments or industry and others were so important ecologically that they should be preserved. Following his time on the legislature, Earl spent years in the Multnomah County Commission



implementing the law and seeing firsthand the controversies and opportunities it created.

From transportation to flood insurance reform, Earl's congressional career has been punctuated by issues that provide the federal government a lever to encourage smarter land use at the local level.

No other member of Congress would have recognized the connection between transit investments, flood insurance reform, and the Superfund tax. However, through Earl's lens of livability - a human and communitycentered approach to policy that creates communities that are safe, healthy, and economically secure — he has been able to identify the through line connecting seemingly unrelated public policy problems. That has meant Earl has been the leader in advancing green infrastructure policies since the early 2000s, before it was in fashion. He advocated for flood insurance reform and to use times of natural disaster to rebuild communities better than they were before.

He led the fight in changing tax policy to support more sustainable communities to combat the climate crisis, and successfully brought Portland's active transportation culture to the national level, integrating transportation options into federal transportation policy.

As Portland's congressman, Earl likes to say that he is just spreading the livability gospel in the nation's capital and in his trips around the country and the world. Whether that gospel takes on the flavor of renewing and rebuilding America, greening the tax code, building streetcars, biking to save the planet, or creating new and smarter revenue sources, Earl has advanced the livability conversation wherever he goes.

### Rebuild and Renew America

Earl has been Congress's strongest voice on the need to invest in our roads, bridges, transit systems, tunnels, and water infrastructure. He traveled to hundreds of communities over his nearly thirty years in Congress, highlighting the critical impact that these simple investments can have. He led a quarterly group of more than 600 infrastructure advocates in Washington, D.C. for more than 15 years, serving as the most consistent voice for the need for comprehensive, long-term sustainable funding for America's infrastructure. From his role on the Ways and Means Committee, Earl highlighted the need for thoughtful, sustainable funding approaches to fill potholes, fix bridges, fix sinkholes, get rid of lead pipes and clean up our most polluted areas. Earl brought together stakeholders from both sides of the aisle and helped amplify their voices in calling for longterm problems to infrastructure challenges.

Earl's interest in this work began during his time in the Oregon State Legislature when he chaired the Ways and Means Committee, tasked with identifying funding sources for the Oregon Transportation Department and for the new transit agency in Portland, now known as TriMet. Later, as the Commissioner of Public Works for the City of Portland, he streamlined and solidified multiple funding streams to allow the department to focus on moving people around the city, rather than navigating archaic funding requirements.

When he was elected to Congress, Earl first sat on the Transportation and Infrastructure Committee, where he experienced firsthand the extent to which funding availability and limitations ended up driving transportation policy. From his role on the Transportation and Infrastructure Committee and then the Ways and Means Committee, Earl worked to bring stakeholders together to advance sustainable funding sources to address the infrastructure needs that are vital to a thriving community and a functioning government.

In the early 2000s Earl called for a renewal of the Gallatin Plan: the vision that Thomas Jefferson laid out in the early 1800s for a nationwide infrastructure plan, focusing on carriageways, waterways, and water systems.

Earl worked with stakeholders and elected leaders across the country to put together a vision for a Gallatin Plan for the 21st Century — one that aligned road and transit improvements, high speed rail, improved clean water and drinking water infrastructure, and broadband to make sure that America's communities were prepared for the new millennium.

Upon joining the Ways and Means Committee in 2007, Earl has become the Committee's foremost champion of investing in rebuilding and renewing America. These efforts culminated in the largest infrastructure investment in American history, the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (IIJA) in 2021.

#### Water

#### Infrastructure

After overseeing the annexation of hundreds of small sewer systems into Multnomah County during his period as commissioner, Earl knows firsthand the importance of maintaining and protecting our clean water resources. During his time in Congress, he heard from town mayors, county leaders, governors, and everyday citizens about the struggles they were having to keep water running and pipes from breaking. As the rate of sinkholes around the country increased, some as big as cars, it became clear that our water infrastructure was at a crisis point.

Consequently, Earl worked with key stakeholders to develop legislation to create a

water trust fund which created a new source of revenue, committed to a water trust fund, to provide an ongoing, consistent source of funding for projects that would get rid of leaky or lead-filled pipes, improve wastewater and drinking water facilities, and clean up major sources of water pollution. The water trust fund bill placed a small tax on some of the products that cause the greatest strain on our water system — flushable products and bottled water — to make sure that those who impact the system the most help keep it running.

The Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act of 2021 recognized the need to rebuild our water systems that spurred the Water Trust Fund Act and dedicated \$55 billion to updating our nation's water supply.

### Transportation Infrastructure

In his roles as Multnomah County Commissioner and the City of Portland Public Works Commissioner, Earl experienced firsthand the positive impact that a functioning, well-funded transportation system can have on a city's economic development, the daily lives of the people who live and work there, and its environmental profile.

Knowing that without sufficient funding, the United States would struggle to become more livable. Earl worked hard to develop and advance revenue funding solutions that robustly funded the transportation, planning, and water programs the country needed, while

incentivizing solutions that made communities healthier, safer, and more economically secure.

From his role on the Transportation and Infrastructure Committee and the Ways and Means Committee, Earl championed bills that increased the gas tax to keep pace with inflation and replace it with a mileage-based user fee program like the one pioneered by the state of Oregon. He led the fight for more targeted fixes, such as replacing the diesel excise tax with a mileage-based user fee to create more stability in the trust fund.

Earl's role on the mileage-based user fee is particularly prescient. In the late 1990s when no one was concerned about the solvency of the Highway Trust Fund, Earl saw what the next 20 years could bring. With the welcome increase in miles per gallon and the advent of electric cars, the Trust Fund would struggle to remain whole, and the burden would remain highest on those who couldn't afford new cars. Earl worked with stakeholders in Oregon to pilot the country's first mileage-based user fee and then championed legislation in Congress to encourage other states to copy that system and align it to meet their own needs. The passage of the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act took the next step in Earl's vision—a national pilot program and expanding the existing state pilot program to include metropolitan planning organizations and local governments, with the hope of eventually phasing out the gas tax and instead phasing in a more equitable, sustainable solution.

While he worked to protect the Highway Trust Fund's long-term solvency, Earl also worked to address the short-term needs. With the support of leaders across the ideological spectrum, Earl proposed the first increase in the federal gas tax since 1993. Everyone from the Chamber of Commerce to organized labor, truckers to cyclists, AARP to AAA supported his legislation. Since the gas tax was last raised, it has lost more than 40% of its purchasing power due to increased fuel efficiency and inflation. His legislation would have enacted a modest increase to the federal gas tax and indexed the tax to inflation, raising nearly \$300 billion in revenue for infrastructure investments.

Earl successfully helped the Ways and Means Committee hold its first hearing on infrastructure funding and finance in nearly four years when Democrats took back control of the House in 2019. Using that platform, the Committee discussed infrastructure funding and financing mechanisms that would be enacted in the next two sessions. This laid the groundwork for the first long-term transportation reauthorizations in over a decade and the eventual embrace of infrastructure as a necessary tool to invest in America and bring communities together. As part of his revenue work, Earl also made sure to protect funding for transit and bike and pedestrian investments.

While others attacked those programs to score political points, Earl worked with stakeholders and advocates across the country to make the case for these targeted, thoughtful investments

that save money in the long run and provide multiple benefits for the price of one transportation project. Now, after decades of investment, bike and pedestrian projects have more federal funding avenues than they ever have, and the 80-20 transit split is ensconced as sacrosanct policy.

#### Superfund Cleanup

Superfund sites are the nation's worst toxic waste sites. The Superfund program was originally created in 1980 to cleanup these contaminated sites. At that time, the Superfund Trust Fund was established to pay for cleanup at sites where the responsible parties cannot be identified or do not have the ability to perform the cleanup. The Trust Fund was financed through taxes on petroleum, certain chemicals, and corporate income, ensuring that those industries responsible for pollution pay for the cleanup. Earl arrived in Congress in 1996 just as the Superfund tax expired. The tax, which placed a modest fee on the use and importation of some of the most toxic chemicals, funded the massive clean-up costs of toxic sites that resulted from the use of those chemicals. Otherwise, taxpayers were on the hook for the cost of cleaning up polluters' messes.

Earl had spent years in Portland working to clean up the local Superfund project in the Willamette River and knew that, without the Superfund tax, hundreds of toxic waste sites around the country would stay polluted and a hazard to the people living around them. One of his first acts in Congress was to reintroduce the Superfund tax to make polluters pay to clean up communities around the United States. This legislation would end the polluters' tax holiday and make Big Oil and other polluters pay for their mess. The bill reinstated the per-barrel excise tax on crude oil and indexed it to inflation. It also reinstated the Superfund tax on certain chemicals and adjusted the tax to inflation. After years of advocacy, the Superfund Reinvestment Act was enacted in the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act in 2021 and the Inflation Reduction Act in 2022. Polluters are now once again required to pay to clean up the environmental devastation they have left behind.

#### Renew & Rebuild Legislative Accomplishments

- Road User Charge Pilot Program: Earl has brought the idea of a road user charge program from a small research paper at USDOT to a series of small pilot programs at the state level to a mandatory state program and a national pilot with the passage of the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act.
- Water Infrastructure Funding: The Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act of 2021 expanded on Earl's vision for a specific funding source to rebuild our nation's infrastructure system.
- Superfund Cleanup: The Superfund Cleanup tax was reinstated as part of the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act of 2021.
- Short Line Railroad Tax Credits: After years of temporary one- and two-year extensions, Earl successfully enacted a permanent tax credit supporting infrastructure improvements on short line railroads. These railroads serve a small portion of America's railroad system, but they are a vital link between producers and export centers around the country. Without short line rail, many rural communities would be entirely cut off from any ability to compete in the global economy. Earl's permanent short line railroad tax credit ended the uncertainty these small railroads faced year after year and provided a permanent incentive for the railroads to make track infrastructure improvements and remain competitive.
- Private Activity Bonds: Earl successfully introduced and enacted legislation to create an additional \$15 billion in private activity bonds in the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act. This additional capacity will serve to help finance public-private partnership surface transportation projects around the country for years to come.

#### Transit

A lifelong champion for transit, in his role on the Transportation and Infrastructure Committee and the Ways and Means Committee, Earl worked to make transit a safe, affordable, and convenient option for people to get to where they need to live, work, and play. Earl was one of the early members of Congress to draw the connection between better transit and a cleaner environment, and some of his earliest work in Congress was to advocate for federal investments and regulations that encouraged communities to use transit as a problem-solving tool to clean up their air pollution. That work stemmed from his experience in the Oregon State Legislature and as the City of Portland Transportation Commissioner when he was part of the group of political leaders who built out Portland, Oregon's transit system in the 1980s and 1990s, fulfilling the promise of the region's land use system, cleaning up its air pollution, and creating development opportunities and an urban fabric that made Portland the livability capital of the United States.

Later, Earl crystallized the connection between increasing transit ridership and reducing greenhouse gas emissions, leading efforts to encourage communities to plan for less carbon intensive transportation systems and instead increase their transit usage as the key to a decarbonized transportation system. His CLEAN TEA bill served as the basis for efforts to increase federal funding for transportation planning to reduce greenhouse gas emissions, which is now reflected in the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act, as well as state laws across the country.

As a member of the tax-writing Ways and Means Committee, Earl has worked hard to make sure that the tax code doesn't unduly incentivize people to drive a car instead of choosing an active transportation option. He introduced a bold clean transportation tax bill, the Green Routes to Work Act, in 2009 to provide tax incentives for low carbon commuting options like public transportation, vanpool, biking, and walking. It also proposed allowing employees to cash out the value of their parking commuter tax benefit if they choose not to drive to work, improved the bicycle benefit by allowing it to be used with other modes, and incentivized employers to offer a commuter benefit by providing employers with a tax credit for establishing the program.

The Green Routes to Work Act also started Earl's years long effort to achieve parity between the value of the parking commuter tax benefit and the transit commuter tax benefit, which at the time was approximately half of the parking benefit. Six years later in 2015, Earl's legislation to make the value of the transit benefit equal to the parking benefit was enacted into law. Because of his efforts, employees can now receive up to \$300/month from their employers tax-free to take public transportation to work. He has also championed financing options to give agencies

flexibility to build better transportation projects and supported the U.S. Department of Transportation and others to work together to make sure that transit projects are aligned with housing, commercial real estate, and land use planning efforts.

### Transit Legislative Accomplishments

- As a congressman, and previously as a local elected official, Earl has worked with local elected leaders and developers to support transit projects across the country and help people understand the land use, housing, and development components that are aligned with a successful transit project.
- Year after year, Earl led the fight to protect funding for the Capital Investment Grant program to make sure that transit projects across the country, including streetcar and Bus Rapid Transit, continue to receive support from the federal government.
- As a member of the Transportation and Infrastructure Committee, Earl created the Small Starts program which was intended to help streetcar projects across the country receive federal funding and technical assistance from the federal government. Over subsequent years, he led efforts to modify and improve the program to make it work for local communities and to ensure that streetcar and bus rapid transit projects across the country could be built quickly and efficiently. Earl successfully championed an initiative to increase the Small Starts program's federal cost share and project cap from \$300 million to \$400 million in the 2021 Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act.
- Earl has defended and expanded tax code policies that create choice and give people more options for how they move around their community through legislation such as the Bicycle Commuter Act.
- Earl's 2009 CLEAN TEA bill was the first congressional effort to direct federal funds to the largest source of greenhouse gas emissions: the transportation sector. This concept morphed into multiple bills over the years that eventually resulted in significant funds in the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act and the Inflation Reduction Act, dedicated toward transportation investments that reduce greenhouse gas emissions.

#### Transit Legislative Accomplishments cont.

• Earl founded the Livable Communities Task Force, a bipartisan, bicameral Task Force focused on advancing livability initiatives and better connecting housing, transportation, and environmental planning at the federal level. The Task Force worked closely with the Obama Administration and resulted in a concurrent Task Force with the Housing and Urban Development Agency, the Department of Transportation, and the Environmental Protection Agency. This behind-the-scenes agency effort streamlined thousands of community efforts to build safe, healthy, and economically secure communities, and cut through government red tape to better align housing, transportation, and environmental projects and policies. Working together, the Livable Communities Task Force and the agency Sustainable Communities Task Force helped the federal government better partner with local governments to make communities safe, healthy, and economically secure.

#### Streetcars

Known as one of the fathers of the modern streetcar movement, Earl championed the creation of the Small Starts program—an offshoot of New Starts focused specifically on lower-cost, smaller scale fixed guideway projects. As cities around the country explored the reintroduction of the streetcar and the introduction of bus rapid transit projects, Earl articulated the need for a smaller, more flexible federal funding program designed to support the more straightforward, less expensive transit projects that cities were exploring.

As the Small Starts program evolved, Earl worked closely with streetcar advocates across the country to refine the program and make sure it was supporting the most impactful projects. He worked closely with the Obama Administration to support the manufacturing of the first American streetcars in over a century, right in Portland Oregon, and championed the use of the Recovery Act TIGER Program to invest in transportation projects that created thousands of jobs and helped reinvigorate downtowns.

As streetcars became more popular and widely utilized across the country, Earl successfully improved the Small Starts program in the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act by increasing the total project amount and the federal cost share, making Small Starts projects even more attractive for communities. After twenty years of championing their reintroduction, Earl is proud to see millions of Americans rediscovering the magic of the American streetcar.

#### Streetcars Legislative Accomplishments

- As a member of the Transportation and Infrastructure Committee, Earl created the Small Starts program which was intended to help streetcar projects across the country receive federal funding and technical assistance from the federal government. Over subsequent years, he led efforts to improve the program to make it work for local communities and to ensure that streetcar and bus rapid transit projects could be built quickly and efficiently. Earl successfully championed an initiative to increase the Small Starts program's federal cost share and project cap from \$300 million to \$400 million in the 2021 Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act.
- Earl worked with elected leaders, advocates, and community leaders to build streetcars in 22 communities across the United States, helping projects utilize best practices and work with each other and providing political leadership and enthusiasm. Earl's national streetcar advocacy helped form the Community Streetcar Coalition and the M:pact (formerly Rail~Volution) Conference both of which bring people together to advance streetcar projects.

#### Greening the Tax Code

Earl supports tax policies that are sustainable and responsive to America's challenges, namely the climate crisis, wealth inequality, and rebuilding and renewing our infrastructure. As a senior member of the Ways and Means Committee, he used his position to shape the tax code toward these priorities — culminating in the historic Inflation Reduction Act that invested hundreds of billions of dollars in clean energy projects while ensuring large corporations pay their fair share.

Earl quickly distinguished himself as one of the most engaged members of the Ways and Means Committee on clean energy and transportation issues. He authored legislation to create an investment tax credit to install distributed wind turbines that would allow individuals and businesses to generate their own power and even at times put power back into the grid. He advanced a carbon audit, directing the National Academy of Sciences to review the tax code to identify provisions that increase carbon emissions. And he wrote and passed legislation to close the Hummer Tax loophole that provides an additional tax incentive for businesses purchasing heavy, gas-guzzling luxury SUVs.

Earl also sought to translate his work on the Transportation and Infrastructure Committee and leading the Livable Communities Task Force to promote sustainable transportation options in the federal tax code. In 2001, Earl introduced the Bicycle Commuter Act, legislation to create a bicycle commuter benefit and allow employees who bike to work the same commuter tax benefit incentives that are available for parking and mass transit.

In 2008, Earl secured significant victories in the Renewable Energy and Energy Conservation Tax Act where his legislation to close the Hummer Tax loophole, create a bicycle commuter benefit, perform a carbon audit on the U.S. tax code, and create an investment tax credit for distributed wind first passed the House. While the legislation did not advance beyond the House during that session of Congress, it set the stage for bolder and more significant proposals for a greener tax code in the future.

Earl also carved out a unique role as the Ways and Means Committee expert and champion on wind energy. He continued to advocate for distributed wind incentives in the tax code and was named the USA Wind Jobs Champion in 2012 by the American Wind Energy Association (AWEA).

Like the solar industry, the wind industry was forced to contend with year after year of shortterm extensions of the production tax credit. These short-term extensions made it nearly impossible to make multiyear commitments when it was unclear if any incentives would be available through the life of the commitment. Earl fought for these extensions every year so that the wind industry could continue to develop and make the electric grid greener. He also advanced legislation to provide longer term extensions of the production tax credit

for wind like the Bridge to a Clean Energy Future Act.

With President Biden's victory in the 2020 election, Earl used his position on the Ways and Means Committee to begin to advance the single largest measure to combat the climate crisis in American history: the Inflation Reduction Act. The Inflation Reduction Act delivered \$385 billion in energy and climate investments, including investments in solar and wind energy, electric vehicles, energy efficiency, clean manufacturing, and vulnerable communities most impacted by environmental degradation. In total, it puts the United States on a path toward a 40 percent reduction in emissions by 2030.

Several of the clean energy provisions contained in the Inflation Reduction Act were authored by Earl. These include the production tax credit and investment tax credit to incentivize wind and solar projects; direct pay and renewable energy credit transferability provisions to make project financing more efficient; legislation to reinstate the Superfund Tax; clean transportation incentives, including an expanded electric vehicle credit for new and used vehicles; an expanded credit to charge ebikes and e-scooters; credits to electrify commercial fleets; and incentives to make commercial buildings more energy efficient and sustainable. Each of these provisions will help reduce carbon emissions and lessen our dependence on fossil fuels.

Where the tax code can be used as a carrot for incentivizing certain behaviors, it can also be used as a stick to discourage certain behaviors. Weeks after the massive Deepwater Horizon oil spill in 2010, Earl introduced legislation to remove unnecessary subsidies for the biggest oil companies. The subsidies were put into place to provide incentives for oil exploration and to lower the price of oil, but instead, they contributed to spills like the Deepwater Horizon and contributed to unprecedented increases in carbon emissions.

An analysis released by the Stockholm Environment Institute found that just two oil and gas tax subsidies – the expensing of intangible drilling costs and the percentage depletion allowance – increased the value of new oil and gas projects by more than \$20 billion in some years. These two subsidies alone helped spur and sustain the shale development boom in the United States. These forgone revenues undermine the United States' ability combat the climate crisis and invest in critical initiatives like education, housing, infrastructure, and health care.

Earl has stood up to Big Oil year after year, repeatedly reintroducing this legislation and a similar proposal to close a loophole that allows oil produced from tar sands to escape the perbarrel excise tax on crude oil. While Big Oil has been successful in thwarting these pieces of legislation to date, Earl secured a major victory in making polluters pay in the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act and Inflation Reduction Act.

Superfund sites are the nation's worst toxic waste sites. The Superfund program was originally created in 1980 to cleanup these contaminated sites. At that time, the Superfund Trust Fund was established to pay for cleanup at sites where the responsible parties cannot be identified or do not have the ability to perform the cleanup. The Trust Fund was financed through taxes on petroleum, certain chemicals, and corporate income, ensuring that those industries responsible for pollution pay for the cleanup. These taxes expired in 1995, depleting the Superfund Trust Fund and shifting the burden for cleanup to the American taxpayer. In 2007, Earl introduced the Superfund Reinvestment Act to end the polluters' tax holiday and make Big Oil and other polluters pay for their mess. The bill reinstated the per-barrel excise tax on crude oil and indexed it to inflation. It also reinstated the Superfund Reinvestment Act was enacted in the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act in 2021 and the Inflation Reduction Act in 2022. Polluters are now once again required to pay to clean up the environmental devastation they have left behind.

#### Greening the Tax Code Legislative Accomplishments

- Earl authored and enacted legislation to create an investment tax credit to install distributed wind turbines that would allow individuals and businesses to generate their own power, and even at times put power back into the grid.
- Several of the clean energy provisions contained in the Inflation Reduction Act were authored by Earl. These include the production tax credit and investment tax credit to incentivize wind and solar projects; direct pay and renewable energy credit transferability provisions to make project financing more efficient; legislation to reinstate the Superfund Tax; clean transportation incentives, including an expanded electric vehicle credit for new and used vehicles; an expanded credit to charge e-bikes and e-scooters; credits to electrify commercial fleets; and incentives to make commercial buildings more energy efficient and sustainable.
- Earl authored and enacted the Superfund Reinvestment Act in the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act in 2021 and the Inflation Reduction Act in 2022. Polluters are now once again required to pay to clean up the environmental devastation they have left behind.

#### **Historic Preservation**

Central to any livable community is a sense of place and belonging. The built environment often contributes to that sense of connection by creating tangible evidence of our heritage. Urban and rural communities that respect their historic roots are more vibrant and connected to their past. Earl co-chairs the Congressional Historic Preservation Caucus, a group of nearly 100 members of Congress dedicated to supporting key federal programs and new legislation to preserve historic places from main street to Wall Street.

Every year, Earl and the caucus led the effort in Congress to fund the Historic Preservation Fund. This Fund supports local communities through State and Tribal Historic Preservation Offices which are responsible for identifying and documenting America's historic places as well as discretionary grant programs for preserving Historically Black Colleges and Universities, underrepresented communities, and historically significant sites. Earl and the caucus have been extraordinarily successful in their mission, increasing funding to preservation programs by more than 250 percent since Fiscal Year 2015. Funding levels have exceeded the authorized amount for several years, so Earl worked with a bipartisan coalition in the House to increase the authorization amount to better reflect Congress' strong support for preserving special places.

He is working with a bipartisan coalition in the House and Senate to expand the successful federal historic tax credit. The historic tax credit has attracted approximately \$173 billion in private capital in the last 45 years, creating nearly three million jobs and rehabilitating more than 45,000 buildings. Historic tax credit projects are unique in that they revitalize communities, spur economic growth, and return more money to the Treasury than the cost of the credit. A 2019 National Park Service report found that the historic tax credit has generated \$38.1 billion in federal tax revenue from \$32.9 billion in tax credits over its lifetime. These projects rely heavily on local skilled labor, are more sustainable than new construction, and contribute to a sense of place that is at the heart of any livable community.

#### Historic Preservation Legislative Accomplishments

• Earl's leadership on the Historic Preservation Caucus has led to a more than 250 percent increase in funding for historic preservation programs since Fiscal Year 2015.

# STREETSBLOG Rep. Earl Blumenauer: Announcing the Livable Communities Task Force

By Earl Blumenauer October 19, 2009

With much excitement, today we are launching the Livable Communities Task Force -- an official initiative of the House Democratic Caucus that will work to improve community livability and Americans' quality of life.

This means reducing the nation's dependence on oil, protecting the environment, improving public health and investing in housing and transportation projects that create jobs and give people more commuting choices. As Chairman of the Livable Communities Task Force, this is an exciting moment for me. When I first came to Congress 13 years ago, people sometimes looked at me funny when I used the term "livability." They had no idea what I was talking about.

Today, not only are blogs like yours dedicated to transportation, infrastructure, and livability, but other leaders in Washington are talking about how to make our communities more livable.

The Obama administration is leading on this issue, having recently established the Partnership for Sustainable Communities with six "livability principles" for coordinating policy across the Departments of Transportation, Housing and Urban Development, and the Environmental Protection Agency.

What a difference a year makes.

The Task Force is made up of 20 members from around the nation who are leaders on everything from transportation and building efficiency to renewable energy and community gardening. In the coming months, we will work with members of the administration to hold briefings and strategy sessions on everything from the livability provisions in the energy and climate legislation that passed the House to the pending transportation re-authorization.

After spending a lifetime in public service working to make our nation's communities more livable, it feels like the pieces are coming together. America was ready for change when President Obama came into office. It is exciting that in 10 months we have moved legislation that will rein in global warming pollution. With the leadership of Secretary LaHood and Chairman Oberstar, we are gearing up for a transportation bill that will make smart investments in low-carbon transportation, give people more commuting choices, and reduce America's dependence on oil.

It is an honor to lead this unique Task Force and, and I am eager to work with Congressional leaders and members of the administration who are committed to protecting our environment and making our communities safer, healthier, and more economically secure.

# **The Oregonian** Earl Blumenauer pushes his congressional agenda globally

#### By: Charles Pope April 26, 2010

WASHINGTON – Welcome to one of Washington's smaller think tanks, where a recent conversation bounced across these topics in the first 10 minutes: health care reform, including end of life counseling; climate change; streetcars; how the Chinese and Germans, even the Danes, are cornering the green energy market; and bark beetle infestation in Colorado.

Stay a little longer and you'll hear references to New York city's famed – or infamous -- planner Robert Moses, the status of India's middle class, and how China is creating a city the size of Houston every month.

Welcome, in other words, to the office of Oregon Rep. Earl Blumenauer, where the only imperative is to think big and think liberal.

"There are representatives in Congress who represent their districts and there are some representatives who are surrogates for larger issues," said Jim Moore, a political scientist at Pacific University. "Earl Blumenauer has taken the surrogacy role for sustainability and he relishes that role."

Blumenauer can afford to be expansive even in a difficult election year for Democrats. He is perceived as so untouchable in his Portland-based district that Republican campaign officials declined to attack him or comment on the race.

It's understandable. A progressive with the most liberal voting record among Oregon's congressional delegation, the 61-year-old Blumenauer mirrors a district with a significant Democratic registration edge that is dominated by left-leaning Portland.

Since he was first elected in 1996 to a seat vacated by now-Sen. Ron Wyden, Blumenauer has never gotten less than 67 percent of the vote, even in years when several third party candidates were on the ballot. In 2008, he rolled in with 75 percent of the vote, even with Pacific Green Party candidate Michael Meo grabbing 4 percent.

Moore says the 3rd District is one of those rare places where voters measure their member of Congress more by his or her global outlook and philosophy than by raw dollars brought home.

"The pride issue is a very big thing," Moore said of a district populated with a high number of socially conscious and active voters.

Blumenauer insists that his focus on big, difficult issues and his good standing with Democratic leaders translates to direct benefits for his district. But like other members for Oregon, Blumenauer doesn't serve on a money committee that decides where federal dollars flow. Whatever he gets comes indirectly and through lobbying friends on the Appropriations Committee and House leadership.

In that sense, Blumenauer is in a relatively good spot.

He was part of a delegation that negotiated higher Medicare payments for Oregon doctors as part of health care reform. Earlier this month, he was principally responsible for bringing \$2.4 million in federal transit dollars to TriMet to develop state-of-the-art streetcars.

"That's absolutely the case," he said in an interview. "All of these things make the case for helping our communities, helping our economy, protecting the environment. This, I think, is our future. And I'm getting validation every week from people around the country who think it's their future too.

"Watching little Oregon pebbles have global ripples is extraordinarily gratifying," Blumenauer continued. "It's exciting. It's worth some of the static back here (meaning Capitol Hill) and the 3,000-mile commute. People are intrigued. People think it's important."

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In his 16 years in the House, Blumenauer has essentially cornered the policy market among Democrats on smart growth, environmentally friendly transportation and related topics. He refers to himself as "Congress' chief spokesperson for livable communities."

The issues are dense and complicated but have provided rewards, both real and political. Blumenauer sits on the powerful Ways and Means Committee and is vice chair of the Select Committee on Energy Independence and Global Warming.

His profile on those issues has given him easy access to Democratic leaders. He was invited by Speaker Nancy Pelosi in December to join her and other House leaders to attend the United Nations climate conference in Copenhagen.

He joined Pelosi again in February on a bipartisan visit to Haiti after that country was struck by an earthquake.

Blumenauer is, to be sure, a reliable vote for Democratic leaders. At 77.8 percent, he has the highest composite liberal law. Restoring it is one of Blumenauer's goals. voting record of any member of Congress from Oregon, according to the nonpartisan National Journal vote analysis.

"They know I'm being careful and thoughtful and being a team member," he said. "I think it is generally acknowledged that I've lived the stuff I believe in; this is not a new agenda for me."

His success and station in Congress are results of both shrewd planning and luck. He was one of the first to publicly endorse candidate Barack Obama and chaired his campaign in Oregon. Even luckier, he became close friends with his seatmate on Ways and Means who happened to be Rahm Emanuel, a fast-rising star in the Democratic leadership who today is Obama's chief of staff.

With a safe seat, Blumenauer is not shy about campaigning for Democrats who share his progressive ideology.

"I have spent a lot of time working with House and Senate candidates around the country," he said. If Maryland Democratic Sen. "Ben Cardin wants me to be part of an infrastructure program in Baltimore, I'll go. I have worked with Sen. Harkin (of Iowa) on some of the nutrition activities. I've helped 200 candidates for the House and Senate."

For all his passion, Blumenauer traditionally remained in the legislative margins with his work on smart growth and sustainability.

Until health care.

Blumenauer wrote a provision that was added to the House bill allowing Medicare to pay for voluntary end-of-life consultations. That language immediately fell victim to superheated partisan distortions, with health care opponents saying it would lead to "government death panels" with the power to "pull the plug on grandma."

The inaccuracy soon went viral as Sarah Palin put it on her Facebook page and House Minority Leader John Boehner said the bill would "start us down a treacherous path toward government-encouraged euthanasia."

The independent fact-checker, PolitiFact eventually awarded the "death panel" claim its "Lie of the Year."

Even so, the language was deleted from the bill that became

"There are all sorts of reform elements in the bill that will take time to implement. And there are some things that got lost in the shuffle. Like end of life," he said. "But I think there's awareness and acceptance now that this is the sort of thing we follow through on."

Blumenauer is also active in the climate debate. The House passed its version of the climate bill narrowly in June. The Senate is considering separate legislation, which means the debate is certain to continue.

Blumenauer says he's ready to engage not only to stop "the planet from cooking," but also to bring jobs to Oregon.

"People who want to pretend there isn't a problem with global warming, they don't believe the evidence and the scientists. There's no denying we are losing the green energy race. And if we don't act we'll be shut out.

"These things are very much center-stage," he said. "It's gone from being important and desirable to essential and urgent."

Beyond health care and climate, Blumenauer is pressing ahead on a range of smaller, lesser-known initiatives that only a life-long policy wonk in a bow tie can appreciate.



"International water, the streetcar movement, the cycling movement, public broadcasting; these are things that don't have the edge," he concedes.

Yet he is not apologetic about his policy fixations or a style that some have called dry and dense.

"We're not in this for this week's sound byte or what shows up on this month's poll. The reason we're having success -- with the administration, with our legislation, with the media and groups from around the country -- is because we've been focused and we've been consistent and we've been right, a lot more than we've fallen short."

# Grist A chat with Earl Blumenauer about livable communities and right-wing paranoia

**Rep. Earl Blumenauer** (D-Ore.) spoke with Grist about livability, paranoia, and spreading the success of Portland.

> By: Jonathan Hiskes Sep 30, 2010

For decades federal policy has promoted sprawl through highway funding and suburban homebuilding subsidies, often at the expense of urban cores. This year, the Obama administration said it intends to end all that by embracing the principles of smart growth through a new Partnership for Sustainable Communities. Transportation Secretary Ray LaHood even climbed atop a table at a bike summit to make the point "livability" is now a priority in transportation funding.

But Republicans like Rep. Paul Ryan (Wisc.) blast the livability goal as "central planning." Conservatives elsewhere go further, tying the administration's livability priority to a U.N. "social engineering" conspiracy.

Rep. Earl Blumenauer (D-Ore.), creator of the Congressional Bike Caucus, chair of the Livable Communities Task Force (and evil mastermind, according to the UN conspiracy folks), is leading efforts in the House to fund the livability

partnership. We spoke Tuesday about transportation options, the free-market appeal of biking in Portland, and the important message about livability in Who Framed Roger Rabbit.

Q. What are you trying to do through the Livable Communities Act?

A. We want the federal government to be a better partner with communities. It has, shall we say, a mixed record over the last 235 years. After World War II, the federal government was jump-starting the housing boom for returning veterans and FHA was perfectly comfortable with segregated communities. It wouldn't loan for integrated communities or for mixeduse development. Lots of money for highways wasn't carefully integrated into the urban fabric, and it created some real damage - along with strengthening the economy and promoting the movement of goods. We want this federal partnership to be appropriate for our new century. We uncovered a UN plot. want it to be sensitive to community context. We want it to be all about giving people more choices, not fewer.

Q. The coordination among agencies is to avoid having the Department of Transportation build a transit line in one neighborhood and HUD build an affording housing project somewhere else?

A. When these major developments are integrated and coordinated, you get more value. Housing can be the greenest, LEED-platinum-with-a-twist project, but if you've got to burn a gallon of gas to buy a gallon of milk, it's not sustainable. We're extraordinarily excited and supportive of the administration's effort to have EPA and the Department of Transportation working together on livability projects. This is tremendously important, not just symbolically but practically.

Q. You're careful to note that this wouldn't force local leaders to do anything they don't want to.

A. Absolutely.

Q. But there is a paranoid faction out there that's convinced that "livability" is code for socialized neighborhoods and U.N. control of the way we live and drive. How do you respond to that?

A. The Republican candidate [for Governor] in Colorado has certainly

This is where the legislation comes in, because the legislation is all about choices. It is voluntary and it will help people demonstrate the viability and the power of these concepts.

We invite people to come to Portland to show that nobody puts people on a bike at gunpoint. No one hunts people out of suburban subdivisions and force them to live in Portland's revitalized inner city neighborhoods. These are free market decisions that people have made. What

# Grist



we've done is provide the infrastructure because for too long, especially in the post-World War II era, the incentives and requirements and subsidies, have gone the other way. We didn't have a level playing field.

Q. So your response to people who say, 'Why is the government picking winners?' is that it already picks winners?

A. Since we first started taking land away from Native Americans and giving it to white settlers, we've been picking winners and losers. When the federal government decided it was going to give essentially free money for the interstate highways, but give no money to expand subway systems or keep streetcars alive, or just maintain bus systems ... that's not a level playing field. Roger Rabbit was right.

#### Q. About?

A. The film Who Framed Roger Rabbit, with a villain that was trying to get rid of streetcars, is one of our movie classics for livability. It is totally tongue in cheek but it is ever more salient as we look at communities that are discovering how villainous the plot was in Southern California and Toontown.

Q. So the thinking behind making this all voluntary is that there's enough market demand for walkable homes and workplaces.

A. You have chronicled a realtors' survey [here] from six years ago that, gee, people actually like to be able to walk out their front door and get a newspaper and a cup of coffee. That makes property more valuable.

We're watching a phenomenon now where there are young people who don't rush to the DMV as soon as they turn 16. The driving culture does not have the appeal it once had to the young. We have an increasing number of people who can't, shouldn't, can't afford to drive or just simply don't want to.

I admit to having a car. But I bike to work every day here in Washington, D.C., and try to bike as much as I can at home. The notion of it being a choice, not a requirement, is growing in power.

Q. You have an amendment that would direct HUD to look at transportation affordability along with housing affordability in its decisions [by developing a housing + transportation affordability index]. Do you expect that to survive in the bill?

A. I think it has a very good chance. It's very straightforward, there is support in the committee, and it gives basic consumer information that really helps people. For most people, you cannot separate transportation costs from housing costs. They are directly related. A lot of low-income people actually pay more for transportation than for hou sing. The more transportation choices near your housing, the better credit risk you are. This is good information for lenders, for developers, for consumers. I'm quite optimistic that we can make this step.

Q. Is there any appetite in Congress for encouraging location efficiency and home energy efficiency through federal underwriting standards?

A. Again, it makes sense. When you at the pattern of foreclosure in the most recent crisis, it's directly related to sprawl and lack of transportation choices. Those were communities that weren't sustainable. I think this is sinking in.

Q. What are the prospects of some form of housing legislation passing in the next year?

A. I think there's a reasonably good chance, if we can avoid the gridlock that characterized more than half of this congressional session. There is broad bipartisan interest in fixing Fannie and Freddie, for instance. In tightening things down a little bit but not destroying the pillar of the housing market. Right now, if we didn't have those [government-sponsored entities], we wouldn't have a housing market. I think there is interest in doing that, and there is an opportunity to take some of these voluntary steps that give communities more choices.



Q. Is there enough literacy in Congress about this stuff?

A. I think there are more and more people who are being aware. What is important is that we need to have the players — NGOs, local governments, people who sell real estate, who develop, who lend, who have lobbies — to get more fired up. That would help.

In fairness to my colleagues, they have a gazillion issues that come across their desks. What we have tried to do is provide a forum with our Livable Communities Task Force to bring members of Congress in to talk to experts. Last week we dropped word Jan Gehl, the delightful Danish architect and planner, who's been an evangelist on this for the last 40 years.

But I will say that people who care about this have not been as aggressive and organized as so many special interests back here. If we had half the focus and political action committees of the sugar lobby, we'd be swimming in livable communities.

# Bike Portland A congressman's college class that has changed Portland forever

By: Michael Anderson February 18, 2016

The one-of-a-kind free transportation class funded by the Portland Bureau of Transportation is celebrating a quarter century of enlightened change.

Created in 1991 by then-Transportation Commissioner Earl Blumenauer, the annual class costs the city \$8,000 a year and has so far churned out 1,200 graduates of a 10-week evening course that introduces interested residents to the history, theory and victories of Portland transportation.

Several dozen of those graduates met Tuesday night at Ecliptic Brewing for a party hosted by Blumenauer, now a U.S. congressman, to honor the class and its founding instructor Rick Gustafson.

Gustafson, a friend of Blumenauer's since they were high school classmates in Gresham, rose beside him through city politics and has served in many roles, including as a state legislator and the first elected executive of the Metro regional government.

Now a streetcar consultant, Gustafson continues to teach the course each fall and taps a contact list of prominent Portlanders to steep the class in the Portland story — and also offer advice on how to work the system for change.

For a final project, people who take the course are invited to deliver a detailed presentation about something they'd like to change in Portland's transportation system. (And, crucially, city staffers are under standing orders to respond to their questions.)

When they finish, people who take the course become 29 percent more likely to get involved in their neighborhood association, 89 percent

more likely to lead a campaign to make a transportation change and twice as likely to attend a city council meeting.

That's the finding of a 2015 study of the class by Portland State University scholar Nathan McNeil. His research was funded through the Transportation Research and Education Center at PSU.

The findings weren't all rosy. McNeil's survey of the class's alumni — who, I should disclose, include me — clearly show that the course is used mostly by relatively privileged people. Homeowners and higher-income people were overrepresented among alumni who responded to McNeil's survey; white people and educated people were greatly overrepresented. A grand total of zero alumni surveyed by McNeil identified as black.

Some (though not all) of that problem probably reflects the social networks of people who've learned about the course, which has never had much of a marketing budget. By far the most common way for people to learn about the course was word of mouth. The second most common way: a blog or listserv.

In an interview Tuesday, Blumenauer said he created the class basically as a defensive posture after being tapped to run the city's public works department. He wanted a place to point the people who came to him with complaints.

"About 6.5 minutes after I got the appointment from [then-Mayor] Bud [Clark], people had figured out

# Bike Portland

that I could do something about where a stop sign could go," Blumenauer said. "It was clear that a lot of what they knew about transportation wasn't true. So I had been obsessed with an opportunity for anyone to do a deep dive to understand these dynamics."

In exchange for getting people to promise to take the new course, Blumenauer promised to visit the final class and hear the best ideas of its graduates. That's a tradition that continues today; the city's transportation director and commissioner typically send representatives to evaluate final presentations.

Over the last 25 years, dozens of those final projects have doubtless taken some sort of root around the city. You know the covered seating area in front of Mississippi Pizza? That happened because my 2010 classmate Rebecca Hamilton (then an activist, now a planner at Metro) spent months lobbying the restaurant's owner to create the first of what became the city's Street Seats program.

Today it's just one example of the class paying off for the city. Surely readers will know of others.

"I had high hopes, but it worked out better than I have ever hoped," Blumeneauer said. "The thing I'm as proud of of anything I've done is this class."

Despite the fact that that Congressman talks it up every chance he gets on his travels around the country, he's not aware of any other city that has replicated it.

That might yet change. Part of McNeil's project was to create a handbook for other cities that want to imitate the program.

In an email Tuesday, McNeil said he's "working with TREC on identifying a few other cities to help implement the curriculum and get their own courses off the ground."

And if you happen to live in Portland, it's never too early to apply for a free seat in this year's class.

# The most dangerous roads in America have one thing in common

We can fix our staggering car fatality crisis. Start with these roads.

David Zipper Nov. 13, 2024

Some 110 years ago, a picturesque new road known as Roosevelt Boulevard began ferrying vehicles across the nascent but burgeoning neighborhoods of North and Northeast Philadelphia. At first, traffic was light, but it rapidly thickened as car ownership rose and the surrounding area developed. By the 1950s, when the boulevard expanded to meet the new Schuylkill Expressway, it was lined with row houses and shops. Today, what was initially a bucolic parkway has become a traffic-snarled, 12-lane thoroughfare snaking its way through neighborhoods that house 1 in 3 Philadelphians.

It is, by all accounts, a mess.

Dubbed the "corridor of death," Roosevelt Boulevard has been named the most dangerous street in the city (and among the most dangerous in the nation). In 2021, 24 crashes resulting in deaths or serious injuries took place there. Residents "want to get across the street to the pharmacy to get their medication or get across the street to the supermarket," Latanya Byrd, whose niece and three nephews were killed in a crash on the boulevard in 2013, said in a video produced by Smart Growth America. "It may take two, maybe three lights, for them to get all the way across."

It's not just pedestrians who loathe Roosevelt Boulevard. "People who walk, drive, or take public transit are all pretty badly screwed," Philadelphia's public radio station declared in 2017.

Aware of the road's shortcomings, city officials have long sought design changes that would reduce crashes. But they are powerless to act on their own, because the boulevard is controlled by the state of Pennsylvania.

That situation is common across the United States, where many of the most deadly, polluting, and generally awful urban streets are overseen by state departments of transportation (DOTs). Often they were constructed decades ago, when the surrounding areas were sparsely populated.

Although only 14 percent of urban road miles nationwide are under state control,

two-thirds of all crash deaths in the 101 largest metro areas occur there, according to a recent Transportation for America report. In some places, this disparity is widening: From 2016 to 2022, road fatalities in Austin, Texas, fell 20 percent on locally managed roads while soaring 98 percent on those the state oversees.

"The country is littered with roads that are a legacy of the past, that don't work very well, and that drive people crazy," said US Rep. Earl Blumenauer (D-OR), who calls them "legacy highways."

Instead of fixing such roadways, state officials tend to keep them as they are, citing limited resources or a need to maintain traffic speeds. In doing so, they constrain the capacity of even the most comprehensive local reforms to respond to urgent problems like car crash deaths, which are far more widespread in the US than among peer countries, or unreliable bus service.

Unless state DOTs recognize that a successful urban road must do more than facilitate fast car trips, that problem will persist.

In the early 1900s, states from coast to coast created transportation agencies to build smooth, wide roads that enabled long-distance car trips. New high-capacity roadways traversed forests and farmland, often terminating at what was then the urban edge. When Americans went on a car-buying binge after World War II, states like Michigan widened their thighways with the goal of keeping traffic moving quickly, a prime directive for engineers.

High-speed roadways fed rapid suburbanization, with new developments mushrooming on the city periphery. Columbus, Ohio, for instance, roughly

doubled in population from 1950 and 2000, while its land area quintupled. Sprawling cities in the South and Southwest emerged seemingly overnight, while new suburbs encircled older metropolises in the North.

In these newly urbanized areas, state highways that had previously meandered through the countryside were now lined with retail and housing. Their designers had initially paid little attention to transit, sidewalks, or tree cover — features that are often afterthoughts for rural roads, but crucial in more densely populated areas.

As with Philadelphia's Roosevelt Boulevard, the width and traffic speed of state roads in urban neighborhoods now frequently clash with local desires for street safety, quality transit service, and pedestrian comfort. But revising them is rarely a priority for state DOTs engaged in a Sisyphean battle against traffic congestion.

"If a state agency's primary focus is on moving vehicles, they're looking at reducing delays and building clear zones" that remove objects such as trees next to a road, where errant drivers might strike them, said Kristina Swallow, who previously led the Nevada DOT as well as urban planning for Tucson, Arizona. "At the local level, you're looking at a bunch of other activities. You have people walking or on a bike, so you may be okay with some congestion, because you know that's what happens when people are coming into an economically vibrant community."

City-state tensions over state highways can take many forms. Roadway safety is often a flashpoint, since fixes frequently involve slowing traffic that state officials want to keep flowing. In San Antonio, for instance, the city negotiated for years with the Texas DOT to add sidewalks and bike lanes to Broadway, a state arterial with seven lanes. Last year the state scuttled that plan at the 11th hour, leaving Broadway's current design in place.

Local efforts to improve transit service can also face state resistance. In September, Madison, Wisconsin, launched its first bus rapid transit(BRT) line, a fast form of bus service that relies on dedicated bus lanes. But much of its route runs along East Washington, an arterial managed by Wisconsin, and the state transportation department prevented Madison from making the entire BRT lane bus-only during rush hour. That could sabotage the new service out of the gate.

"These dedicated bus lanes would serve the bus best in the heaviest traffic, so it's counterintuitive to typical BRT design," said Chris McCahill, who leads the State Smart Transportation Initiative at the University of Wisconsin and serves on Madison's transportation commission. Wisconsin's DOT did not respond to a request for comment.

The whole point of fast transit programs like BRT is to get more people to ride transit instead of driving, thereby increasing the total humancapacity of a road since buses are much more space-efficient than cars. But that logic can escape state transportation executives oriented toward longer, intercity trips instead of shorter, intracity ones, as well as highway engineers trained to focus on maximizing the speed of all vehicles, regardless of how many people are inside them.

Even sympathetic state transportation officials may not fix dysfunctional urban roadways due to limited resources and competing needs that include expensive upgrades to bridges and interstates. Critical but relatively small-dollar projects, such as street intersection adjustments that better serve pedestrians or bus riders, can get lost in the shuffle. Lacking the authority to make changes themselves, city officials are stuck.

"How do you create connected networks when you don't own the intersection, and to fix it you have to compete at the state level with 500 other projects?" said Stefanie Seskin, the director of policy and practice at the National Association of City Transportation Officials (NACTO).

As an example, Seskin cited the state-controlled St. Mary's Street bridge in Brookline, a dense suburb adjacent to Boston. "It's the only way to get to and from Boston that isn't on a major, super busy arterial," she said. "It's not structurally deficient, but from the position of those walking, biking, and using transit, it's just not functioning well. It requires a reconstruction" — something that Massachusetts has not done.

With deaths among US pedestrians and cyclists hitting a 40year high in 2022, a growing number of state DOTs are starting to acknowledge that maximizing vehicle speed is not the only goal that matters on urban roadways. The Pennsylvania DOT, for example, is now working with Philadelphia to at last bring lane redesigns, bus lane improvements, and speed cameras to Roosevelt Boulevard. On the other side of the country, the head of the Washington state DOT has requested \$150 million from the state



legislature to address the shortcomings of legacy highways.

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"I think there are people in every single state DOT who want to be more proactive and to plan for safer streets for people who are moving, no matter what mode of transportation they use," Seskin told me. "I don't think that that was necessarily the case 20 years ago."

Still, fixing the deficiencies of state roadways requires a paradigm shift within state DOTs, with senior officials accepting that maximizing car speeds jeopardizes crucial local priorities like accommodating pedestrians, enabling rapid transit service, or supporting outdoor dining. Such nuance can escape state highway engineers trained with a myopic focus on vehicle speed. "Many of the people doing roadway design work for states are still stuck in the old model," said Billy Hattaway, an engineer who previously held senior transportation roles in the Florida DOT as well as the city of Orlando.

McCahill, of the State Smart Transportation Initiative, empathized with those toiling within state DOTs. "Think about their position as engineers," he said. "They've got their federal highway design guidelines, they've got their state guidelines. They've been conditioned to be conservative and not try new things."

Historically, those roadway design guidelines have prioritized free-flowing traffic. Making them more malleable could empower engineers to get more creative. Instead of applying one-size-fits-all rules for elements like lane widths and traffic lights, "context-sensitive design" encourages engineers working in urban settings to add pedestrian crossings, narrow lanes, and other features that can support local transportation needs. McCahill applauded Florida's DOT for recently "rewriting" its design guide to incorporate such context-sensitive layouts. Federal money could help finance such redesigns — if state officials know how to use it. "There's a lack of knowledge about the flexibility of federal dollars, with misunderstandings and different interpretations," said NACTO's Seskin. Recognizing the issue, over the summer, the Federal Highway Administration published guidance and held a webinar highlighting dozens of federal funding programs available to upgrade legacy highways.

Then there is an alternative approach: Rather than revise problematic roads themselves, states can hand them over to local officials, letting them manage improvements and maintenance. Washington state, for instance, in 2011 transferred a 2.5-mile strip of state road 522 to the Seattle suburb of Bothell. But such moves are not always financially feasible.

"The risk is that when you transfer a highway to local government, you take away the capacity to properly fund it over the long term" because the city becomes responsible for upkeep, said Brittney Kohler, the legislative director of transportation and infrastructure for the National League of Cities. Unless the revamped road spurs development that creates new tax revenue, as it did in Bothell, cash-strapped cities may be unable to afford the costs of retrofits and ongoing maintenance.

In Portland, Oregon, pretty much everyone seems to agree that 82nd Avenue, a major thoroughfare that the state manages, is a disaster.

Originally a little-used roadway marking the eastern edge of the city, 82nd Avenue has developed into a bustling arterial. It's been a dangerous eyesore for decades, with potholed pavement, insufficient pedestrian crossings, inadequate lighting, and minimal tree cover, said Art Pearce, a deputy director for the Portland Bureau of Transportation.

According to city statistics, from 2012 to 2021, crashes on the thoroughfare caused 14 deaths and 122 serious injuries. At least two-thirds of crash victims were pedestrians, bicyclists, or occupants of cars turning left at intersections without traffic signals.

During winter storms, Pearce said state workers would often clear nearby Interstate 205 but leave 82nd Avenue unplowed, leaving the city to do it without compensation. "Our priority in snow and ice is to keep public transit moving, and 82nd

Avenue has the highest transit ridership in the whole state," he said.

Nearby residents and business owners have been begging local officials to revamp 82nd Avenue for decades, said Pearce and Blumenauer (whose congressional district includes Portland). The state was willing to transfer the roadway to the city, but the local officials wanted more than a handshake.

"We were like, if you give us \$500 million, the city will take over 82nd Avenue and fix it," Pearce said. "The state officials answered, 'We don't have \$500 million, so hey, good meeting."

A breakthrough came in 2021, when the American Rescue Plan Act offered states and cities a one-time influx of federal funding. Matching that money with contributions of their own, the state and city negotiated a transfer of seven miles of 82nd Avenue from the Oregon DOT to Portland. Some \$185 million will go toward new features including sidewalk extensions, trees, a BRT line, and curb cuts for those using a wheelchair or stroller. Blumenauer, who said that reconstructing 82nd Avenue has been a personal goal for 35 years, led US Transportation Secretary Pete Buttigieg on a tour of the roadway last year.

The success story is "a bit of a one-off," Blumenauer admits, reliant on stimulus dollars tied to the Covid-19 pandemic. But a dedicated federal funding source could enable similar roadway reboots nationwide.

At the moment, President-elect Donald Trump and incoming congressional Republicans show little appetite for transportation reforms, but a golden opportunity will come during the development of the next multiyear surface transportation bill, which is expected to be passed after the 2026 midterms. Although Blumenauer did not run for reelection this month, he said he hopes the future bill will include a competitive grant program that invites state and local officials to submit joint proposals to upgrade state highways in urban areas, with federal dollars acting as a sweetener.

Otherwise, these state roads will continue to obstruct urban residents' most cherished goals of safety, clean air, and public space. Flourishing cities cannot coexist with fast, decrepit roads. Too many state officials have not yet learned that lesson.

# **The Washington Post** Rep. Earl Blumenauer to retire after nearly three decades in Congress



By: Maegan Vazquez October 31, 2023

Rep. Earl Blumenauer (D-Ore.), who has spent nearly three decades in Congress, announced Monday night that he does not plan to seek reelection next year.

"I have dedicated my career to creating livable communities where people are safe, healthy, and economically secure," Blumenauer, 75, said in a Facebook post announcing his upcoming retirement. "This mission has guided my involvement on a wide range of issues that have been very rewarding for me and productive for our community. Now, it is time to refocus on a narrower set of priorities."

In a half a century of public service — roughly two-thirds of his life — Blumenauer has also served as a state legislator, county commissioner and city council member in Oregon. He was first elected to Congress in a special election in 1996 to succeed then-Rep. Ron Wyden (D-Ore.), who had been elected to the Senate. Known for his signature bow ties and bike lapel pins, Blumenauer has been a policy advocate for public transportation, housing, sustainability and marijuana reforms. He currently serves as a member of the House Ways and Means Committee, and is the ranking Democrat on the Subcommittee on Trade. He also founded the Congressional Bike Caucus, which advocates for safer streets and other pro-bicyclist policies.

Blumenauer's congressional district, which includes Portland and Mount Hood, has been a Democratic stronghold and he is expected to be succeed by another Democrat.

Sen. Jeff Merkley (D-Ore.) tweeted that Blumenauer has long "been a powerful force in the policy and politics of Oregon and America."

"He is a national leader on issues from urban transportation and housing to climate and cannabis. I so thank him for his over 50 years of public service," Merkley said.

House Minority Leader Hakeem Jeffries (D-N.Y.) credited



Blumenauer with helping craft key legislation.

"As a senior Member of the Committee on Ways and Means, he was an architect of the single largest investment in addressing climate change in our nation's history," Jeffries said in a statement, adding that "as Chair of the Subcommittee on Trade, Earl ensured that the bipartisan United States Mexico Canada Trade Agreement protected American workers."

"Earl and his bicycle pins will be greatly missed after the conclusion of this term and I wish him and his family the best as he begins this next chapter," Jeffries said.



CNU VIII PLENARY SPEAKER

PORTLAND: GROUND ZERO IN THE LIVABLE COMMUNITIES DEBATE

U.S. Congressman Earl Blumenauer

Presented at CNU 2000: The Politics of Place

JUNE 16, 2000, 8:30 AM

#### Mass Transit

#### Rep. Blumenauer led a movement of connection and choice

Rep. Earl Blumenauer's time in public service has been spent advocating for causes that give people more choices in how they live, move and connect within their communities.

Mischa Wanek-Libman June 4, 2024



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#### **The Livable Communities Task Force**

Early in the 105th, Earl founded the Livable Communities Task Force within the Democratic Caucus. The Task Force seeks to both educate Members of Congress and their staff on the federal role in enhancing community livability, and to support federal policies that promote local, regional and state efforts to make our nation's communities places where families can be safe, healthy and economically secure.

#### WHY IS THE TASK FORCE NECESSARY?

- Communities all across the country are finding creative ways to improve the quality of life for their citizens. Since 1996, over 500 local and statewide ballot measures have been passed to provide communities the tools they need to provide more transportation choices, enhance environmental quality, improve safety and generally make communities better places to live.
- As these efforts build at the local level, the Livable Communities effort in Congress recognizes the fact that federal policies from transportation to tax incentives to environmental regulations and everything in between -- have a profound effect on the livability of our communities. The Task Force seeks to identify both the ways in which the federal government affects community livability as well as the means by which the federal government can be a better partner.
- During the 106th Congress, the Task Force sponsored bi-monthly briefings to spotlight national livable community leaders, supportive federal programs, and activity by Task Force Members to promote livability in their districts. It is also a forum for Members to promote legislation and budget requests, and to share information on issues related to smart growth and livable communities.

#### THE TASK FORCE SUPPORTS FEDERAL POLICIES THAT:

- Provide local communities with the tools to solve their own local problems
- Promote cheaper, more environmentally friendly solutions to infrastructure problems, thereby preserving and conserving resources
- Emphasizes partnerships among and between local government, private companies, federal government, non-profits, and citizen groups for funding solutions
- Require local community involvement in government decisions at all levels

For more information or to join, contact James Koski in Congressman Blumenauer's Washington, D.C. office at (202) 225-4811, or Julia Pomeroy in the Portland District office at (503) 231-2300, or check out our website at http://www.house.gov/blumenauer

Background Information

#### Appendix

#### Rebuild and Renew America

- **1997:** Post Office Relocation Act Modifies Federal postal provisions to require a 60-day notice before the renovation, relocation, closing, or consolidation (currently, the closing or consolidation) of a post office.
- **1999, 2001, 2003, 2005:** Post Office Community Partnership Act Modifies Federal postal law to revise requirements for the closing or consolidation of a post office and apply them, as well, to its proposed closing, consolidation, relocation, or construction.
- 2000, 2001: Community Character Act Directs the Secretary of Housing and Urban Development to establish a program to provide grants to States (including tribal governments and Native Hawaiian organizations) to assist in the development or revision of land use planning legislation and the creation or revision of State and multi-State comprehensive land use plans or plan elements.
- 2003, 2009: Orphan Highway Restoration Act Directs the Secretary of Transportation to make grants and provide assistance to States and local governments to work on highways, sidewalks, bike lanes, traffic devises, etc.
- 2007: Celebrating the contributions of the architectural profession during National Architecture Week.
- 2007: H.Amdt.743 to the Housing and Economic Recovery Act of 2008 Requires natural gas utilities to integrate energy efficiency resources into the plans and planning processes of the natural gas utility; and adopt policies that establish energy efficiency as a priority resource in the plans and planning processes of the natural gas utility. *Agreed to in House on August 4, 2007.*
- 2008: H.Res.936 Resolution reaffirming the goals and ideals that formed the impetus for Albert Gallatin's national plan for transportation improvements 200 years ago, and for other purposes. *Agreed to in House June 18, 2008.*
- 2008: United States Commission on Rebuilding America for the 21st Century Act -Establishes the United States Commission on Rebuilding America for the 21st Century to review published materials on the nation's transportation, water, energy, public lands, and housing infrastructure and assess the challenges of meeting the nation's infrastructure needs in the 21st century.
- **2009**: Clean, Low-Emission, Affordable, New Transportation Efficiency Act Establishes the Low Greenhouse Gas Transportation Fund
- 2009, 2012: To direct the Secretary of the Treasury to establish a pilot program to study alternatives to the current system of taxing motor vehicle fuels, including systems based on the number of miles traveled by each vehicle.

- 2013: H.Amdt.1154 to the Military Construction and Veterans Affairs and Related Agencies Appropriations Act, 2013 - Redirects funding within the Military Construction, Defense Wide account to increase funding for study, planning, design, and architect and engineer services by \$10 million.
- 2013: To amend title 23, United States Code, with respect to the establishment of performance measures for the highway safety improvement program, and for other purposes To establish performance measures for states to use to assess significant reductions in the number of serious injuries and fatalities for both motorized and nonmotorized transportation.
- 2013: Water Trust Fund Act Amends the Internal Revenue Code to establish in the Treasury a Water Infrastructure Investment Trust Fund.
- 2013, 2015: Road Charge Fee Pilot Program Act Directs the Secretary of the Treasury to establish the Road Usage Fee Pilot Program to make competitive grants to state or local governments, or metropolitan planning, regional transportation planning, or tribal organizations to conduct pilot studies on implementing mileage-based fee systems as a method for funding transportation highway projects
- 2015: Postal Innovation Act Directs the U.S. Postal Service (USPS) to establish a pilot program to provide nonpostal services through public-private partnerships in five postal districts or regions, including at least one rural area.
- 2015: H.Amdt.755 to H.Amdt.734 to the FAST Act Increases the number of states eligible for funding through the nonmotorized National Priority Safety Program, and doubles the funding for that program.
- 2017: Safe Communities Act Directs the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) to provide grants encouraging community safety by incorporating disaster mitigation and emergency preparedness into comprehensive land use planning and urban development to assist states and local governments.
- 2019, 2021: PLACE Act Directs the Department of Transportation to provide grants to institutions of higher education to (1) operate a national highly automated vehicle clearinghouse; (2) collect, conduct, and fund research on how autonomous vehicles can influence land use, urban design, transportation, real estate, municipal budgets, social equity, and the environment; and (3) make such research publicly available online. *Enacted in the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act in 2021*.
- 2019, 2021: Road User Charge Advancement Act Revises and reauthorizes through FY2025 the Department of Transportation's (DOT's) surface transportation system funding alternatives program. *Enacted in the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act in 2021*.

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- 2021: Rebuilding America's Airport Infrastructure Act Increases the cap on the airport passenger facility charge program of the Federal Aviation Administration.
- 2023: To direct the Administrator of the Federal Emergency Management Agency to issue guidance on extreme temperature events and resilience goals, and for other purposes.
- 2023: Empowering Resilient Communities Act Directs the Administrator of the Federal Emergency Management Agency to issue guidance on extreme temperature events and resilience goals.

#### <u>Transit</u>

- **1997**: H.Res.37 Authorizing the House of Representatives to participate in State and local government transit programs pursuant to section 7905 of title 5, United States Code
- 2008: Transportation and Housing Choices for Gas Price Relief Act the Secretary of Transportation to: (1) carry out a competitive grant program that supports community efforts to invest in transportation alternative; and (2) award grants to proposals for reducing single occupancy vehicle trips
- 2010: Transportation and Housing Transparency Act Requires the Secretary of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) to develop publicly a transportation affordability index that measures the transportation costs associated with the location of a home, both on a neighborhood and regional basis.

#### <u>Bikes</u>

- **1999, 2000:** H.Con.Res.314 Authorizing the use of the Capitol Grounds for a bike rodeo to be conducted by the Earth Force Youth Bike Summit. Agreed to in House on May 3, 2000.
- 2003: H.Amdt.78 to the Energy Policy Act of 2003 Provides for the establishment of a conserve by bicycling pilot program within the Department of Transportation; authorizes ten pilot projects dispersed throughout the United States; and requires a report to Congress on the feasibility of converting motor vehicle trips to bicycle trips. Agreed to in House on April 10, 2003
- 2005: H.Con.Res.145 Expressing the sense of Congress in support of a national bike month and in appreciation of cyclists and others for promoting bicycle safety and the benefits of cycling. Agreed to in House on July 25, 2006.
- 2002, 2005: Congratulating Lance Armstrong on his exceptional career upon his victory in the 2005 Tour de France and retiring from professional cycling.

- 2005: H.Amdt.88 to the Energy Policy Act of 2005 Amendment provides for the establishment in the Department of Transportation of the "Conserve by Bicycle Program". Agreed to in House on April 21, 2005
- 2008: H.Con.Res.305 Recognizing the importance of bicycling in transportation and recreation Supports policies that increase bicycle use. Agreed to in House on June 2, 2008.
- 2009: Safe Routes to High Schools Act Amends the Safe, Accountable, Flexible, Efficient Transportation Equity Act: A Legacy for Users (SAFETEA-LU) to include high school students as beneficiaries of the safe routes to school program. Enacted in the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act in 2021.
- 2010: Active Community Transportation Act Directs the Secretary of Transportation to carry out an active transportation investment program to encourage a mode shift to active transportation within selected communities that have development plans that provide safe and convenient opportunities to travel by bicycling and walking.
- 2015, 2017, 2019, 2021: Vision Zero Act Authorizes the Secretary of Transportation to award grants to a city, town, township, borough, county, parish, district, village, or other political subdivision of a state to develop a Vision Zero plan to eliminate transportation-related fatalities and serious injuries in its jurisdiction within 10 years. Enacted in the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act in 2021.
- 2016, 2017, 2019, 2021: Bikeshare Transit Act This bill allows bikeshare projects to be eligible for federal funding. Enacted in the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act in 2021.
- 2016: H.Amdt.1165 to the Continuing Appropriations and Military Construction, Veterans Affairs, and Related Agencies Appropriations Act, 2017, and Zika Response and Preparedness Act Requires the Architect of the Capitol to conduct a feasibility study regarding the installation and operation of Capital Bikeshare stations on Capitol Grounds. Agreed to in House on June 9, 2016.
- 2022, 2023: Bicycles for Rural African Transport Act To establish within the Office of Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment of the United States Agency for International Development a rural mobility program to promote mobility in rural communities through access to affordable, fit-for-purpose bicycles, provide support to sustainably increase access to rural areas.
- 2023: Sarah Debbink Langenkamp Active Transportation Safety Act Will support state and local government efforts to build safer, more complete, networks for bicycling and walking

#### Appendix

#### **Streetcars**

- 2003: Community Streetcar Development and Revitalization Act Establishes a five-year pilot grant program to provide Federal assistance to States and local governmental authorities for the capital and startup costs of development and expansion of streetcar transportation.
- 2009: Fast Starts Act Authorizes the Secretary of Transportation to make grants to state and local government authorities for eligible new fixed guideway streetcar capital projects that are electricity- and rail-based
- 2009: Federal Streetcar Revitalization Act Revises small starts program requirements to increase the ceiling amounts of federal funding under a grant to state and local governments

#### Greening the Tax Code

- 2001, 2003, 2005, 2007: Bicycle Commuter Act Amends the Internal Revenue Code to include a bicycle commuting allowance as a qualified transportation fringe benefit.
- **2007:** Rural Wind Energy Development Act Amends the Internal Revenue Code to provide a tax credit for the installation of wind energy property and an accelerated depreciation allowance for such property. *Enacted*.
- 2007: To amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to include heavier vehicles in the limitation on the depreciation of certain luxury automobiles Amends the Internal Revenue Code to revise the definition of "passenger automobile" for purposes of the limitation on depreciation for luxury automobiles to mean any four-wheeled vehicle which is primarily designed or used to carry passengers over public streets, roads, or highways; and rated at 14,000 pounds unloaded gross vehicle weight or less.
- 2007, 2009, 2011, 2013, 2015, 2017, 2019, 2021: Superfund Reinvestment Act Amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to fund the Hazardous Substance Superfund and ensure adequate resources for the cleanup of hazardous substances. *Enacted in the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act and the Inflation Reduction Act*.
- 2007, 2009: American Family Farm and Ranchland Protection Act Amends the Internal Revenue Code to increase to \$5 million the limitation on the estate tax exclusion for land subject to a qualified conservation easement and to increase the percentage of the value of such land that is excludable. the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to limit the application of tax exempt bond financing relating to newly included counties in the Gulf Opportunity Zone to property, neither the acquisition of which occurred, nor the construction, reconstruction, or renovations began, prior to the enactment of the Housing Assistance Tax Act of 2008 Amends the Internal Revenue Code to limit the application of tax-exempt

- bond financing for properties located in the Gulf Opportunity Zone (GO Zone) counties of Colbert and Dallas, Alabama, for which neither the acquisition occurred, nor the construction, reconstruction, or renovation was begun, before the enactment of the Housing Assistance Tax Act of 2008.
- 2009: To amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to allow employees to receive transportation fringe benefits for the same month both in the form of transit passes and reimbursement of bicycle commuting expenses Amends the Internal Revenue Code to allow employees to receive transit passes and reimbursements of bicycle commuting expenses as tax-exempt employer-provided fringe benefits in the same month and exempts reimbursements of bicycle commuting expenses from inclusion in gross income as constructively received.
- 2009: Green Route to Work Act Amends the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to improve commuting and transportation options.
- 2009: Idling Reduction Tax Credit Act Amends the Internal Revenue Code to allow a business tax credit for 50% of the cost of a qualified idling reduction device, up to \$3,000.
- 2009, 2012: Water Protection and Reinvestment Act Amends the Internal Revenue Code to establish in the Treasury the Water Protection and Reinvestment Trust Fund (Trust Fund) to support investments in clean water and drinking water infrastructure
- 2010: Green Railcar Enhancement Act Amends the Internal Revenue Code to allow, through 2011, a new business-related tax credit for 25% of the cost of acquiring or rebuilding freight railcars which achieve an increase in capacity or fuel efficiency of at least 8%. (Provides an incentive to encourage the replacement of inefficient, outdated freight railcars with greener, more fuel-efficient vehicles)
- 2010: Geothermal Energy Investment Act Amends the Internal Revenue Code to temporarily increase the investment tax credit for geothermal energy property to 30%.
- 2010, 2011, 2013, 2015, 2020, 2021, 2023: End Oil and Gas Tax Subsidies Act (formerly the End Big Oil Tax Subsidies Act) Amends the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to repeal fossil fuel subsidies for large oil companies.
- 2010: Heavy Truck Tax Fairness Act Amends the Internal Revenue Code to repeal the excise tax on heavy trucks and trailers sold at retail, increase the rate of tax on diesel fuel or kerosene to 31.6 cents per gallon, and impose a floor stocks tax with respect to certain taxable fuels
- 2010: Transportation Finance Innovation Demonstration Act Amends the Internal Revenue Code to impose a vehicle mileage tax on mobile mounted concrete boom pump vehicles in lieu of the tax on taxable fuels.

- 2010: Renewable Energy Expansion Act of 2010 Amends the Internal Revenue Code to: (1) allow taxpayers an election to receive a direct payment for investing in or producing specified energy property in lieu of existing energy tax credits; and (2) extend eligibility for such payments until January 1, 2013
- 2011: Commuter Relief Act Amends the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to improve commuting and transportation options.
- 2012: Wind Powering American Jobs Act Amends the Internal Revenue Code to extend through 2013 the tax credit for the production of electricity from wind facilities and the energy tax credit for investment in wind facilities and limits the foreign tax credit and tax deferrals for amounts paid or accrued by a major integrated oil company that is a dual capacity taxpayer.
- 2013, 2015: Update, Promote, and Develop America's Transportation Essentials Act -Amends the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to increase the excise tax on gasoline, diesel, and kerosene fuels.
- 2014: Rural Wind Energy Expansion Act Amends the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to increase the maximum nameplate capacity of a small wind turbine qualifying for an energy credit from 100 kilowatts to 20 megawatts.
- 2014, 2015: Bridge to a Clean Energy Future Act Amends the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to extend certain expiring provisions relating to energy.
- 2015, 2017, 2019, 2020, 2021: Tar Sands Tax Loophole Elimination Act Amends the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to clarify that tar sands are crude oil for purposes of the Federal excise tax on petroleum.
- 2016, 2017: RAISE IT Act Amends the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to increase the excise tax on gasoline, diesel, and kerosene fuels.
- 2017, 2018: American Opportunity Carbon Fee Act Amends the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to provide for carbon dioxide and other greenhouse gas emission fees, reduces the rate of the corporate income tax, provides tax credits to workers, and delivers additional benefits to retired and disabled Americans.
- 2019: BRACE Act Amends the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to permanently extend the tax credit for railroad track maintenance. Enacted in 2020.
- 2019, 2021: Public Buildings Renewal Act Amends the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to provide for the tax-exempt financing of certain government-owned buildings.
- 2019, 2021, 2023: Bicycle Commuter Act Amends the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to modify employer-provided fringe benefits for bicycle commuting. Passed the House in 2021.
- 2019: Move America Act Amends the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to allow tax-exempt

- Move America bonds and Move America tax credits to be used for certain infrastructure projects
- 2019, 2022, 2023: No Tax Subsidies for Stadiums Act Amends the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to ensure that bonds used to finance professional stadiums are not treated as tax-exempt bonds.
- 2019, 2021: BUILD Act Amends the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to increase the national limitation amount for qualified highway or surface freight transfer facility bonds from \$15 billion to \$20.8 billion.
- 2019: Renewable Energy Transferability Act Amends the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to allow for transfers of the tax credits for renewable electricity production and renewable energy property. *Enacted in the Inflation Reduction Act.*
- 2019: Rebuild America Act Provides for an incremental increase in the excise taxes on gasoline, diesel, and kerosene fuels over a five-year period.
- 2019, 2021: Renewable Energy Investment Act Provides taxpayers the option to receive tax-excludable elective payments for energy property and electricity produced from certain renewable resources. *Enacted in the Inflation Reduction Act.*
- 2019, 2021: Energy Efficient Commercial Buildings Act Reinstates and extends the tax deduction for energy efficient commercial buildings through 2024 and modifies efficiency standards for commercial buildings. *Enacted in the Inflation Reduction Act.*
- 2020, 2021: Revitalizing Economies, Housing, and Businesses Act (formerly the REHAB Act Amends the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to modify provisions relating to the rehabilitation tax credit, allowing an increased 15% credit for non-historic buildings placed in service 50 years prior to the current calendar year.
- 2020, 2021: Rural Wind Energy Modernization and Extension Act Amends the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to expand the energy tax credit to include qualified distributed wind energy property. *Enacted in the Inflation Reduction Act.*
- 2022: To amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to stipulate that a parking benefit is not a qualified parking fringe benefit unless an employer offers employees the option to receive an equivalent cash benefit or alternative tax-exempt benefit in lieu of the parking benefit Denies a tax exclusion for qualified parking fringe benefits unless employers providing such benefits offer their employees the option to receive, in lieu of the parking benefit, the fair market value of the parking.

#### Appendix

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Historic Preservation

• 2019, 2021: Historic Tax Credit Growth and Opportunity Act - Amends the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to modify the rehabilitation credit for certain small projects and eliminates the requirement that the taxpayer's basis in a building be reduced by the amount of the rehabilitation credit determined with respect to such building.

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NATIONAL DEFENSE AND SECURITY

# National Defense and Security

No area has been of greater concern during Congressman Earl Blumenauer's congressional career than national defense and security. Earl's national defense agenda crystalized around two goals: eliminating wasteful defense spending and securing individual privacy against domestic surveillance policies.

Earl is deeply concerned about the gap between spending and results. Earl has consistently fought against wasteful defense spending that has missed the mark. Early on, he saw the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan as a disaster in the making, costing a huge number of lives, and money, while making us less safe rather than more. This is a reoccurring theme that Earl has opposed.

Following the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001, Earl's defense agenda came into focus. In a dictation from September 12, Earl states:

"For the last two Congresses, I've been working on provisions to strengthen our defenses against terrorism... We cannot squander tens, perhaps hundreds of billions of dollars on a remote threat from a rogue state when we clearly have an immediate danger to American security that is going to cost billions in its own right... There is no question that we are in a battle, that we are going to have to respond against these forces of hatred and terror. It will require a firm response but not indiscriminate carnage... The country demands, whether it is spending on our defense and intelligence, or protecting our economy and environment, that maybe we use this new sense of urgency and spirit of cooperation to rise above old ways of thinking to make all Americans safer, healthier, and more economically secure. Foresee or prevent the attack on 9/11,"

Earl was concerned that continuing to fund and seek out military response would only perpetuate fear and terrorism.

Reflecting on President Bush's joint session of Congress in September 2001, Earl notes, "It seems to me that in this time of extreme tension and a sense of urgency, that we should be urgent about doing things right. The last thing we can afford to do is throw large amounts of money at incomplete solutions, take shortcuts on legislative procedures that may jeopardize program stability or fundamental rights of Americans."

In 2002, as a member of the then House Committee on International Relations, Earl voted against the Bush Administration and House leadership's resolution authorizing the use of military force against Iraq. The resolution effectively authorized President Bush to use military force against Iraq at any time. In committee, Earl argued in favor of amendments to require the Administration to pursue inspections and other actions under the auspices of the United Nations rather than use unilateral, preemptive military force against Iraq. He called preemptive U.S. use of force "dangerous" and "a terrible precedent."

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# National Defense and Security

Earl strongly urged the Bush Administration to continue its current efforts at the United Nations. The Administration was considering a more aggressive process of inspection for weapons of mass destruction within Iraq. Earl supported that approach as an alternative to war. His statement opposing unilateral force in Iraq underscores the values and strategy in his defense policy work: "If we can't live up to our principles, how can we expect other countries to obey the rule of law?"

Earl believes that a safe, secure, and resilient homeland means more than just preventing the next terrorist attack. It also means ensuring that the liberties and privacy of all Americans are respected, that we are prepared for natural disasters, pandemics, cyber-attacks, and the ever-changing nature of international threats.

Earl opposed the Patriot Act as he was concerned about the lack of safeguards for Americans. Regarding the 2005 reauthorization, Earl said, "This is a step backwards. It puts the Administration on too long of a leash and does not force Congress to review and modify the act as needed. We can keep America safe without compromising our civil liberties."

During his tenure on the International Relations Committee, Earl notably called for a committee investigation into the torture of detainees as part of the United States' foreign policy in 2005. Despite media reports of the use of torture by the United States, no Congressional Committee has investigated the breadth of these allegations. Shortly after calls for congressional investigations, the House overwhelmingly (420-2) approved Earl and Senator Edward Markey's amendment to the \$82 billion Emergency Supplemental Appropriations for Iraq and Afghanistan legislation, prohibiting the use of federal funds for the torture of detainees in American custody and for sending detainees to countries that practice torture. Earl also led several efforts spanning the 2000s to implement meaningful oversight and accountability to address the use of torture by U.S. forces in military prisons in Iraq, Afghanistan, and Guantanamo Bay, Cuba.

The intersection of national security and civil liberties came to a head in 2013 following the leaks by private security contractor Edward Snowden. In an editorial, Earl remarks that with a ballooned defense department, leaks like this were not a matter of if, but when. "If this kind of leak can happen with 400 people having access to sensitive information, consider the inherent challenges created by our vast, sprawling security apparatus, where nearly 5 million people have access to confidential or secret security data, including more than 1.4 million with top-secret clearance. These people are not just employees of government agencies across the country. Private contractors make up 21 percent (1,065,787) of the total number of clearance holders."

# National Defense and Security

Aligning with his interest in using defense funding strategically, Earl has long been a leader in nuclear disarmament. Earl supported the Treaty on the Prohibition of nuclear weapons, the Smarter Approaches to Nuclear Expenditures Act, and led many targeted NDAA amendments, Earl is constantly looking for ways to inject sanity into the U.S. nuclear arms policy discussion. Earl led the Smarter Approaches to Nuclear Expenditures (SANE) Act, which would rein in the extraordinary costs of Pentagon spending on our nuclear weapons arsenal. The bill was supported by a broad coalition of anti-war leftists and right-wing budget hawks. Earl also led the NDAA amendment to support a policy of no first use for nuclear weapons each year.

The SANE Act introduction reflects a broader global debate regarding nuclear proliferation. This importance also impacted international affairs, and Earl anticipated the Iran Nuclear Agreement would be "the most important decision I have made in Congress since voting against the disastrous Iraq war." Formally known as the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA), the Iran Nuclear Deal is a landmark accord reached between Iran and several world powers, including the United States, in July 2015. Under its terms, Iran agreed to dismantle much of its nuclear program and open its facilities to more extensive international inspections in exchange for billions of dollars' worth of sanctions relief. Earl supported the deal as it was not only a strong diplomatic statement, that six world powers could join for a common good, but

also the 15-year agreement period would allow for remarkable progress, especially considering the current nuclear breakout time for Iran was less than 15 weeks.

In March 2016, Earl successfully amended the NDAA to highlight the true cost of wasteful U.S. Nuclear weapons programs. The amendment increased transparency in nuclear weapons spending by requiring the Department of Defense to report to Congress the total cost of research, production, and maintenance of the B-21 bomber program.

In 2023, Earl continued to work to find the balance between protecting security abroad and avoiding unnecessary war. Earl strongly supported aid to Ukraine and was a strong advocate for robust support for humanitarian needs in nations that previously relied on imported Ukrainian grain. In 2022, Earl led the effort in Congress to secure \$200 million in funding for emergency nutrition assistance in countries whose populations are increasingly at risk of famine and severe malnutrition.

### National Defense & Security

#### PRESS RELEASE: Blumenauer: "Cut Wasteful Military Spending that Weakens Our Country"

#### May 18th, 2012

WASHINGTON – Rep. Earl Blumenauer, a senior member of the House Ways & Means and Budget Committees, submitted the following statement to the Congressional Record regarding the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2013 (NDAA):

Today, I voted against the National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA) for Fiscal Year 2013.

While nothing is more important than keeping America and our men and women in uniform safe, this legislation wastes too much money and represents another missed opportunity for greatly needed reform. The NDAA offered by the Majority is an example of Congress' inability to make hard choices on defense spending. Instead they opted for an "all of the above" strategy that put the funding of an already bloated military budget ahead of any semblance of fiscal responsibility – unbelievably, this authorization will consume 57 percent of our total discretionary budget and provide \$8 billion more than the cap for defense set by the Budget Control Act.

Congress needs to show leadership and prove that we have the ability to make difficult choices. That's why I, along with Representatives Barbara Lee and Barney Frank, introduced an amendment to cut defense spending for Fiscal Year 13 by \$8 billion, aligning this bill with the levels authorized by the Budget Control Act.

It's clear to people across the nation that we can no longer separate national security from fiscal responsibility. Congress needs to get that message. Last week, a Stimson Center poll found that, on average, Americans feel the defense budget should go down by 18 percent in 2013. In addition to the public, budget hawks and military experts also agree that we need to cut defense spending. Instead, we'll decrease spending by less than half of one percent.

In addition to containing excessive spending on weapons systems that correspond to threats that no longer exist, the bill contains a number of harmful policy provisions. It fails to expedite a rapid and secure withdrawal from Afghanistan; an amendment to the bill that I voted for would have made some progress on detainee provisions, but failed; NDAA prevents the administration from closing Guantanamo once and for all; and, it erodes the New START treaty aimed at decreasing the size of America's nuclear arsenal.

Without more cuts to the Pentagon, we undermine the very security here at home we aim to protect through military spending. Crumbling bridges and roads, failing schools, and a massive national debt all pose a greater national threat to America's power abroad than modest and reasonable cuts to defense spending.

President Eisenhower once said, "Every gun that is made, every warship launched, every rocket fired signifies, in the final sense, a theft from those who hunger and are not fed, those who are cold and not clothed." Those words still ring true today. Even though my amendment did not become part of the final bill, I will not stop fighting to cut wasteful military spending that actually weakens our country.

#### Appendix

- **1999**: To provide penalties for terrorist attacks against mass transportations Amends the Federal criminal code to set penalties for specified terrorist attacks against mass transportation, including derailing or setting fire to a mass transportation vehicle or vessel (vehicle), and incapacitating any person while such person is employed in operating or maintaining such vehicle with intent to endanger passenger or employee safety, or with a reckless disregard for the safety of human life.
- **1999:** To provide for the establishment of a National Firearm Injury Reporting System, and for grants to States for the collection of information on fatal injuries caused by firearms.
- 2005: H.Res.463 Of inquiry directing the Secretary of Homeland Security to provide certain information to the House of Representatives relating to the reapportionment of airport screeners Directs the Secretary of Homeland Security to furnish the House of Representatives all documents and record relating to the screener allocation model of the Transportation Security Administration.
- 2005: H.Amdt.217 to the Military Quality of Life and Veterans Affairs Appropriations Act, 2006 Seeks to shift funding for the 2005 round of base closures into accounts that would be used to finish the cleanup of installations closed in previous rounds.
- 2006: First Step to Redeployment Act Recognizes the exemplary service of the National Guard in Iraq and directs the President to begin the redeployment of United States military forces from Iraq, starting with National Guard units.
- 2006: Military Range Legacy Act Improves the effectiveness of Department of Defense programs for the remediation of unexploded ordnance on former defense sites.
- 2006: H.Amdt.862 to the Military Construction and Veterans Affairs, and Related Agencies Appropriations Act, 2007 Increases the Department of Defense Base Closure Account of 1990 by \$27.5 million; decreases the Department of Defense Base Closure Account of 2005 by \$440 million; and increases the account for Environmental Restoration, Formerly Used Defense Sites by \$50 million.
- **2007:** H.Amdt.302 to the Supplemental Appropriations Act, 2008 Seeks to increase funding, by offset, for the 1990 Department of Defense Base Closure Account by \$50 million.
- 2008: Honoring the Oregon National Guard Youth Challenge Program for its outstanding achievements Honors and recognizes the 125 Oregon National Guard Youth Challenge Program cadets who graduated on June 18, 2008, and more than 3,500 cadets who have entered the program since 1994.
- 2010: Accountability for Defense Contractors Act Restores accountability and Congressional oversight to the defense contracting process by directing the DOD to report its actions relating to federal contracts to Congress.

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# National Defense and Security

- 2013: H.Amdt.1382 to the Department of Defense Appropriations Act, 2013 Seeks to restore funding for cleanup of Formerly Utilized Defense Sites.
- 2013: H.Amdt.142 to the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2014 -Reduces from 11 to 10 the statutory requirement for the number of operational carriers that the U.S. Navy must have.
- 2013: H.Amdt.357 to the Department of Defense Appropriations Act, 2014 Reduces funding for the Ohio-class submarines by 10 percent to help prepare the Department of Defense for the sequestration.
- 2014: H.Amdt.664 to the Howard P. "Buck" McKeon National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2015 Authorizes the Secretary of the Air Force to procure not more than 10 AESA radar upgrades for the Air National Guard F-15C/D aircraft, which is offset by cuts to levels authorized beyond the President's Budget Request, spread across 9 accounts.
- 2014: H.Amdt.681 to the Howard P. "Buck" McKeon National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2015 Requires Congressional Budget Office to update, on an annual basis, their report on the projected costs of U.S. nuclear forces. *Agreed to on May 22, 2014.rura*
- 2014: REIN-IN Act Reduced the number of nuclear-armed submarines operated by the Navy and prohibits the development of a new long-range penetrating bomber aircraft, to prohibit the procurement of new intercontinental ballistic missiles.
- 2014, 2015, 2017, 2019, 2022: Veterans Equal Access Act Authorizes Department of Veterans Affairs health care providers to provide recommendations and opinions to veterans regarding participation in State marijuana programs.
- 2014, 2015, 2017: Smarter Approach to Nuclear Expenditures Act (formerly the Reduce Expenditures in Nuclear Infrastructure Now Act) Reduces the number of nuclear-armed submarines operated by the Navy, prohibits the development of a new long-range penetrating bomber aircraft, and prohibits the procurement of new intercontinental ballistic missiles.
- 2015: H.Amdt.227 to the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2016 -Requires funding for the Navy's new Ohio-class replacement submarines to come from their traditional Navy accounts, instead of the Sea-Based Deterrent Fund and transfers funds from the Sea-Based Deterrent Fund back into their historic Navy budget lines.
- 2017: Nuclear Cruise Missile Reconsideration Act Restricts the use of funds for the longrange standoff weapon until the Secretary of Defense completes a Nuclear Posture Review that includes an assessment of its capabilities and effects.

# National Defense and Security

- 2017: H.Amdt.166 to the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2018 Imposes limitations on the development of an INF range ground-launched missile system.
- 2017: H.Amdt.170 to the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2018 Limits spending on the Long-Range Standoff weapon (LRSO) until the Administration submits a Nuclear Posture Review to Congress including a detailed assessment of the weapon.
- 2019: Preventing Authoritarian Police Tactics on American Streets Act Imposes limitations on federal law enforcement officers and members of the Armed Forces (or the National Guard) engaging in law enforcement activities related to crowd control.
- 2019: H.Amdt.529 to the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2020 -Requires the Under Secretary for Nuclear Security to conduct a study on the unexpected cost increases for the W80-4 nuclear warhead life extension program and prevents \$185 million from being obligated or expended until the study is completed.
- 2019: Keep Law Enforcement Local Act of 2020 Requires the U.S. Marshals Service to obtain consent from the chief executive of the unit of local government prior to deputizing local law enforcement officers. A chief executive may withdraw their consent at any time.
- 2019, 2021, 2023: Smarter Approaches to Nuclear Expenditures Act Reduces spending on nuclear weapons and related defense spending and prohibits the procurement and deployment of low-yield nuclear warheads.
- 2023: H.Amdt.230 to the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2024 Strikes section 1639 and to prohibit the use of funds for the sustainment of the B83-1 bomb.

# NEUROSCIENCE

While not always obvious, neuroscience impacts everyone. We all know or have family members with neurological conditions from addiction to Alzheimer's. Furthermore, it does not just impact every family, but it has a huge cost. Despite this, it is often left out of important health care conversations. In the early 2000s, as brain science research rapidly advanced, some of the world's leading experts became concerned that their work was extremely siloed, with little communication or collaboration between federal agencies or specialties. The neuroscience community lacked a "common language" for speaking with people outside of the discipline and did not have any strategic initiatives to capture federal interest. In essence, the various stakeholders lacked a federal champion.

After speaking at the OHSU Brain Fair in 2010, Congressman Earl Blumenauer became captivated by the issue and took on the mantel of Congress's neuroscience champion.

He was focused on the need to "integrate neuroscience into our public discourse, decision making, and public priorities," on public policy issues as diverse as juvenile justice, preventive health care, and early childhood education. There was a new urgency for a neuroscience caucus because the area was stubbornly resistant to the breakthroughs seen in other areas like cancer and cardiovascular health.

After becoming engaged in the issue, Earl founded the bipartisan Congressional Neuroscience Caucus to support the many disparate disease groups, practitioners, and research areas. Partnering with the American Brain Coalition and the Society for Neuroscience, Earl had his first convening on neuroscience in 2011. It focused on the perfect storm made up of rising autism rates, traumatic brain injuries, and PTSD in veterans returning from Iraq and Afghanistan, the neurological impact of aging Baby Boomers and the impact those disparate neurological events would have on public policy.

Since that first meeting, the Congressional Neuroscience Caucus continued to highlight diverse neuroscience issues to educate members and staff in a bipartisan setting.

Earl worked with the Obama Administration to roll out the Brain Research Through Advancing Innovative Neurotechnologies (BRAIN\_ Initiative, which provided federal resources and support to create a temporal and spatial map of neural cells and circuits. By accelerating the development and application of innovative technologies, researchers can produce a dynamic picture of the brain that shows how individual cells and complex neural circuits interact in both time and space. This groundbreaking work lays the foundation for new treatments for brain-related afflictions.

Earl, in his role as chair of the Congressional Neuroscience Caucus, worked to ensure the project has the funding and coordination necessary to succeed. He provided leadership so that the BRAIN Initiative was positioned to fight for funding amongst the many health care needs.

The BRAIN Initiative continues to this day and for many years to come. Much of this work is happening in the Pacific Northwest, with Oregon Health and Sciences University (OHSU) and their Vollum Institute leading the way. Combining forces for this Northwest network, Earl and OHSU have been able to bring home \$17 million in research money to advance the world of neuroscience research and help coordinate work across the country.

#### Legislative Accomplishments

• Earl has organized the House effort to fund the BRAIN Initiative, successfully achieving this support each fiscal year. Nineteen research grants have been awarded to researchers in Oregon.

#### PRESS RELEASE: Congressman Blumenauer, Fitzpatrick Introduce Resolution to Recognize Brain Donation Awareness Day as May 7th

#### April 28th, 2022

WASHINGTON, DC– Today, Congressman Earl Blumenauer (D-OR) and Brian Fitzpatrick (R-PA) introduced a joint resolution to designate May 7th as Brain Donation Awareness Day. Post-mortem brain donation is critically important to advance the science of treating and curing degenerative brain diseases.

"Brain donations provide a rare research opportunity for cognitive scientists to physically study the human brain. This is one key to learning how to treat and prevent neurodegenerative diseases like Huntington's disease, Parkinson's disease, Alzheimer's and other cognitive diseases and disorders," said Rep. Earl Blumenauer, the Co-Chair of the Congressional Neuroscience Caucus. "Unlike other forms of organ donation, brain donors are used solely for research and medical advances. It is important we raise awareness of the need for brain donors."

"More than one million adults in the United States are diagnosed with a chronic brain disease or disorder each year, and we expect to see an increase of neurodegenerative disease in the coming years, especially among our aging population," said Rep. Brian Fitzpatrick. "It is critical we raise awareness for the crucial need for brain research and donation, and that is why I am proud to support this resolution to recognize May 7th as Brain Donation Awareness Day."

"Almost 100 million Americans are impacted by brain diseases and disorders. Groundbreaking scientific research through the National Institutes of Health and the BRAIN Initiative is bringing us closer to treating and curing these conditions, and much more is needed. Brain donation gives researchers around the world irreplaceable opportunities for pathbreaking discoveries for treatments and cures, by studying the brains from people who had neurodegenerative diseases or healthy brains," said Matthew Rizzo, MD, Chair American Brain Coalition. "The American Brain Coalition is pleased to support this resolution recognizing Brain Awareness Day to demonstrate the vital importance of brain donation."

"Nearly one in five of us has a neurologic disorder and our chances of getting one increase as we age. Neuroscience researchers tell us there is no substitute for human brain tissue when it comes to studying brain diseases and disorders. For all of these reasons, it is so important that we educate on this critical need, dispel the myths about brain donation and make the process as simple as possible for people to be able to donate their brain when they die," said Tish Hevel, CEO of The Brain Donor Project. "We are very grateful to Rep. Blumenauer and to all who have signed on in support of this resolution. National Brain Donor Awareness Day is just one more small step to help us meet this critical need for science."

- 2010- Earl gives speaks at the OHSU Brain Awareness Lecture Series at OMSI after Senator Patrick Kennedy cancelled. Earl spoke on the importance of neuroscience and mental health advocacy in Congress. He also called for the establishment of a neuroscience caucus.
- 2011 The Congressional Neuroscience Caucus hosts its inaugural event with Co-Chairs Earl and Congresswoman Cathy McMorris Rodgers. The briefing was organized by the Society of Neuroscience and the American Brain Coalition and highlighted how brain research is unlocking the mysteries behind Autism, Down syndrome, Alzheimer's, PTSD, Parkinson's and Epilepsy.
- 2012- Earl proposed an amendment to the Military Construction and Veterans Appropriations Act for Fiscal Year 2013. The amendment, introduced with Representative McMorris Rodgers, would require that no fewer than \$35 million of the Medical and Prosthetic Research Account go toward post-traumatic stress disorder and traumatic brain injury research and treatment.
- 2014- Earl speaks at the G20 World Brain Mapping and Therapeutics Initiative in Brisbane, Australia. The summit started with messages of cooperation from the U.S. Congressman Fattah, Earl, and Member of the Canadian Parliament Kirsty Duncan. These leaders encourage all scientists to work together to curb the growing cost associated with diagnosis and treatment of neurological disorders through introducing game-changing diagnostics and therapeutics.
- 2017, 2019: H.Res.204 and 209 Declares support for Brain Awareness Week and calls upon Americans to recognize and support brain and spinal cord research.
- 2021- Earl is awarded the Neuroscience Champion Award from the American Brain Coalition with Rep. Cathy McMorris Rodgers.
- 2021: BRAIN Act- Requires the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) to establish the Neuroscience Center of Excellence and the Neuroscience Translation Working Group.
- 2022- Earl speaks at the CATO Institute on Fresh Approaches to the Overdose Crisis. Earl was joined by Dr. Carl L. Hart, a psychologist, neuroscientist, and psychopharmacologist and Ziff Professor of Psychology at Columbia University, and Trevor Burrus, a research fellow at the Cato Institute's Robert A. Levy Center for Constitutional Studies.
- 2022, 2023: H.Res.1069 Expressing support for the designation of May 7 each year as "Brain Donation Awareness Day" to raise awareness of postmortem brain donation and its importance in scientific research on neurological conditions.
- 2022- Earl and Brian Fitzpatrick introduced a joint resolution to designate May 7th as Brain Donation Awareness Day.

#### Appendix

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- **2022:** H.Res.1348 Supports the designation of "National Brain Health Day" and efforts to study and improve treatments for brain health.
- 2022- The American College of Neuropsychopharmacology named Earl and Cathy McMorris Rodgers as the 2022 Public Service Award recipients.

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# PUBLIC BROADCASTING

Throughout Congressman Earl Blumenauer's career, he has been the premier champion of public broadcasting, defending it time after time when it finds itself in the eye of the storm.

As a huge consumer and advocate of Oregon's superb public broadcasting system, Earl has been aware of the critical role Oregon Public Broadcasting (OPB) plays in Oregon's cultural, political, and educational life. Sadly, from his first days on Capitol Hill, Earl had to continuously re-educate members of Congress about the vital role public broadcasting plays in the health of our democracy, and the service to our citizens.

For nearly 20 years the Public Broadcasting Service (PBS) has been ranked the most trusted source of news and public affairs programming, outranking all other competitors in American media markets. With thousands of public broadcasting stations across the county, it is often the only source of locally-owned and managed media. It is clear that the role played by public broadcasting is more important than ever.

Yet, there have been repeated efforts by congressional critics to attack public broadcasting funding provided by the federal government. While this is a relatively small portion of the overall public broadcasting funding stream, it plays a critical role in providing the foundation for programming.

Federal funding also provides a base of support for rural and small-town America.



There will always be some public broadcasting in San Francisco, Portland, and Boston. But stations in rural and small-town America with greater needs and fewer resources would be at risk. Alaska, Maine, large stretches of the west could not provide the vibrant, essential service without the underpinning Corporation for Public Broadcasting, which is fully funded by the federal government, and various individual funding streams to local stations.

In 2001, Earl founded the Congressional Public Broadcasting Caucus to bring together members supportive of public media and the services these programs provide American families. The caucus provides a forum to continuously re-educate members of Congress about public media's central role. The caucus held its first meeting on April 3, 2001 joined by nearly 70 members of the House, presidents of the four national public broadcasting organizations, dozens of local station general managers from around the country.

Each year, Earl and the Public Broadcasting Caucus led in pushing for more funding for public broadcasting as part of the appropriations process. During the Public Broadcasting Caucus' first year advocating for increased appropriations, Earl secured an increase for FY 2003 from \$350 million to \$380 million. The caucus called for increased levels each year, and in FY 2012 the requested level was enacted at \$445 million. Since the caucus' creation in 2001, the Corporation for Public Broadcasting's funding has increased from \$350 million (FY 2002) to \$535 million (FY 2023), a 52% increase.

Every year Earl meets with Public Broadcasting Leadership from across the country sharing insights and encouragement, he works to protect and enhance the coalition of support and make the case which is made so much easier by the amazing work done at the state and local level. Earl visits public broadcasting facilities as he travels the country to better understand the opportunities and needs, and frankly to be impressed by the strength of local public broadcasting initiatives. He's constantly on the lookout for new congressional supporters – of which there are many, despite those who continually seek to reduce or eliminate federal support.

In addition to leading the fight for public broadcasting funding over the past two decades, Earl looked for opportunities to raise the profile of public broadcasting and point out the unique role that it plays in educating the public in times of national stress. In the aftermath of 9/11, Earl had the Public Broadcasting Caucus staged a showing of Frontline's Hunting for Bin Laden. Well in advance of 9/11, PBS and Frontline had tracked the story and developed a powerful and informative look at Bin Laden, his history, and his motivations.

Earl found it fascinating watching members of both parties in rapt attention to something that only public broadcasting could have provided.

During the era of heightened concern about security for our families and communities, public broadcasting provided the backbone to critical programs like 'Amber Alerts' or storm warnings. Earl worked with his colleagues to help them understand that public broadcasting, and its emergency broadcast functions, is not only trusted, but the only solution with infrastructure already in place The public helped create it and thus believes that they can rely on it more than on the whim of commercial broadcasters.

The fight for public broadcasting returned with the 112th Congress. Republicans, energized by the Tea Party movement in the 2010 election, took control of the House. Meanwhile, Democrats maintained control of both the Senate and the Obama White House. Republicans wasted no time, signaling early on their intention to cut federal support for public broadcasting, both in the FY 2011 Continuing Resolution, and for future fiscal years.

In response, Earl called for a "Big Bird Alert."

In a dictation, Earl summarized the moment well:

"I would like to have a Big Bird alert. The most extreme and dramatic demonstration of the political agenda of the new Republican majority will unfold next week as we see targeted federal support for public broadcasting. That the new majority is willing to completely defund one of the most important and popular federal programs is an amazingly powerful signal of both their intentions and their hubris. The approach here would weaken public broadcasting, but it would deny many in small towns and rural America the opportunity to hear public broadcasting at all."

Earl hosted a press conference featuring popular PBS children's character Arthur along with many members of Congress, announcing efforts to oppose House Republican attempts to cut funding in the Continuing Resolution in February 2011. The efforts include an amendment to the Continuing Resolution to restore funding.

Following the press conference, Earl organized a Special Order of the House, to highlight the benefits of Public Broadcasting, and secured funding in the FY 2011 Continuing Resolution and beyond.

All told, in 2011 alone, Republicans introduced more than 8 separate bills to strip the Corporation for Public Broadcasting (CPB) of federal funding. None of them made it into law. Earl's leadership and the Public Broadcasting Caucus successfully communicated the value of public broadcasting to their fellow members of Congress, and since then, any efforts to attack public broadcasting have been sporadic. Earl and the Public Broadcasting Caucus have successfully translated the public's appreciation for public broadcasting and media to Congress.

There is a reason that public broadcasting is the most trusted source of media. Only public broadcasting has the infrastructure, trust, flexibility and credibility to meet the varied needs of the public through this unprecedented era in American history.

#### Legislative Accomplishments

- Saving public broadcasting from the Tea Party's attacks in FY 2011, ultimately beating back Republican efforts to defund public broadcasting.
- Since the caucus' creation in 2001, the Corporation for Public Broadcasting's funding has increased from \$350 million (FY 2002) to \$535 million (FY 2023), a 52% increase.
- In recognition of his tireless work leading the charge in public and behind the scenes, Earl has been awarded every major honor from the National Public Radio Board of Directors (Public Radio Leadership Award in 2005), the Public Broad Casting System (Leadership Award in 2006), the Center for Public Broadcasting (Ralph Lowell Award in 2010), and the American Public Telivision Stations (Champion of Public Broadcasting Award in 2011).

# HUFFPOST Attack on Big Bird Tells You Everything You Need to Know About Romney's Approach to Government

People may not understand the vagaries of Medicare and tax reform, but 170 million Americans know and understand Big Bird and public broadcasting.

> By Rep. Earl Blumenauer, Oct 4, 2012

It's been frustrating serving on the Ways and Means and Budget Committees, enduring the repetition of Republican talking points despite evidence to the contrary. Many of their unfounded claims and misguided efforts go unchallenged or fly under the radar, but the attack on Big Bird and public broadcasting may finally catch up with them. People may not understand the vagaries of Medicare and tax reform, but 170 million Americans know and understand Big Bird and public broadcasting.

When Americans were asked specifically if they felt the 15 cents of the public broadcasting dollar that is supplied by the federal government should be increased, decreased, or remain the same, the overwhelming majority wanted to increase or maintain funding, including nearly two-thirds of Republicans.

The Republican effort to attack public broadcasting and force Sesame Street to take advertising betrays an appalling lack of appreciation and understanding of what public broadcasting is and represents. A recent study demanded by public broadcasting's enemies in Congress reveals that there is no alternative to public funding and that advertising on Sesame Street would actually result in less money for public broadcasting because people would refuse to voluntarily contribute to watch commercial advertising.

Big Bird is not just another cartoon creature to be hawked by Disney or sugary breakfast cereals. He is a non-commercial friend of children who does not want anything from them other than to help them understand their world and learn.

The short-sighted, politically expedient, destructive approach to public broadcasting led by Mitt Romney characterizes the GOP approach to taxation and healthcare. Unlike taxes and healthcare, which can be muddied with faulty arithmetic, kneecapping Big Bird is a straightforward attack that the 170 millionAmericans who use and appreciate public broadcasting every month can easily see. The Republican strategy is the same, however: target a program that benefits millions of Americans but not specifically the top 1%, like Medicare, food stamps or PBS, launch a massively misleading campaign to convince voters it's a waste of money, and destroy it. It's shameless and we can't let them get away with it.

Public broadcasting has a long and storied history of educating the public. Perhaps we need Big Bird to educate Governor Romney about the value of public broadcasting and investing in services for the American public instead of coldly shutting them down. After all, if Big Bird can be friends with a Grouch, he can probably be friends with a bully.

# At CPB Board meeting, congressman calls for 'civil and thoughtful' advocacy for pubcasting funding



By: Dru Sefton June 12, 2017

WASHINGTON — Rep. Earl Blumenauer (D-Ore.) told the CPB Board Monday that he asked House Democrats to stop "using the assault on public broadcasting as a fundraising technique."

The founder and chair of a congressional caucus to support public broadcasting also took advantage of his appearance before the CPB Board to make his own assault on public TV's pledge programming.

Blumenauer said that when he learned the Democratic Congressional Campaign Committee was citing the threat to public media support in fundraising messaging, "I took the DCCC chair aside and said, 'Please don't.' I don't even know if he knew about it. But it stopped." Blumenauer initially said he heard about the campaign from CPB staff, but a spokesperson later told Current that a public media advocate alerted him. Blumenauer said he hopes the work to preserve federal funding for public broadcasting won't become "intensely political" and "weaponized." Advocating for support "can be done in a civil and thoughtful way," he said.

"I don't think it turned out well for Mitt Romney to run against not just Senator Obama but also Big Bird," Blumenauer said, referencing the Republican candidate's jabs at the Sesame Street character during the 2012 campaign.

The congressman stressed the importance of federal funding. "It is absolutely essential that we keep the public-private partnership in place," he said. "Make people understand that having some federal money is strength." Federal funding allows stations to subsidize coverage of rural areas, he noted, and helps them raise nonfederal funds as well.

Blumenauer also addressed another source of public broadcasting revenue: pledge programming. He cautioned that public broadcasting is "reaching a point of pledge-break saturation."

"Even though I go do pledge drives, I find it a little tedious," he said. "We risk wearing out our welcome, frankly. And if we think we're going to commercialize public broadcasting more, we lose what's unique about being noncommercial. Any additional pledge programs, he predicted, "will provide less support, not more."

Blumenauer added that lawmakers widely respect public broadcasting and cited "support from Republicans, Democrats and independents, all of whom want to maintain or increase the level of support," he said.

Meanwhile, not all of CPB's own board members are in line with that goal.

# NEWS FOR PEOPLE IN PUBLIC MEDIA

Director Howard Husock cast the only "nay" vote when the board approved a resolution to submit CPB's fiscal year 2019 budget request to the Office of Management and Budget. The request contains the corporation's forward-funded 2021 general appropriation and 2019 interconnection appropriation to create a new distribution network. CPB has not yet disclosed those figures, discussed in executive session

When Husock attempted to explain his reasoning behind the vote, Chair Lori Gilbert cut him off and said that discussion should have taken place during executive session.

Husock later told Current that he didn't see the point of making his statement in executive session because the rest of the board disagrees with him. "But I did feel an obligation to explain my vote in public," he said.

"I moved to this position reluctantly over the last few years," Husock said. "I think the system needs to be shaken up. A great many practices need to be re-examined. Short of seeing a real effort internally to do that, I felt that some kind of shot across the bow is the healthiest thing at this point. Industries of all kinds change under pressure and change in healthy ways."

"The system needs a profound stock-taking," he said. "So I reluctantly voted no."

Husock has not been silent about his views on federal support. He has written op-eds for the Washington Post and The Hill calling for defunding of CPB. Fellow directors chastised him at their April meeting over the Post commentary. Gilbert and director Bruce Ramer also fired back at Husock's latest commentary with their own Hill piece Monday criticizing his opinions.

#### Digital work ahead

Monday.

In other news from the board meeting, attendees heard about CPB's efforts to expand digital content distribution by investing in infrastructure and professional development at stations.

Maja Mrkoci, VP, digital innovation, said CPB is taking a "three-pillar approach" by working to change organizational culture at stations, making digital work efficient and financially sustainable, and focusing on an increase in content production. "For a long time, we have been providing a one-to-millions communication," Mrkoci said. "Now we must provide one-toone communications times millions" via digital platforms, she said.

CPB is supporting change from the bottom up with a six-month Digital Immersion Initiative offering professional development for employees at PBS stations. From the top down, the Digital Culture Accelerator Initiative is a pilot project helping three stations — UNC-TV in North Carolina, ideastream in Cleveland and WBHM-FM in Birmingham, Ala. — develop best practices for increased production and distribution of digital content across the system.

For another initiative, focusing on digital infrastructure, "we need systems to pull content together and then push it out to viewers, to PBS, to Facebook," said Bob Kempf, VP for digital services at WGBH in Boston. "We must do this in a coherent way. Now we have multiple systems and a fragmented approach."

Throughout the system, investments in infrastructure "are uneven at best, even at larger organizations," Kempf said. "And it's not consistent for smaller stations and independent producers."

These issue surfaced in conversations at public media conferences with Silicon Valley–based KQED board members, CPB COO Michael Levy said. National organizations and stations urged CPB to take a leadership role, he said.

Advisory team members for the digital work are Kempf; Tim Olson, chief digital officer at KQED in San Francisco; Scott Nourse, PBS VP, digital product development; and from NPR, Stephanie Miller, managing director of digital services, and Jonathan Epstein, senior director of digital technology.

Outlook for auction wrap-up

CPB Board directors also heard that the FCC's spectrum auction did not result in major areas losing over-the-air public TV service. But some smaller areas will encounter problems, reported two PBS executives.

The relinquishment of channels, challenges of repacking spectrum and displacement of translators will affect stations for several years, said Tom Rosen, senior director of standards and practices.

Over the next 36 months, 148 public TV stations will move to



new channels, said Eric Wolf, technology strategy and planning VP. And 284 of 561 public TV translators will be displaced.

Ted Krichels, CPB's SVP system development, told directors that members of a station advisory panel on Community Service Grants to TV stations met following the auction to revisit their previous recommendations.

"The panel agreed that the original recommendations were appropriate and that no additional policy adjustment was required" due to the auction's impact on the system, Krichels said.

Under those policies, public TV stations in channel-sharing agreements must maintain control of at least half of their spectrum and cannot count auction revenue, interest or dividends as nonfederal financial support. Stations that fall short of the guidelines could lose CPB support. Also, stations that relinquished all of their spectrum in the auction must return CPB funds from any open grant period.

The panel also recommended that CPB should maintain the current level of the TV Distance Service Grant for three years to stations that involuntarily lose translators after the auction repack. The grant supports licensees that operate multiple transmitters or translators.



By: Michaela Bourgeois Feb 28, 2024

PORTLAND, Ore. (KOIN) – Oregon Congressman Earl Blumenauer accepted a Lifetime Achievement Award from America's Public Television Stations on Wednesday for his work supporting public broadcasting throughout his 28-year career in Congress.

The congressman advocates for public media with lawmakers across the political spectrum and formed the bipartisan Public Broadcasting Caucus in 2001 to ensure continued service from local public TV and radio stations.

"Public broadcasting's dependable, unbiased, local and national news coverage is more important than ever. There's a reason it's the most trusted name in news. I have helped fend off political attacks and build support for this vital communication link for decades," Blumenauer said.

"No organization has ever had a more passionate, committed and effective champion than public broadcasters have in Congressman Earl Blumenauer," said APTS president and CEO Patrick Butler.

"For almost a quarter of a century, he has been tireless and relentless in his support for our cause. His eloquent advocacy is matched only by his profound and his towering integrity, and he has set a standard for public

# Oregon Rep. Blumenauer receives Lifetime Achievement Award for broadcast TV support

service to which every political leader should aspire. We present our Lifetime Achievement Award only rarely, and no one has ever deserved it more. It is with profound gratitude that America's Public Television Stations give this very special recognition to the incomparable Earl Blumenauer," Butler continued.

The congressman has previously accepted broadcasting awards from the National Public Radio Board of Directors in 2005 (earning the Public Radio Leadership Award,) the Public Broadcasting System's Leadership Award in 2006, the Center for Public Broadcasting's Ralph Lowell Award in 2010, and the American Public Television Station's Champion of Broadcasting Award in 2011.

The District 3 representative announced in October he will not seek reelection in 2024 after 50 years in elected office, nearly 30 of which were as a U.S. congressman.



This marks the third Lifetime Achievement Award given by APTS. The first award was presented to Sen. Tom Harkin (D-IA) in 2014, and the second was awarded to Rep. Nita Lowey (D-NY) in 2020.

- 2001: Established the Public Broadcasting Caucus in April with Reps. Zach Wamp (R-TN), Amo Houghton (R-NY), Nita Lowey (R-NY), Edward Markey (D-MA), and Connie Morella (R-MD). PBS joined to thank the 69 members of the Public Broadcasting Caucus.
  - In the 107th Congress the Public Broadcasting Caucus defended the "Ready to Learn" program against threats to eliminate it on the House floor during consideration of the Elementary and Secondary Education Reauthorization bill. It also held numerous congressional briefings to highlight the following topics: educational technology initiatives, digital conversion, funding and appropriations, homeland security, and the caucus itself.
- 2008: Introduced legislation expressing support for the designation of a "Public Radio Recognition Month" Agreed to in House on June 18, 2008.
- 2010: Defeated Rep. Doug Lamborn (R-CO)'s proposal to strip the Corporation for Public Broadcasting of federal funding. Quoted floor remarks include "National public broadcasting is one of the few areas where the American public can actually get balanced information. It's not the bloviators on the right or the left. Public broadcasting, because it is not taking commercial advertising, because it has a commitment to public service and balanced information, has been the most important, unbiased source available to Americans from coast to coast."
- 2011: Earl, joined by Reps. Ed Markey, Betty McCollum, Nita Lowey, Sam Farr, Paul Tonko and Bill Owens, as well as popular PBS children's character Arthur, held a press conference announcing efforts to oppose House Republican attempts to cut funding for the Corporation for Public Broadcasting (CPB) in the Continuing Resolution in February.
- 2012: In February, Earl provided opening remarks for the Public Media Summit's annual breakfast. Earl also met with Mel Ming, President and CEO of Sesame Workshop to discuss Sesame Street's latest projects and public broadcasting funding. In October, Earl wrote an OpEd for Huff Post entitled, Attack on Big Bird Tells You Everything You Need to Know About Romney's Approach to Government.
- 2013: The Public Broadcasting Caucus closed the 112th Congress with 93 members.
- 2014: The Public Broadcasting Caucus closed the 113th Congress with 74 members.
- 2017: In February, Earl hosted a roundtable with Public Broadcasting Caucus members, America's Public Television Station, National Public Radio and Corporation for Public Broadcasting representatives to discuss the Caucus's agenda for the 115th Congress.
- 2018: Earl Provided remarks at America's Public Television Stations Hill Day Breakfast. In September, Earl met with Nevada Public Radio President & CEO, Flo Rogers at their office in Las Vegas.

- 2020: In April, Earl addressed the Corporation for Public Broadcasting Board to offer supportive remarks and uplift the organization. In May, Earl spoke to the national leadership of Americas Public Television Stations (APTS) after CPB did not receive and of the requested \$175 million from the HEROES Act, but did receive \$75 million in emergency funding by the CARES Act.
- 2021: In December, Earl met with Corporation for Public Broadcasting President & CEO Pat Harrison to discuss the political climate and ongoing negotiations for CPB Funding.
- **2022**: In January, Earl provided welcoming remarks for the Public Broadcasting Caucus introductory meeting.

# PUBLIC LANDS

Congressman Earl Blumenauer has long been a leader in protecting America's public lands.

Earl knows that public lands are not just good for our collective soul but play a critical part in carbon reduction and municipal water supply. He is dedicated to preserving habitat for wildlife and aquatic species, defending bedrock environmental laws like the Endangered Species Act, and standing up against threats to erode the protections afforded to our nation's public lands under federal law. Recognizing that only a small fraction of America's public lands have been truly protected from extractive industries such as clearcutting, salvage logging, mining, and oil and gas drilling, Earl has been a consistent advocate for expanding protections for our most beautiful, fragile, and sacred places in the United States.

A significant challenge for public lands stewardship is the escalating volume of users. Earl understands that landscapes in proximity to urban areas are under pressure and threatened with being "loved to death." Earl sees time and again the legal and management paralysis that result from user group conflicts.

Protecting our lands means finding ways for people to recreate together, while also ensuring that the lands where people recreate are not overwhelmed. Climate change complicates this negotiation, since it poses a unique challenge to wilderness everywhere, and makes the ecosystem benefits that these places protect even more crucial. In Oregon, Earl played key roles in expanding the public lands through landmark legislation including the Steens Mountain Cooperative Management and Protection Act of 2000 and the Omnibus Public Lands Act of 2009, which added new Wilderness acres and Wild and Scenic Rivers miles on Mt. Hood and throughout the state. He also supported the declaration and expansion of the Cascade Siskiyou National Monument in southern Oregon.

Working from a commitment to bring people together and identify common ground, Earl convened public summits from 2002-2009 to discuss current and future challenges for the use and management of Mt. Hood, Oregon.

He formed a key alliance with Republican Rep. Greg Walden, whose district shared the Mt. Hood National Forest. Over many years, a bipartisan group of elected officials, Tribal leaders, recreation and conservation groups, forestry interests, citizens, transportation planners, and public lands agencies worked to find collaborative solutions for challenges related to wilderness. This included wild and scenic river protection, recreation, forestry and hazard fuels mitigation, upholding First Foods gathering rights for Native Americans, transportation management, and planning for the future growth of nearby communities. Earl and Walden even led a 3-night bipartisan backpacking trip around Mt. Hood on the 41mile Timberline Trail. Along the way they met and hiked with key stakeholders, getting a first-hand view of the management

challenges on the mountain during an unprecedented field hearing.

Ultimately, that backpacking trip and the years of work leading up to it resulted in legislation that became a roadmap for stewardship and conservation of the Mt. Hood National Forest. The years of engagement had the additional benefit of building new trust and collaboration between user groups, resulting in better cooperation and less conflict.

In 2019, Earl and Senator Wyden teamed up to roll out draft concepts for additional Wilderness and Wild and Scenic River designations, and management regimes. In 2022, Earl introduced the Mt Hood and Columbia River Gorge Recreation Enhancement and Conservation (REC) Act.

At the national level, Earl is considered a go-to defender of public lands under threat. No greater example was his commitment to thwart the assault on environmental protections from 2001-2009 under the administration of former President George W. Bush, and then again during the Trump era from 2017-2021. Under former President Bush, massive amounts of public lands were opened to oil and gas drilling. The Roadless Area Conservation Rule developed by the Clinton Administration was disregarded and thrown into court, jeopardizing the protection of 58.5 million acres of undeveloped public lands. New listings under the Endangered Species Act ground to a halt. The Clean Water Act was disregarded, clearing the way for the coal mining industry to effectively bury nearly 2000 miles of

Appalachian streams in mining debris. Restrictions on snowmobiles and off-road vehicles were reversed, allowing them to roam freely on public lands and in some cases raising air pollution to levels seen in major cities.

In Oregon, the Bush Administration took significant efforts to open new lands to logging, and allow more harmful, aggressive logging on protected lands. Eight years later, then-President Trump tried the same playbook: opening new lands to oil and gas exploration, reducing the power of the Clean Water Act, and supporting aggressive logging.

There was arguably no member of Congress more outspoken against the Bush Administration's environmental rollbacks than Earl. He took to the House floor, the media, and public forums in Oregon and across the country to discuss the popularity and value of public lands to the American people. He brought advocates together and worked hard to increase awareness of the environmental fights happening across the nation. Repeated attempts to open the iconic Arctic National Wildlife Refuge were rebuffed thanks to leaders like Earl calling out the imperative to protect this important stronghold. His role in fighting the Bush Administration's systemic efforts to roll back our nation's environmental laws ensured that the damage was not far greater than it could have been. At a time when wilderness needed more defenders, Earl helped lead efforts, coordinating House Democratic Leadership and rank and file members, to protect the public lands, rivers, streams, and places Oregonians love.

Earl also worked to proactively protect public lands, instead of only playing defense. Earl and his colleagues have updated public lands laws passed long ago and grossly out of step with the needs and values of the American public. He worked with his colleagues in Congress and in the environmental community to reform one of the worst examples of outdated legislation: the Mining Law of 1872. The law remains virtually unchanged since it was signed by President Ulysses S. Grant, allowing mining companies to use an antiquated claims system and extract minerals from public lands without repaying the public. No royalties are paid to the American people, and there is no requirement for the industry to clean up their mess, leaving a legacy of toxic abandoned mines. Earl led the fight to end this giveaway to the hardrock mining industry on behalf of the American people and the health of our nation's public lands and waterways.

Closer to home, Earl has been a strong voice in trying to bring rational solutions to bear in Oregon and California's Klamath Basin. During the water crisis of 2001-2002, it was clear that management practices on public lands in the Basin were putting increased pressure on a dwindling resource, water. Earl introduced an amendment that would have prohibited farmers from growing water and pesticide intensive row crops on leased agricultural lands in the Lower Klamath and Tule Lake Wildlife Refuge. Known as the "Everglades of the West," these refuges are one of the most important wetlands for feeding and nesting habitat of migratory birds and other species on the Pacific flyway. No other national wildlife refuge in the country permits farming for commercial purposes on its lands. Earl's amendment made the point that there were common sense ways to protect species, improve water quantity and quality, and help Klamath Basin farmers navigate an uncertain future. While water shortages remain an issue in the Klamath Basin, Earl's work to develop a science-backed, full Basin approach contributed to the decision to remove the Klamath dams and restore those lands to a more natural condition restoring fish habitat.

Earl also was a strong voice in support of the development and adoption of science-based initiatives like the Northwest Forest Plan. This landscape level plan covers 17 national forests, 7 BLM districts, 6 national parks and national wildlife refuges across Oregon, Washington, and Northern California. It shifted the goal of federal forest management from extractive timber harvest toward conserving the species and habitat of old growth forests. Despite constant challenges by industry interests, the plan remains intact today thanks to the support and defense of champions like Earl. The protection and implementation of this bill has meant that 30%, or 7.4 million acres, of federal land as Late Succession Reserves (LSR) protects current old-growth forests and wildlife habitat, as well as developing future oldgrowth habitat.

# The Pregonian **MOUNT HOOD FREEWAY FIGHT LEADS TO FOCUS** ()N TRANSPORTATION

automobile. The federal goverment did not adopt a similar rule nationally until 1991.

He later worked with then-Portland Mayor Neil Goldschmidt and others to develop the Banfield light-rail line as an alternative to the freeway. He began to see transportation as an organizing tool for quality-of life-issues. The Regional Rail Summit, which met last weekend for the sixth consecutive year, is one of Blumenauer's efforts to showcase land use and transportation connections.

"It's very, very easy just to be opposed to things," he said.

By: Gordon Oliver May 22, 1996

Earl Blumenauer became interested in the politics of transportation more than two decades ago, when he fought against the proposed Mount Hood Freeway through Southeast Portland. He quickly discovered the tentacles that link transportion to countless other urban issues, and he developed a passion for the subject that has never faded. During his 25 years in public life, Blumenauer emerged as the area's most visible advocate for alternative transportation. He has pitched tirelessly for light rail and mass transit, for bike paths and pedestrian improvements, for traffic-calming speed bumps and skinny streets that protect neighborhoods from automobile traffic.

"He has gone where very few government officials have dared to go by supporting bicycling and walking and challenging the domination of the car," said Portland resident Rex Burkholder, a leader in the Bicycle Transportation Alliance.

But Blumenauer also has won favor from downtown business interests by developing a compromise to remove the parking lid downtown while imposing other parking regulations that cover both downtown and the Lloyd District. And he has won respect from trucking interests by continuing to support a Water Avenue freeway ramp to Interstate 5 to serve the Central Eastside Industrial District, an idea opposed by a City Council majority.

Less known than Blumenauer's stand on issues is his constant cheerleading for regional cooperation to avoid the political infighting that has grounded Seattle and other cities.

"He understands what Portland needs and wants, and that the success of Portland depends on the success of the whole (region)," said Grace Crunican, director-designee of the Oregon Department of Transportation and a former Portland and federal transportation official.

Politically, Blumenauer made an early impact while serving in the Oregon Legislature in 1973. He pushed legislation requiring the Transportation Department to come up with a plan for all forms of transportation, not just the In recent years, Blumenauer's national and international travels have helped build Portland's image as a leader in producing creative transportation solutions. Still, his assertive style has alienated some people who don't share his vision.

Rep. Eileen Qutub, R-Beaverton, who opposes light rail, said she was irritated when Blumenauer became a pinch-hitter for Tri-Met at a forum about light rail in her district last year.

``He talked about the emotions and the vision of Portland of being a world-class city," Qutub said. "Yet none of the facts -the hard, cold facts -- were talked about."

A frequent jogger and regular biker, Blumenauer says he'll take a bicycle but no car when he heads back to Washington, D.C. He is convinced that Portland and the nation will continue to look for a balance between the automobile and other forms of travel.

"No place in the country is paying their way out of congestion," he said. "Everybody is going back to the future, one way or another."

# The Washington Post

# The Mountain and the Hill

#### Oregon Congressmen Come Together on Wilderness Protection

By Jef Barnard December 17, 2005

PORTLAND, Ore. -- Republican Greg Walden and Democrat Earl Blumenauer sit on different sides of the aisle as

congressmen, and their Oregon districts are on different sides of Mount Hood, the snow-capped icon that looms over Portland and the Columbia River Gorge.

Walden represents the rural, conservative side, which has traditionally viewed the forests there as a source of timber and jobs.

Blumenauer is on the urban, liberal side, which depends on the mountain for water and recreation.

Despite past clashes over environmental issues, the two have come together, even buddying up for a backpacking trip around the mountain. Out of that has come a proposed bill to put 75,000 acres of wilderness off limits to logging on the Mount Hood National Forest, without reducing the area where logging is allowed.

Their proposal would also guide development of ski resorts, reduce the danger of forest fires, maintain tribal foods such as huckleberries, and enhance outdoor recreation, particularly mountain biking.

The plan comes at a time when Congress has been stingy about designating wilderness and the Bush administration has been a close ally of the timber industry.

"As a resident of Hood River, I know the huge role Mount Hood plays economically," said Walden, a major player in legislation that eased environmental laws to make it easier to thin forests to reduce wildfire risk. "We're trying to keep the mountain ecologically sound while it carries on its shoulders the increasing recreation demands of the region."

"It is in danger of being loved to death," said Blumenauer, best known as a bow-tied bicycling enthusiast and champion of mass transportation. "There are 3 million people who can get there in a couple-hour drive. That number over the next 100 years is probably going to double. We are not going to want less winter recreation, summer recreation, skiing and sightseeing."

With widespread local support from former timber communities as well as conservation groups, the plan also may signal a watershed in the spotted owl wars, the bitter debate that has gone on more than 20 years over whether Northwest national forests are primarily a source of timber, fish and wildlife habitat or cathedrals for spiritual renewal.

"It's a political shift," said Andy Kerr, who was a lightning rod for attacks from timber interests while at the Oregon Natural Resources Council. "You now have a generation of politicians who aren't beholden to big timber, and Oregon has urbanized."

Back in 1984, the last time Congress designated wilderness on Mount Hood, timber was the state's top industry. Congress was pushing logging at record levels. Conservation groups were trying to pass legislation that would put the biggest and oldest trees off limits to chain saws by making them wilderness, a designation that prohibits logging and mechanized vehicles while sometimes allowing livestock grazing and small-scale mining. Ten years later, the timber industry had disappeared from many

of the small towns that grew up around mills and logging camps. The Northwest Forest Plan, adopted in 1994 to settle lawsuits that froze logging in spotted owl habitat, cut harvests west of the Cascades by more than 80 percent. The bitterness between urban and rural Oregon remained strong, even as timber was overshadowed by hightech enterprises and tourism.

Sherry Holliday grew up in a logging family and was mayor of Maupin, Ore., when the last mill in town shut down in 1992, costing her husband his job. Now a Wasco County commissioner, she supports the Walden-Blumenauer proposal.

With timber jobs mostly a memory, Maupin has become the center of whitewater rafting and steelhead fishing on the Deschutes River, while The Dalles, Ore., is looking forward to a new facility being built by Google, the Web search giant.

"I truly never thought I would see the day this would happen, that people would be able to agree on some things," Holliday said. "Certainly we went kicking and screaming -- but we realize the writing is on the wall."

Wasco County is particularly concerned about protecting

# The Washington Post

sources of drinking water on the mountain. It also recognizes that people taking jobs at Google see protections as good, not encroachments on property rights and the natural resources economy, Holliday said.

"I think we've become more aware of our environment, and the need to protect it," she said.

Like Wasco County, the town of Sandy, which calls itself the Gateway to Mount Hood, wants to protect drinking water coming off the forest, said Mayor Linda Malone. It also depends on skiers, hikers and mountain bikers to spend money on their way to the mountain.

"We're not a timber town anymore," Malone said. Malone testified in favor of a bill sponsored last year by Sen. Ron Wyden (D-Ore.) that would have created more than twice as much wilderness on Mount Hood. But she will settle for less.

"I guess I'd rather have something than fight the good fight and have nothing," she said.

As a close lieutenant of House Resources Committee Chairman Richard W. Pombo (R-Calif.), Walden is practically

assured of getting what he wants through the House, insiders say. Conservationists hope a compromise with

Wyden's bill will boost the acreage.

"While Senator Wyden would like to see considerably more wilderness, this will be a bicameral process," said Josh Kardon, Wyden's chief of staff, adding that discussions were being held with Sen. Gordon Smith (R-Ore.) in hopes of producing a bipartisan Senate proposal.

Walden said this is the most wilderness he can get through the House but also the most that can be put off limits to logging without becoming an obstacle to forest thinning to reduce fire danger in watersheds that towns use for drinking water.

"It's important to remember wilderness is not the only management tool on Mount Hood," Walden said. "The Forest

Service's own planning document estimates 60 percent of the forests are overstocked," and in need of thinning.

The timber industry does not oppose the proposal, praising the fact it was crafted from the grass roots up with local support.

"The bottom line here is Mount Hood is Portland's play area, but Portland consumes the most lumber and wood products of any Oregon communities, too," said Chris West, vice president of the American Forest Resources Council. "Our view is, the congressmen have done a pretty good job of balancing those."

The Oregon Natural Resources Council, meanwhile, would like to see three times the wilderness as the Walden-Blumenauer proposal. In the past, Walden and Blumenauer have clashed over the allocation of water between farmers and threatened salmon in the Klamath Basin, where Walden was a powerful champion of the farmers.

But they have also previously co-sponsored legislation, and, at Walden's suggestion, the two spent four days hiking 41 miles around Mount Hood, stopping for presentations from experts and interest groups.

"We were, I would wager, the only bipartisan backpacking duo in Congress," Walden said.

Erik Fernandez of the Oregon Natural Resources Council walks along a log on Roaring River, near Mount Hood.

# The Caddis Fly: Oregon Fly Fishing Blog

# Conservation News: DeFazio and Blumenauer propose "Oregon Treasures" bill

The Congressmens' Rogue River proposal is co-opted from the larger Save the Wild Rogue wilderness campaign but does not propose any additional wilderness designations in the Rogue River basin.

A wild and scenic designation for these tributaries is an important step in maintaining and enhancing the Rogue's legendary runs.

April 9, 2008

Congressmen Peter DeFazio and Earl Blumenauer recently proposed an "Oregon Treasures" bill that would add 132,000 acres of wilderness, 34,550 acres of recreation area and 80 miles of wild and scenic river designations to the Mount Hood National Forest as well as protect 142 miles of lower and middle Rogue River tributaries as wild and scenic. The proposal would add to the Senate's pending Lewis and Clark Mt Hood Wilderness bill.

To be designated wild and scenic a river must possess outstandingly remarkable scenic, recreational, geologic, fish and wildlife, historic, cultural, or other similar values. A wild and scenic designation means that the river shall shall be preserved in free-flowing condition, and that they and their immediate environments shall be protected for the benefit and enjoyment of present and future generations. I like the sound of that.

In the case of the Rogue River many of the creeks proposed for protection provide spawning and rearing habitat for chinook, steelhead and coho. The creeks have all been found to be either eligible or suitable for federal wild and scenic designation by the BLM the managing agency. Streams proposed for protection important for salmon and steelhead include:

Big Windy Creek, Ditch Creek, East Fork Big Windy Creek, Galice Creek, Grave Creek, Hewitt Creek, Howard Creek, Jenny Creek, Kelsey Creek, Little Windy Creek, Long Gulch, Meadow Creek Missouri Creek, Mule Creek, North Fork Galice Creek, Quartz Creek, Rum Creek, Russian Creek, West Fork Whiskey Creek, and Whiskey Creek.

# **The Oregonian** Readers respond: More protection for Mount Hood

By: Tania Lown-Hecht, Portland May. 25, 2022

Mount Hood and the Columbia River Gorge are beloved in Oregon for good reason. There's nothing my family loves more than a weekend spent hiking through the endless spring and summer wildflowers, splashing in a creek, camping under the stars, or admiring the dramatic vistas of the Gorge.

Earlier this month, Rep. Earl Blumenauer introduced the Mt. Hood and Columbia River Gorge Recreation Enhancement and Conservation Act to protect 350,000 acres as a National Recreation Area, 10 times the amount that was protected in 2009 legislation. It also would designate 7,500 acres more Wilderness and 92 miles more Wild and Scenic River protection.

In recent years, especially as COVID-19 accelerated the popularity of outdoor recreation, it has been evident that we need more attention, funding and protection for Mount Hood. Rep. Blumenauer has done a thoughtful job balancing the need for protection, for expanding trails and sustainable recreation, for better transportation planning including public transportation, for tribal co-management, and for wildfire mitigation, especially after the devastation of the Eagle Creek Fire. Though Wilderness designation has many benefits, it is not the be-all, end-all for protecting places that we care about. The focus on sustainable recreation and wildfire management makes this a 21st-century land management bill, one of the best I've seen come out of Congress.

I hope other Oregonians will join me in thanking Rep. Blumenauer and urging other lawmakers to advance the bill, protecting this special place for generations to come.

#### "Mt Hood: A View from the Summit" Shows Strong Commitment to "Re-creating" Mountain's Soul

#### Editorial - August 12th, 2003

Last week we saw an amazing level of participation in the first of what I hope will be an ongoing series of Mt. Hood summits. It certainly exceeded my expectation. I was heartened to see the diversity of ideas exchanged by 300 people at Timberline Lodge whose most common point of agreement is their passion for our regional treasure.

The discussion from the two sets of panelists and our audience members was thoughtful, civil, and remained in focus despite the tremendous scope and range of ideas. Even the rough edges that surfaced were a credible reflection of the tension, the passion, and the opportunity for meeting our challenges.

Over the course of the afternoon we heard about a range of issues including transportation, recreation, environmental protection, Tribal trust obligations, tourism, and community development. As we reviewed Mt. Hood's past, present and future, we discovered a strong interest in "recreating" the soul of the mountain. This was, I think, indicative of a broader concern and illustrates ways that we can build on the momentum.

I appreciate Congressman Greg Walden's determination to steer the event towards the big picture. He helped us move from the discussion phase and identified some areas where we can unify our efforts. I valued his insight on our success with the preservation of the Steens and the Little Sandy. These examples represent a blueprint for projects that will encompass the future of Mt. Hood.

I am looking forward to continuing the conversation about Mt. Hood and to others joining our discussion. This is a conversation that must continue and I am committed to seeing that we never abandon the landmark that has never abandoned us.

Copy 2003 East County News

#### PRESS RELEASE: Walden, Blumenauer Statement on Mt. Hood Trek

#### August 19th, 2005

Portland, Ore. - Congressmen Greg Walden (R-Ore.) and Earl Blumenauer (D-Ore.) emerged from the Mt. Hood National Forest late Thursday afternoon, having successfully completed their 41-mile hike around Mt. Hood. They began their hike early Monday morning.

"Spending four days on the Timberline Trail has helped us better understand the challenges Mt. Hood faces," Blumenauer stated. "Besides getting a firsthand look at our mountain, we spent more than 30 hours in meetings on the move with a variety of knowledgeable people along the way, who were willing to share information and perspectives on the mountain's forests, geology, hydrology, history, spiritual significance, and users."

"Mt. Hood is one of Oregon's most diverse treasures and the issues we face in managing its longterm heath and vitality are as equally varied," Walden said. "This hike was immensely valuable, affording us the opportunity to learn and understand even more as we move forward with legislation. I appreciate all of the experts who volunteered their time to join Congressman Blumenauer and me this week."

Blumenauer said, "For all the work we have done over the last two-and-a-half years, this was the single most important effort to bring the pieces together and understand the context, making the issues surrounding Mt. Hood real."

In addition to their focus on the mountain, there were many opportunities to compare political war stories and exchange reminiscences on the trail. Walden and Blumenauer have a long personal history: Walden's father, the late Paul Walden, was a distinguished member of the Oregon House of Representatives in the 1970's. Blumenauer was first elected to the Oregon Legislature in 1972, where he served with Paul Walden on the House Revenue Committee. Congressman Walden also served in the Oregon House and Senate, as well being on the staff of Congressman Denny Smith before being elected to Congress himself in 1998.

When Congress reconvenes after Labor Day, Blumenauer and Walden will resume their weekly meetings on Mt. Hood and start drafting specific proposals and legislation that they will present to Oregonians this fall.

- 1995: Restoration of Natural Resources Laws on the Public Lands Act Amends Federal law to repeal the emergency salvage timber sale program. Directs the Secretaries of Agriculture and the Interior to suspend respective activities until they have determined that any such activity complies with applicable environmental and natural resource laws.
- 2000, 2001: Community Character Act of 2000 Directs the Secretary of Housing and Urban Development to establish a program to provide grants to States to assist in the development or revision of land use planning legislation and the creation or revision of State comprehensive land use plans or plan elements.
- 2000: passage of the Steens Mountain Cooperative Management and Protection Act of 2000 (PL 106-399). As President Bill Clinton prepared to leave office, conservation interests engaged Interior Secretary Bruce Babbitt in the idea of designating a national monument for the Steens. The Oregon delegation worked closely with representatives from statewide interest groups to legislate an alternative that would protect the Steens and local interests. The bill is remarkable for creating the nation's first cow-free Wilderness area. Earl played a critical role in keeping pressure on the Administration to declare a monument, which drove negotiators to arrive at compromise and consensus.
- 2001-02: the Klamath water crisis became a national conversation with Vice President Cheney's interference in federal agency managers' decisions to halt irrigation water deliveries for farmers. The decision recognized the agency's obligation to make adequate water available for salmon and suckerfish listed under the Endangered Species Act and prevent massive fish kills in the Basin. Earl visited the Basin to meet with local farmers and ranchers, Tribal leaders, conservation interests, and agency heads. Subsequently he introduced an amendment to the Interior Appropriations bill to prohibit lease land farmers from growing water intensive row crops in the Lower Klamath and Tule Lake National Wildlife Refuges.
- 2002: Planning began for the first Mt. Hood Summit, held at Timberline Lodge with Congressman Greg Walden and a group of legendary Oregon stakeholders including Kate McCarthy. This kicked off years of process and public conversation the present and future management of Mt. Hood and adjacent areas.
- 2006: The bipartisan "hike around the mountain" took place. Subsequent Mt Hood summits and years of legislative process followed.
- 2007: To amend the National Trails System Act to require the Secretary of the Interior to update the feasibility and suitability studies of four national historic trails, and for other purposes.

- 2007: Honoring the 100th anniversary of President Theodore Roosevelt's Conference of Governors, supporting the goals and ideals of that Conference, and recognizing the need for a similar undertaking today Recognizes, celebrates, and acknowledges the goals and ideals that formed the impetus for President Roosevelt's Conference of Governors 100 years ago.
- 2008: Lewis and Clark Mount Hood Wilderness Act- Designates specified wilderness additions in Oregon as wilderness areas and components of the National Wilderness Preservation System.
- 2009: The Omnibus Public Lands Management Act of 2009 (PL 111-11) was passed into law. The bill protected millions of acres of federal land as Wilderness and designated over 1000 river miles as Wild and Scenic across the country. Over 127,000 acres of Wilderness and 80 miles of Wild and Scenic Rivers were added to the Mt. Hood National and Columbia Gorge National Forests. The bill also designated Oregon's Copper Salmon Wilderness in the 4th Congressional district.
- 2009: Supporting the goals and ideals of National Trails Day. Recognizes that the important contributions of trail volunteers and organizations have created an outstanding network of trails across the country.
- 2013: H.Amdt.184 to the Federal Agriculture Reform and Risk Management Act Requires that twenty percent of the acreage enrolled in the Conservation Reserve Program be set aside for the Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program and the Continuous Conservation Reserve Program, which allows states to target high priority and environmentally sensitive land, and to continuously re-enroll that land in CRP.
- 2014: H.Amdt.968 to the Lowering Gasoline Prices to Fuel an America That Works Act of 2014 Requires companies holding leases, which allow them to drill on public lands off-shore without paying a royalty, to renegotiate those leases prior to bidding on new leases issued pursuant to Title I of the Act.
- 2015, 2016: Recreation Not Red-Tape Act This bill amends the Federal Lands Recreation Enhancement Act to require the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) and the Forest Service to adopt a consistent and uniform special recreation permitting process with respect to outfitters and guides.
- 2017: Passage of the Mt. Hood Cooper Spur Land Exchange Clarification Act. The bill clarified elements of a land exchange included in the Omnibus Public Lands Management Act of 2009 to facilitate the protection of 700 acres on Mt. Hood's north side while allowing for the development of 100 acres on the south side.
- 2019-2021: Earl and Senator Ron Wyden undertake a series of conversations to gather and incorporate feedback from stakeholders and the public regarding next steps for Mt. Hood.

- 2019: H.Amdt.438 to the Further Continuing Appropriations Act, 2020, and Further Health Extenders Act of 2019 - An amendment numbered 136 printed in Part B of House Report 116-119 to prohibit the use of funds to plan, design, study, or construct, for the purpose of harvesting timber by private entities or individuals, a forest development road in the Tongass National Forest.
- 2021: REC Act of 2022 This bill establishes programs and requirements to support the conservation of and recreational access to the Mount Hood National Forest and the Columbia River Gorge National Scenic Area in Oregon.
- 2022: Earl introduces the Mt Hood and Columbia River Gorge Recreation Enhancement and Conservation Act (REC). The bill contains a groundbreaking model of tribal comanagement directing the Forest Service to co-develop a management plan with the Confederated Tribes of the Warm Springs to protect and enhance Tribal Treaty resources within agreed-upon Treaty Resource Emphasis Zones. It would also designate an additional 7500 acres of Wilderness and 95 miles of Wild and Scenic Rivers and expand the definition of best available science to include indigenous knowledge, overcoming a serious deficiency in the Northwest Forest Plan.



### Tax

Congressman Earl Blumenauer has based his fiscal policies on providing resources for communities and reducing destructive policies that undermine livability while wasting resources that should be available to help solve problems. He has focused on building livable communities to make families safer, healthier, and more economically secure; making polluters pay their fair share; investing in our roads, bridges, and energy systems to prepare our communities for the next generation; reducing income and wealth inequality and creating opportunity for all Americans; leveling the playing field for working families and small businesses; and funding our nation's priorities without mortgaging our children's and grandchildren's futures. In an ideal world, the federal government would invest in these priorities directly. Instead the federal government uses tax expenditures for its most pressing priorities.

Earl supports tax policies that are sustainable and responsive to America's challenges; namely, the climate crisis, wealth inequality, and rebuilding and renewing our infrastructure. As a senior member of the Ways and Means Committee, he used his position to shape the tax code toward these priorities — culminating in the historic Inflation Reduction Act that invested hundreds of billions of dollars in clean energy projects while ensuring large corporations pay their fair share.

#### The Tax Code and Livable Communities

As Congress' chief spokesperson for livable communities (communities that are sustainable, safe, healthy, and economically secure) Earl played a variety of unique roles on the Ways and Means Committee, Budget Committee, Select Committee on Energy Independence and Global Warming, and Transportation and Infrastructure Committee.

After his appointment to the Ways and Means Committee in 2007, Earl quickly distinguished himself as one of the most engaged Committee members on clean energy and transportation issues. He authored legislation to create an investment tax credit to install distributed wind turbines that would allow individuals and businesses to generate their own power, and even at times put power back into the grid. He advanced a carbon audit, directing the National Academy of Sciences to review the tax code to identify provisions that increase carbon emissions. And he pushed legislation to close the Hummer Tax loophole that provides an additional tax incentive for businesses purchasing heavy, gas-guzzling luxury SUVs.

Earl also sought to translate his work on the Transportation and Infrastructure Committee and leading the Livable Communities Task Force to promote sustainable transportation options in the federal tax code.

In 2001, Earl introduced the Bicycle Commuter Act, legislation to create a bicycle commuter benefit and allow employees who bike to work the same commuter tax benefit incentives that are available for parking and mass transit.

In 2008, Earl secured significant victories in the Renewable Energy and Energy Conservation Tax Act where his legislation to close the Hummer Tax loophole, create a bicycle commuter benefit, perform a carbon audit on the U.S. tax code, and create an investment tax credit for distributed wind first passed the House of Representatives. While the complete legislative package did not of Congress, Earl's Bicycle Commuter Act was enacted in the Emergency Economic Stabilization Act (the so-called "bank bailout bill"). The Bicycle Commuter Act finally provided commuters with a small tax advantage to bike to work and set the stage for bolder and more significant proposals for a greener tax code in the future. Earl's work helped environmental advocacy organizations understand the power of the tax code in tackling climate change.

In 2009, with the impacts of the climate crisis becoming more apparent, and the role that transportation played in that crisis, Earl introduced the boldest clean transportation tax legislation to date, the Green Routes to Work Act. The legislation provided tax incentives for low carbon commuting options like public transportation, vanpool, biking, and walking.

It also proposed allowing employees to cash out the value of their parking commuter tax benefit if they choose not to drive to work, improved the bicycle benefit by allowing it to be used with other modes, and incentivized employers to offer a commuter benefit by providing employers with a tax credit for establishing the program.

The Green Routes to Work Act also started Earl's yearslong effort to achieve parity between the value of the parking commuter tax benefit and the transit commuter tax benefit, which at the time was approximately half of the parking benefit. Six years later in 2015, Earl's legislation to make the value of the advance beyond the House during that session transit benefit equal to the parking benefit was enacted into law. Because of his efforts, employees can now receive up to \$300/month from their employers tax-free to tax public transportation to work.

#### Making Polluters Pay

Where the tax code can be used as a carrot for incentivizing certain behaviors, it can also be used as a stick to discourage certain behaviors. Weeks after the massive Deepwater Horizon oil spill in 2010 Earl introduced legislation to remove unnecessary subsidies for the biggest oil companies. The subsidies were put into place to provide incentives for oil exploration and to lower the price of oil but instead they contributed to spills like the Deepwater Horizon and contributed to unprecedented increases in carbon emissions.

An analysis released by the Stockholm Environment Institute found that just two oil and gas tax subsidies — the expensing of intangible drilling costs and the percentage depletion allowance — increased the value of new oil and gas projects by more than \$20 billion in some years. These two subsidies alone helped spur and sustain the shale development boom in the United States. These forgone revenues undermine the United States' ability combat the climate crisis and invest in critical initiatives like education, housing, infrastructure, and healthcare.

Earl has stood up to Big Oil year after year, repeatedly reintroducing this legislation and a similar proposal to close a loophole that allows oil produced from tar sands to escape the per-barrel excise tax on crude oil. While Big Oil has been successful in thwarting these pieces of legislation to date, Earl secured a major victory in making polluters pay in the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act and Inflation Reduction Act, through the inclusion of his Superfund tax proposal.

Superfund sites are the nation's worst toxic waste sites. The Superfund program was originally created in 1980 to cleanup these contaminated sites. At that time, the Superfund Trust Fund was established to pay for cleanup at sites where the responsible parties cannot be identified or do not have the ability to perform the cleanup. The Trust Fund was financed through taxes on petroleum, certain chemicals, and corporate income, ensuring that those industries responsible for pollution pay for the cleanup.

These taxes expired in 1995, depleting the Superfund Trust Fund and shifting the burden for cleanup to the American taxpayer. In 2007, Earl introduced the Superfund Reinvestment Act to end the polluters' tax holiday and make Big Oil and other polluters pay for their mess. The bill reinstated the per-barrel excise tax on crude oil and indexed it to inflation. It also reinstated the Superfund tax on certain chemicals and adjusted the tax to inflation. After years of advocacy, the Superfund Reinvestment Act was enacted in the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act in 2021 and the Inflation Reduction Act in 2022. Polluters are now once again required to pay to clean up the environmental devastation they have left behind.

#### Clean Energy

As a senior member of the Ways and Means Committee, Earl is a long time champion and expert on wind energy. This includes his efforts to stop bad policy during the Tax Cuts and Jobs Act where he took on Republicans for going back on their commitment to a long term extension for wind energy.

Earl was named the USA Wind Jobs Champion in 2012 by the American Wind Energy Association (AWEA). Like the solar industry, the wind industry was forced to contend with year after year of short-term extensions to the production tax credit. These short-term extensions made it nearly impossible to make multiyear commitments when it was unclear if any incentives would be available through the life of the commitment.

Earl fought for these extensions every year so that the wind industry could continue to develop and make the electric grid greener. He also advanced legislation to provide longerterm extensions of the production tax credit for wind, like the Bridge to a Clean Energy Future Act.

After Joe Biden's presidential election victory in 2020, Earl used his position on the Ways and Means Committee to influence the single largest measure to combat the climate crisis in American history: the Inflation Reduction Act. The Inflation Reduction Act delivered \$385 billion in energy and climate investments, including investments in solar and wind energy, electric vehicles, energy efficiency, clean manufacturing, and vulnerable communities most impacted by environmental degradation. It put the United States on a path toward a 40 percent reduction in emissions by 2030.

Several of the clean energy provisions contained in the Inflation Reduction Act were authored by Earl. These include the production tax credit and investment tax credit to incentivize wind and solar projects; direct pay and renewable energy credit transferability provisions to make project financing more efficient; legislation to reinstate the Superfund Tax; clean transportation incentives, including an expanded electric vehicle credit for new and used vehicles; an expanded credit to charge ebikes and e-scooters; credits to electrify commercial fleets; and incentives to make commercial buildings more energy efficient and sustainable.

Each of these provisions will help reduce carbon emissions and lessen our dependence on fossil fuels.

#### Rebuild and Renew America

For a community to be safe, healthy, and economically secure, it needs high quality infrastructure. Earl has become the Ways and Means Committee's foremost champion of investing in rebuilding and renewing America. With the support of leaders across the ideological spectrum, Earl proposed the first increase in the federal gas tax since 1993. Everyone from the Chamber of Commerce to organized labor, truckers to cyclists, AARP to AAA supported his legislation. Since the gas tax was last raised, it has lost more than 40%of its purchasing power due to increased fuel efficiency and inflation. His legislation would have enacted a modest increase to the federal gas tax and indexed the tax to inflation, raising nearly \$300 billion in revenue for infrastructure investments. Earl successfully pushed the Ways and Means Committee to hold its first hearing on infrastructure funding and finance in nearly four years when Democrats took back control of the House in 2019. Using that platform, the Committee discussed infrastructure funding and financing mechanisms that would be enacted in the next two sessions. After years of temporary oneand two-year extensions, Earl successfully enacted a permanent tax credit supporting infrastructure improvements on short line railroads.

These railroads serve a small portion of America's railroad system, but they are a vital link between producers and export centers around the country. Without short line rail, many rural communities would be entirely cut off from any ability to compete in the global economy. Earl's permanent short line railroad tax credit ended the uncertainty these small railroads faced year after year and provided a permanent incentive for the railroads to make track infrastructure improvements and remain competitive.

Earl also enacted legislation to provide an additional \$15 billion toward financing public-private partnerships through Private Activity Bonds. Private Activity Bonds have been used successfully for years and are an important tool to building major infrastructure projects like commuter rail, bridges in need of repair, and new high-speed rail projects. This legislation was enacted in the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act, leveraging tens of billions of additional local and private dollars to rebuild and renew America while creating thousands of familywage jobs.



### Fighting for Families and Small Businesses

Earl has consistently opposed efforts to tilt the tax code toward individuals and corporations who need it the least. Before he was appointed to the powerful House Ways and Means Committee, he was one of Congress' foremost critics of the Bush tax cuts. He voted against the 2001 and 2003 Bush Tax Cuts, pointing out that it would not have the economic effects promised, it would further constrain budgets for years to come, and it would make it challenging for the United States to deliver basic services. His criticism was justified as the tax cuts have not for themselves, as proponents suggested, but instead increased deficits and increased income inequality. Highincome households benefitted most significantly from the Bush tax cuts, the top one percent of income earners received nearly seven times the benefit as the bottom 20 percent. When it came time to extend the tax cuts in 2010 and make them permanent in 2012, Earl took a principled stand against their extension, bucking President Obama, and voted against further extending the tax cuts.

After he was appointed to the Ways and Means Committee in 2007, Earl led efforts to provide middle-income tax relief to prevent the Alternative Minimum Tax from hitting millions of middle-class families, including more than 200,000 Oregonians. Without his leadership, families earning just \$50,000 would have been subjected to tax increases.

And in 2017, Earl joined his colleagues on the Ways and Means Committee to strongly oppose Trump's tax scam. Trump's tax cuts acted as the largest transfer of wealth from middle class families to wealthy billionaires in American history; the average tax benefit from the bill for someone who earned a million dollars a year or more was 138 larger than the average benefit for someone earning less than \$100,000. Corporations used their tax cut not to hire workers but instead to buy back stock and reward their wealthy shareholders.

The bill also targeted Democratic-leaning states like Oregon by restricting the amount individual taxpayers could itemize on their tax returns. When Earl offered an amendment to suspend the Republicans' tax cuts if deficits increased, Republicans rejected it. Like the Bush Tax Cuts before, Republicans' promise that the bill would pay for itself have not come to fruition – adding trillions to the national debt.

After Democrats regained control of the House in 2019, however, Earl injected some fiscal sanity and vertical equity into tax policy.

He supported expansion of the Child Tax Credit and the Earned Income Tax Credit in the American Rescue Plan, direct cash payments throughout the pandemic, and incentives for employers to help pay off their employees' student loans. Beyond tax fairness for families, Earl has also advocated for tax fairness for Oregon businesses.

#### Supporting Oregon Small Businesses

Oregon's Third Congressional District is renowned for its craft beverage industry, home to dozens of breweries, cideries, and distilleries. Earl has sought to further a business environment that is favorable for these industries' development and growth. After meeting with local cidermakers and hearing their concerns about a quirk in the tax code that could cause certain ciders to be taxed at a rate fifteen times higher than originally intended, Earl introduced the bipartisan CIDER Act. The CIDER Act updated the tax code to no longer tax carbonated hard cider like champagne and to expand the benefits to pear-based cider in addition to apple-based cider. Working closely with Oregon Senator Ron Wyden, Earl successfully enacted the CIDER Act in 2015, supporting hundreds of cideries around the country. Earl is now working on similar legislation for kombucha producers. His KOMBUCHA bill would ensure that kombucha brewers making nonalcoholic kombucha don't inadvertently get caught up in excise taxes intended for alcoholic products.

Earl also worked closely with Senator Wyden to modernize the tax code for newly legal cannabis businesses in Oregon. First introduced in 2015, the Small Business Tax Equity Act proposed to reconcile state marijuana laws and federal tax laws by creating an exception to the tax code to allow marijuana businesses operating in compliance

with state law to deduct the normal business costs, like any other business. Earl also partnered with Rep. Jared Polis to introduce a package of bills to tax adult-use marijuana sales and remove marijuana from the Controlled Substances Act so it could be regulated like alcohol. After years of organizing in Congress and around the country, these commonsense marijuana tax policies have passed the House of Representatives twice in a comprehensive bill to decriminalize and tax marijuana alongside important criminal and social justice reforms, including expungement of prior marijuanarelated convictions.

#### Supporting Workers

Supporting small businesses can happen alongside supporting workers. Earl always keeps workers top of mind. He successfully enacted a modest deferral of capital gains taxes when S Corporations sell part of their stock to Employee Stock Ownership Plans (ESOPs). Earl first introduced legislation to incentivize more companies establishing ESOPs in 2009. Many of the strongest supporters of ESOPs are the employees themselves who benefit from a model that sees higher returns than the stock market, provides retirement security, improves the working environment, and in fact results in better returns for businesses. After successfully enacting a modest incentive for employers to sell their stock to ESOPs, Earl has continued to advocate to increase the value of the incentive with the Promotion and Expansion of Private Employee Ownership Act.

Both private- and public-sector employees deserve to be supported and fulfilled in their work.

Throughout his career, Earl has stood up for the employees of the Internal Revenue Service (IRS) and the value they provide to a wellfunctioning federal government. Earl repeatedly voted against Republican-imposed cuts to the IRS in the 2010s. When Republicans threatened to impeach then-IRS Commissioner John Koskinen in 2016, Earl led the charge against his impeachment in the House. He called out the Republicans' spectacle of destroying the reputation of Commissioner Koskinen, a distinguished public servant who came to the position after a lifetime of success in business. Pointing out the consequences of impeachment on the effective administration of the tax system, Earl was successful in stopping House Republicans' efforts to impeach Commissioner Koskinen.

Congressional Republicans' assault on the IRS continued for several years after, however, until enacting the Inflation Reduction Act in 2022. The Inflation Reduction Act invested nearly \$80 billion in the IRS over the next ten years. This funding includes more than \$3.2 billion for taxpayer services such as filing and account services, prefiling assistance and education. An additional \$4.8 billion will be spent to modernize and upgrade the business systems it uses to administer taxpayer services, operations, and cybersecurity.

Significantly, these improvements will be

sustainable. The Inflation Reduction Act also added \$45.6 billion to ensure compliance with our voluntary tax system and prevent tax fraud. The Congressional Budget Office estimates that over the next 10 years these additional enforcement resources will generate \$204 billion in revenue that would otherwise go uncollected—paying for the investment in enforcement nearly four and a half times over.

The Inflation Reduction Act is the first major investment in the Internal Revenue Service in decades. While the IRS is committed to implementing the Inflation Reduction Act as quickly as possible, it will take time for these investments to correct course after decades of divestment.

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#### Legislative Accomplishments

- After Joe Biden's presidential election victory in 2020, Earl used his position on the Ways and Means Committee to influence the single largest measure to combat the climate crisis in American history: the Inflation Reduction Act. Several of the clean energy provisions contained in the Inflation Reduction Act were authored by Earl. These include the production tax credit and investment tax credit to incentivize wind and solar projects; direct pay and renewable energy credit transferability provisions to make project financing more efficient; legislation to reinstate the Superfund Tax; clean transportation incentives, including an expanded electric vehicle credit for new and used vehicles; an expanded credit to charge e-bikes and e-scooters; credits to electrify commercial fleets; and incentives to make commercial buildings more energy efficient and sustainable.
- In 2001, Earl introduced the Bicycle Commuter Act, legislation to create a bicycle commuter benefit and allow employees who bike to work the same commuter tax benefit incentives that are available for parking and mass transit. The legislation was enacted in the Emergency Economic Stabilization Act (the so-called "bank bailout bill"), providing commuters with a small tax advantage to bike to work.
- Earl's Superfund Reinvestment Act to require polluters to pay to clean up the environmental devastation they have left behind was enacted in the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act in 2021 and the Inflation Reduction Act in 2022.
- After years of temporary one- and two-year extensions, Earl successfully enacted a permanent tax credit supporting infrastructure improvements on short line railroads. These railroads serve a small portion of America's railroad system, but they are a vital link between producers and export centers around the country.

# **Bike** Bike Commuter Act, "Hummer tax loophole" up for House vote tomorrow

Jonathan Maus February 26, 2008

On the heels of record profits by the big five oil companies, U.S. Congressman Earl Blumenauer (D-Portland) will once again try to enact a tax benefit for bike commuters and close the "Hummer tax loophole."

The bike commuter tax benefit (a.k.a. the Bike Commuter Act and the Conserve By Bike provision) would amend the IRS code to include "bicycles" in the definition of transportation covered by fringe benefits. The Hummer tax loophole would fix what Blumenauer refers to as "a serious mistake" in the tax code that provides an additional tax break for business purchases of luxury SUVs weighing over 6,000 lbs.

According to a statement from Blumenauer's office announcing vote, several weeks ago Exxon Mobil reported earning \$40.6 billion in 2007 — the largest corporate profit in American history — equal to \$132 for every U.S. resident (or \$1,287 of profit for every second of 2007).

The bike commuter and Hummer loophole provisions are two of four provisions introduced by Blumenauer that are part of the Renewable Energy and Energy Conservation Tax Act (H.R.5351) that the House will vote on tomorrow. Both provisions were part of an Energy Plan that passed the House back in August, but were later stripped by the Senate before passage of the Plan.

Read my previous coverage of the Bike Commuter Act in my Special Coverage section.

## & WORLD REPORT JSNÉ

By: Andrew Soergel Nov. 7, 2017

## **House Lawmakers Tweak GOP** Tax Bill, Debate 'Poison Pill'

**Democrats on Tuesday** threw support behind a tax reform amendment they say would safeguard the economy. Republicans

Democrats are calling a proposed amendment to the GOP's vaunted tax reform proposal a safety valve designed to protect the U.S. economy and the nation's already substantial debt burden.

But Rep. Peter Roskam, R-Ill., described years ahead, the total likely would settle the measure as a "poison pill" Tuesday during the GOP tax bill's continuing markup within the House Ways and Means Committee.

"This isn't a fail-safe enterprise. This is a said Tuesday the benefits of the plan poison pill," Roskam said. "I'm not interested in adding another level of complexity onto a system that is already complex."

Lawmakers within the House's primary tax-writing committee spent the bulk of Tuesday morning discussing the possibility of including an amendment put forward by Rep. Earl Blumenauer, D-Ore., that would nullify Republicans' tax reform plan – should it clear Capitol Hill and be signed by President Donald Trump – after two years if America's annual deficit continues to increase.

expectation of independent economists, so much the better," Blumenauer said, saying some consider the GOP's proposal to rely on "unicorn dust and magic beans." "If the deficit continues to increase beyond what you said - if the economy is not supercharged - we shouldn't borrow the money to give tax benefits to the most favored in our called it a death sentence. society and end up putting us in a more difficult situation over time."

> Key to the issue is the nearly \$1.5 trillion debt burden the GOP tax plan is expected to bring to the table over a 10-year window. Several Democrats argued that, if inflation rises as expected over the closer to \$2.3 trillion.

> Republicans contend the plan would increase economic growth to help offset potential revenue losses. Roskam also aren't expected to crop up overnight and that suggesting "all of the growth is going to happen in two years is not something that we're claiming."

> "We've created this and what we're proposing is dealing with this within a 10year budget window," he explained.

Blumenauer asked if Roskam would consider his amendment if the two-year window was extended to four years, but the Illinois Republican still batted down the idea, despite Democrats' widespread support for the provision.

"If it all works and the economy explodes" If there's another economic downturn, and grows rapidly beyond the those costs will be reflected in, I think,

the pain the American people will feel because of the haste with which this tax plan has been drafted and drawn and put in front of us, again, based upon what no economist is willing to say, and that is that 'I guarantee you these tax cuts will be able to provide substantial economic growth," said Rep. Richard Neal of Massachusetts, the committee's top Democrat.

Blumenauer's amendment comes a day after the Ways and Means Committee approved some tweaks to the tax bill from Rep. Kevin Brady, a Texas Republican and the panel's chairman. The changes included a provision aimed at shrinking the pool of universities that would be hit with an excise tax on their endowments and one regarding "carried interest" that would impose a three-year holding period before certain income could be taxed at a lower rate.

Absent was language that would repeal the Affordable Care Act's individual mandate, which Trump has pushed Brady to include. And as the committee markup continues toward a targeted end on Thursday, The Washington Post reports conservatives are calling for changes to the bill that would include cutting taxes on those with incomes exceeding \$1 million and restoring a tax credit that can be claimed by families who adopt children.

Yet while Blumenauer's sunset proposal is considered dead in the water given the GOP's control of the committee and the broader House, it provided a jumping-off point Tuesday for Democrats to attack the Republican tax proposal for its lack



of revenue neutrality and its potential benefits for wealthy Americans. A recent study from the University of Pennsylvania's Penn Wharton Budget Model was cited Tuesday as an example of an independent analysis that casts doubt on the GOP's growth and revenue calculations. That report found the tax proposal would cut revenues by \$1.75 trillion through 2027 and \$4.39 trillion through 2040, suggesting overall debt would take a bigger hit than Republicans have accounted for.

Also noted during the session was a separate analysis from The New York Times that said 45 percent of middleclass families would pay more in taxes by 2026 than they would under the current system.

"We don't have to rely on what we believe. We can actually get the data. We can get the facts – the true facts, not the alternative facts – the true facts," said Rep. Mike Thompson, D-Calif.

Republicans were quick to argue Tuesday that many analysts haven't factored in what stronger economic growth would mean for the government's tax revenues. The initial data from Wharton, for example, were calculated on a static basis and did not involve the "dynamic" scoring methodology that plenty of proponents would argue is crucial to understanding the potential impacts of the bill.

Meanwhile, a dynamic modeling from Wharton released later Tuesday found the tax proposal would on net reduce tax revenues by between \$1.4 trillion and \$1.7 trillion over the next 10 years, at the same time increasing federal debt by up to \$2.1 trillion. It also estimated that by 2027, economic growth would only be up to 0.83 percent larger when compared with where it's expected to be under the current tax code, before fading over time.

The Trump administration, looking to tax reform as a springboard, has set a target for economic growth in the range of 3 to 4 percent.

Republicans also have looked to shoot down revenue arguments from plan opponents by noting how little attention was paid to revenue neutrality in the past, especially as Democrats passed legislation like the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act. That measure was designed to spur the economy out of the Great Recession and has been projected to expand budget deficits by nearly \$840 billion between 2009 and 2019. "My personal preference is for revenueneutral tax reform. but I think all of us on this committee know no one member of Congress gets everything they want," said Rep. Carlos Curbelo, R-Fla. "We did have to make some sacrifices to deliver the type of tax relief we believe American families deserve."

Among those sacrifices is the partial elimination of state and local tax deductibility, with the tax bill's crafters proposing to permit the deduction of up to \$10,000 in state and local property taxes only. The proposal has drawn criticism from Democrats as well as Republicans from the high-tax states of New Jersey and New York.

"Now, some in the majority will tell you this is a compromise," Rep. Bill Pascrell, D-N.J., said Tuesday of the property tax provision. "Some have tried to claim that this is a big win. But middle-class families, particularly those from New Jersey and other high-tax states, will tell you that's baloney. ... Despite claims of this bill being a pro-growth tax reform plan, the only thing homeowners in my district will see grow is their tax bill." So-called SALT deductions and revenue neutrality are likely to continue to be sticking points among lawmakers as the bill's markup continues. The Trump administration and GOP leadership are hoping to have a plan through the House by Thanksgiving, and to get a bill through the Senate and to the president's desk by Christmas.

## **The Oregonian** Earl Blumenauer pushes to reinstate tax benefit for bike

## commuters

By: Andrew Theen Mar. 14, 2019

When the Republican-controlled Congress passed its tax bill in 2017, it did away with an incentive for the nation's bicycle commuters.

The tax bill did away with a provision allowing employers to offer fringe benefits to bike commuters. U.S. Rep Earl Blumenauer, who famously sports a bicycle pin on his lapel and advocated for the tax incentive for years, hopes to bring it back and make it easier for employees to claim.

Last week, Blumenauer filed his Bicycle Commuter Act of 2019, seeking to amend the tax code to allow employers to offer that fringe benefit once again. He was joined by Rep. Vern Buchanan, R-Florida, and Ayanna Pressley, D-Massachusetts, in filing the bill.

"Communities of all sizes are demanding better transportation options to get to work and it is past time that the federal government provides the flexibility and incentives needed to encourage bike community," Blumenauer said in a statement last week. "We must offer more transportation choices that are better for the environment, cheaper for families and incentivize burning calories, not carbon."

The Internal Revenue Service allows companies to offer up to\$265 per month in fringe benefits for employees to claim – pre-tax – for driving or parking a car or taking transit. That benefit doesn't include cycling.

The fringe benefits allow employees to save on their federal income taxes and employers to save on payroll taxes. Companies could still offer commuter benefits or incentives to bike commuters, and they could write those off as a business expense, but employees would not save on their taxes like they're able to with driving or transit.

Portland has more than 22,647 bike commuters, according to the most recent census figures. That translates to roughly 6.3 percent of workers commuting by bicycle, the highest of the nation's 50 largest cities. "Incentivizing bicycle commuting helps people stay active, promotes a clean environment and is good for the economy," said Buchanan, a Republican who represents a coastal area south of Tampa. "I'm excited to continue co-leading bipartisan efforts to encourage biking and the numerous benefits that come with it."

Blumenauer last introduced his Bicycle Commuter Act in 2007, and that legislation was wrapped into the 2008 federal financial bailout legislation. However, the bill was amended to offer the fringe benefit as a reimbursement to commuters instead of a pre-tax benefit.

The Portland congressman says it's easier for employees to make it pre-tax, similar to what they do for parking and transit costs.

If enacted, the maximum benefit available to bike commuters would be \$53 per month, but that would be tied to inflation. If an employee were to opt for the bike benefit in addition to parking, the maximum value for parking would be reduced in equal proportion to that figure, according to Blumenauer's staff.

If approved, the benefit would be much like an employee's flexible spending account, and users could use that money to help buy a bike, on repairs or for membership in Biketown or other bike rental services.

According to the 2017 tax bill, the bike commuting benefit was suspended until January 2026.



By: Antonio Pacheco June 11, 2019

"The legislation would bring more value to historic tax credits and improve access to the credit and investment for smaller rehabilitation projects."

The legislation was introduced in the House of Representatives by Congressmen Earl Blumenauer (D-OR), Darin LaHood (R-PA), Terri Sewell (D-AL) and Mike Kelly (R-PA). Senate introduction of similar legislation is expected within the next few weeks.

Efforts to expand the Historic Tax Credit (HTC) program have earned bipartisan support in the United States House of Representatives, where last month Congress members Earl Blumenauer (D-OR), Darin LaHood (R-PA), Terri Sewell (D-AL) and Mike Kelly (R-PA) introduced the Historic Tax Credit growth and Opportunity Act (HTC-GO).

HTC-GO promises to "bring more value" to the nation's historic renovation projects by pursuing five interrelated improvements that include increasing the overall HTC from 20 to 30 percent for projects that incur rehabilitation expenses below \$2.5 million and allowing nonprofits greater flexibility in partnering with developers on HTC projects.

The changes would also eliminate an exiting tax penalty on projects that use the HTC by no longer requiring building owners to subtract the amount of credits earned from a building's taxable property value. The measure would also make it easier for building owners to meet the "substantial rehabilitation" standard that opens up HTC incentives to building owners. Proponents of the bill hope that the expanded credits will incentivize the owners of smaller, income-generating properties to rehabilitate their buildings.

A similar piece of legislation will be introduced in the United States Senate in coming weeks, as well. The latest push to bolster the HTC comes after the program was nearly scrapped as part of President Donald Trump's 2017 corporate tax cut plan.

#### E-Newsletter - December 10th, 2017

#### No wonder the American public opposes the GOP tax bill

Republicans are poised to pass the largest transfer of wealth in our nation's history—financed by mortgaging our children's future with a mountain of increased debt. It was written over the last few days to satisfy donors and win the final few votes necessary for Senate passage. It is not tax reform. It is not even a policy, but rather a collection of special interest provisions. It is being sold on a false set of promises.

It is decidedly not middle-class tax relief. It provides permanent and massive tax reductions for the largest corporations. The American public understands that the benefits in this bill flow to wealthy individuals like Donald Trump. Every independent expert agrees.

Meanwhile, the vast majority of Americans will only receive a small and temporary tax reduction—when the bill is fully phased in, the bottom 80 percent of taxpayers actually face a tax increase.

These massive tax cuts for the privileged few comes at a very high cost for the rest of America:

- It will massively increase the national debt and interest costs by an estimated \$2.3 trillion—and likely even higher as accountants and lawyers discover ways to full exploit the many new loopholes created by lobbyists.
- Insurance premiums will rise by 10 percent per year for everyone, the insurance market will destabilize, and the ranks of the uninsured will increase by 13 million people over the next 10 years.
- The increased national debt will increase interest rates, making it harder for everyone who wants to borrow money to start a business, buy a home, or finance a college education.
- The bill fails to invest in our crumbling bridges and roads or to meet the needs of our aging and growing population.

In fact, by slashing federal revenues, the legislation triggers a \$25 billion cut to Medicare in the first year alone. Republican leadership also plan to cut back on other critical programs relied on by Americans.

The legislation fails utterly to invest in the American people. It is, however, a bonanza for all of the attorneys, accountants, and lobbyists, who will find ways to further enrich the most privileged. And for weeks to come, we will only learn more about the "special gifts" hidden within the bill to nail down the last few votes.

No wonder the American public is opposed. They are right, and the Republicans are wrong.

Courage,

manne Earl Blumenauer

Member of Congress

#### E-Newsletter - January 6th, 2018 Join me on January 13 for a "Teach-in" on the GOP Tax Bill

Dear Friends,

In the final days of 2017, with little to no public support, Republicans passed a massive overhaul of the U.S. tax code. Americans will now face cuts to healthcare, tax hikes on the middle class, and a \$2 trillion increase in national debt over the next 10-years. All the while, the wealthiest 1 percent reap more than 80% of the bill's benefits over hard-working, everyday Americans.

In order to help my constituents better understand how this legislation impacts our community, I'll be hosting a tax teach-in on Saturday, January 13th. We'll hear from a panel of experts who will detail how the new law affects Oregon families, seniors, children, and our most vulnerable populations.

WHAT: Tax Reform Teach-In

WHEN: Saturday, January 13th from 10:30-11:30 AM. Doors open at 10:00AM.

WHERE: Hosford Middle School, 2303 SE 28th Place, Portland, OR 97214

Seating is limited so please RSVP at your earliest convenience. Please consider taking public transit, walking, or biking. Bicycle parking is available in front of the school. ADA entry and parking is available on SE 28th Place.

It's time to plot the course for unraveling this shameful tax scam.

Sincerely,

Earl Blumenauer Member of Congress

#### PRESS RELEASE: Blumenauer Applauds Passage of the Inflation Reduction Act, Calls it a "Historic Investment in Our Nation's Health, Climate, and Economy"

August 12th, 2022

**WASHINGTON, D.C.**—Today, Congressman Blumenauer (D-OR) released the following statement celebrating the passage of the Inflation Reduction Act:

"Today, Congress passed the Inflation Reduction Act, a historic investment in our nation's health, climate, and economy. I came to Congress with a mission to make the federal government a better partner to local communities so they can be more livable, healthy, and economically secure. With the passage of this legislation, we have made unprecedented progress toward fulfilling the fundamental premise of this mission.

"The Inflation Reduction Act is the single largest investment in climate action in our nation's history, and it could not come soon enough. Oregonians know all too well that the climate crisis is here and rapidly getting worse. This legislation will deliver \$385 billion in energy and climate investments, including investments in solar and wind energy, electric vehicles, energy efficiency, clean manufacturing, and vulnerable communities most impacted by environmental degradation. In total, it will put the United States on a path toward a 40 percent reduction in emissions by 2030.

"I am proud that several climate-related provisions I advocated for were included in this package. These include the production tax credit and investment tax credit to incentivize wind and solar projects; direct pay and renewable energy credit transferability provisions to make project financing more efficient; legislation to reinstate the Superfund Tax which ensures that polluters are responsible for cleaning up after themselves; clean transportation incentives, including an expanded electric vehicle credit for new and used vehicles; an expanded credit to charge ebikes and e-scooters; credits to electrify commercial fleets; and incentives to make commercial buildings more energy efficient and sustainable. Each of these provisions will help reduce carbon emissions and lessen our dependence on fossil fuels.

"The Inflation Reduction Act will also reduce health care spending by \$288 billion over the next decade. It will bring down the price of prescription drugs, cap Medicare beneficiaries' out-of-pocket costs at \$2,000 a year, penalize drug companies for outrageous price hikes, and lower Affordable Care Act premiums for millions of Americans.

"Finally, the package enacts a 15% corporate book income minimum tax to ensure corporations pay what they owe. It bolsters funding for the Internal Revenue Service (IRS), providing \$3.2 billion for taxpayer services and \$45.6 billion for enforcement, which the Congressional Budget Office estimates will raise more than \$200 billion in additional revenue for the federal government.

"I look forward to President Biden signing this historic bill into law. As we celebrate this win, there is more work to be done—protecting reproductive health care, addressing the housing crisis, strengthening our democracy, ending the failed war on drugs and much more.

"I will continue to work tirelessly on these issues, because as difficult as the challenges we face are, inaction is not



#### Blumenauer Applauds Passage of the Inflation Reduction Act, Calls it a "Historic Investment in Our Nation's Health, Climate, and Economy"

#### Press Release - August 12th, 2022

an option. The federal government has to solve problems rather than create new ones. Today's passage of the Inflation Reduction Act proves that we can still come together and do just that."

#### ###

Below is a full list of provisions Congressman Blumenauer authored or advocated for that have been included in the final package:

#### Sec. 13601 – Reinstatement of Superfund Financing Rate (based on <u>H.R. 2674</u>, the Superfund Reinvestment Act)

- Reinstates the Hazardous Substance Superfund Financing Rate on crude oil and imported petroleum products and increases it from 9.7 cents/gallon to 16.4 cents/gallon beginning in 2023, adjusts the rate to inflation.
- Sec. 13801(a) Direct pay (based on <u>H.R. 3180</u>, the Renewable Energy Investment Act)
- Allows certain taxpayers to elect to be treated as having made a payment of tax equal to the value of the credit they would be eligible for, thereby receiving the credit as a direct payment.

Sec. 13801(b) – Transferability (based on H.R. 27014, the Renewable Energy Transferability Act (116th Congress))

• Allows for taxpayers to transfer tax credits received to project partners. Eligible tax credits include those for wind and solar projects, electric vehicle charging stations, carbon oxide sequestration, nuclear production, clean hydrogen, and advanced manufacturing.

Sec. 13303 – 179D Improvements (based on <u>H.R. 5181</u>, the Energy Efficient Commercial Buildings Act)

• Increases the maximum tax deduction, determined on a sliding scale that is based on building efficiency, removes the lifetime limitation for taxpayers taking the deduction, and expands the deduction to tax-exempt entities.

Sec. 13404 – Two- and three-wheeled electric vehicle charging stations

• Allows for the electric vehicle charging station credit to be used for two- and three-wheeled electric vehicles, like scooters and bikes.

#### Sec. 13102 – Small Wind Investment Tax Credit (based on <u>H.R. 1484</u>, the Rural Wind Energy Modernization and Extension Act)

• Extends the small wind investment tax credit at full value for 10 years, followed by a 2-year phase down, and sunsetting for projects commencing construction in 2034 and thereafter. Expands the wind ITC to include project sizes greater than the current 100 kw limitation.

#### Sec. 13102 – Energy Storage Investment Tax Credit (based on <u>H.R. 1684</u>, the Energy Storage Tax Incentive and Deployment Act)

• Expands the Investment Tax Credit to include energy storage technologies such as batteries, pumped hydropower, fuel cells, and more.

- **1997:** To amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to provide for an exclusion of capital gains upon the sale of a principal residence Amends the Internal Revenue Code to exclude up to \$250,000 (\$500,000 jointly) of gain on the sale of a principal residence if owned and used as the principal residence for periods aggregating at least two years during the five-year period prior to sale or exchange.
- 2001, 2003, 2005, 2007: To amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to extend the transportation fringe benefit to bicycle commuters Amends the Internal Revenue Code to include a bicycle commuting allowance as a qualified transportation fringe benefit.
- 2001: To amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to treat charitable remainder pet trusts in a similar manner as charitable remainder annuity trusts and charitable remainder unitrusts Amends the Internal Revenue Code to treat a charitable remainder pet trust (a trust created to provide, for a period of up to 20 years, for the exclusive benefit of one or more pets) in a manner similar to charitable remainder annuity trusts and charitable remainder remainder unitrusts.
- 2007: Rural Wind Energy Development Act Amends the Internal Revenue Code to provide a tax credit for the installation of wind energy property and an accelerated depreciation allowance for such property.
- 2007: To amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to treat charitable remainder pet trusts in a manner similar to charitable remainder annuity trusts Amends the Internal Revenue Code to provide for the tax treatment of a charitable remainder pet trust as a charitable remainder annuity trust.
- 2007: To amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to include heavier vehicles in the limitation on the depreciation of certain luxury automobiles Amends the Internal Revenue Code to revise the definition of "passenger automobile" for purposes of the limitation on depreciation for luxury automobiles to mean any four-wheeled vehicle which is primarily designed or used to carry passengers over public streets, roads, or highways; and rated at 14,000 pounds unloaded gross vehicle weight or less.
- 2007, 2009, 2011, 2013, 2015, 2017, 2019, 2021: Superfund Reinvestment Act Amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to fund the Hazardous Substance Superfund and ensure adequate resources for the cleanup of hazardous substances.
- 2007, 2009: American Family Farm and Ranchland Protection Act Amends the Internal Revenue Code to increase to \$5 million the limitation on the estate tax exclusion for land subject to a qualified conservation easement and to increase the percentage of the value of such land that is excludable. the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to limit the application of tax exempt bond financing relating to newly included counties in the Gulf Opportunity

- Zone to property, neither the acquisition of which occurred, nor the construction, reconstruction, or renovations began, prior to the enactment of the Housing Assistance Tax Act of 2008 Amends the Internal Revenue Code to limit the application of tax-exempt bond financing for properties located in the Gulf Opportunity Zone (GO Zone) counties of Colbert and Dallas, Alabama, for which neither the acquisition occurred, nor the construction, reconstruction, or renovation was begun, before the enactment of the Housing Assistance Tax Act of 2008.
- 2009: To amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to allow employees to receive transportation fringe benefits for the same month both in the form of transit passes and reimbursement of bicycle commuting expenses Amends the Internal Revenue Code to allow employees to receive transit passes and reimbursements of bicycle commuting expenses as tax-exempt employer-provided fringe benefits in the same month and exempts reimbursements of bicycle commuting expenses from inclusion in gross income as constructively received.
- 2009: Healthy Workforce Act Amends the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to provide a tax credit to employers for the costs of implementing wellness programs.
- 2009, 2011: Veterans' Home Loan Improvement Act Amends the Internal Revenue Code to make all veterans eligible for home loans under the veterans mortgage revenue bond program.
- 2009: To amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to modify the application of the tonnage tax on vessels operating in the dual United States domestic and foreign trades, and for other purposes Amends the Internal Revenue Code to modify the alternative tax on qualifying shipping activities to treat a corporation electing such tax as continuing to use a qualifying vessel in the U.S. foreign trade during any period of use in the U.S. domestic trade, thus eliminating the 30 day limitation on operating in U.S. domestic trade under current law
- 2009: Green Route to Work Act Amends the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to improve commuting and transportation options.
- 2009: Idling Reduction Tax Credit Act Amends the Internal Revenue Code to allow a business tax credit for 50% of the cost of a qualified idling reduction device, up to \$3,000.
- 2009, 2012: Water Protection and Reinvestment Act Amends the Internal Revenue Code to establish in the Treasury the Water Protection and Reinvestment Trust Fund (Trust Fund) to support investments in clean water and drinking water infrastructure
- 2009: Tax Equity for Meal Replacements and Supplements Act Amends the Internal Revenue Code to exclude from gross income amounts reimbursed by an individual's

- employer for certain dietary supplements and meal replacement products.
- 2009: Call to Service Homebuyer Credit Act Amends the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to prevent a change in residency due to extended official duty in the uniformed services, Foreign Service, or intelligence community from triggering the repayment provisions of the first-time homebuyer credit.
- 2010: Green Railcar Enhancement Act Amends the Internal Revenue Code to allow, through 2011, a new business-related tax credit for 25% of the cost of acquiring or rebuilding freight railcars which achieve an increase in capacity or fuel efficiency of at least 8%. (Provides an incentive to encourage the replacement of inefficient, outdated freight railcars with greener, more fuel-efficient vehicles)
- 2010: Geothermal Energy Investment Act Amends the Internal Revenue Code to temporarily increase the investment tax credit for geothermal energy property to 30%.
- 2010, 2011, 2013, 2015, 2020, 2021, 2023: End Oil and Gas Tax Subsidies Act (formerly the End Big Oil Tax Subsidies Act) Amends the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to repeal fossil fuel subsidies for large oil companies.
- 2010: Heavy Truck Tax Fairness Act Amends the Internal Revenue Code to repeal the excise tax on heavy trucks and trailers sold at retail, increase the rate of tax on diesel fuel or kerosene to 31.6 cents per gallon, and impose a floor stocks tax with respect to certain taxable fuels
- 2010: Transportation Finance Innovation Demonstration Act Amends the Internal Revenue Code to impose a vehicle mileage tax on mobile mounted concrete boom pump vehicles in lieu of the tax on taxable fuels.
- 2010: Renewable Energy Expansion Act of 2010 Amends the Internal Revenue Code to: (1) allow taxpayers an election to receive a direct payment for investing in or producing specified energy property in lieu of existing energy tax credits; and (2) extend eligibility for such payments until January 1, 2013
- 2011: Commuter Relief Act Amends the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to improve commuting and transportation options.
- 2012: Wind Powering American Jobs Act Amends the Internal Revenue Code to extend through 2013 the production tax credit for the production of electricity from wind facilities and the energy tax credit for investment in wind facilities and limits the foreign tax credit and tax deferrals for amounts paid or accrued by a major integrated oil company that is a dual capacity taxpayer.
- 2013, 2015: Marijuana Tax Revenue Act (formerly Marijuana Tax Equity Act) Amends the Internal Revenue Code to impose an excise tax on the sale of marijuana by producers or

- importers of such drug equal to 50% of the sales price and on each person who is engaged in a marijuana enterprise.
- 2013, 2015, 2019, 2023: Small Business Tax Equity Act Amends the Internal Revenue Code to allow deductions and credits relating to expenditures in connection with marijuana sales conducted in compliance with State law.
- 2013, 2015: Cider Act Amends the Internal Revenue Code to modify the taxation of hard cider. *Enacted on December 18, 2015, in the PATH Act.*
- 2013, 2015: Update, Promote, and Develop America's Transportation Essentials Act -Amends the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to increase the excise tax on gasoline, diesel, and kerosene fuels.
- 2014: Rural Wind Energy Expansion Act Amends the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to increase the maximum nameplate capacity of a small wind turbine qualifying for an energy credit from 100 kilowatts to 20 megawatts.
- 2014, 2015: Bridge to a Clean Energy Future Act Amends the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to extend certain expiring provisions relating to energy.
- 2015, 2017, 2019, 2020, 2021: Tar Sands Tax Loophole Elimination Act Amends the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to clarify that tar sands are crude oil for purposes of the Federal excise tax on petroleum.
- 2015: To amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to extend the statute of limitation for credit or refund for taxpayers who receive combat pay Extends the limitation period for claiming a credit or refund for taxpayers who receive tax-exempt combat pay from 3 years from the date the return was filed, or 2 years from the date the tax was paid, to 15 years from either of such dates.
- 2016: Safe Drug Disposal Tax Credit Act Amends the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to allow a credit against tax for costs incurred by certain businesses for drug disposal programs.
- 2016, 2017: RAISE IT Act Amends the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to increase the excise tax on gasoline, diesel, and kerosene fuels.
- 2017, 2019: Marijuana Revenue and Regulation Act Imposes an excise tax on any marijuana product produced in or imported into the United States and an occupational tax on marijuana production facilities and export warehouses.
- 2017, 2018: American Opportunity Carbon Fee Act Amends the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to provide for carbon dioxide and other greenhouse gas emission fees, reduces the rate of the corporate income tax, provides tax credits to workers, and delivers additional benefits to retired and disabled Americans.

- 2019: BRACE Act Amends the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to permanently extend the tax credit for railroad track maintenance. *Enacted in the Continuing Appropriations Act, 2020.*
- **2019, 2021:** Public Buildings Renewal Act Amends the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to provide for the tax-exempt financing of certain government-owned buildings.
- 2019, 2021, 2023: Bicycle Commuter Act Amends the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to modify employer-provided fringe benefits for bicycle commuting. *Passed the House in the Build Back Better Act on November 19, 2021*.
- 2019: Move America Act Amends the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to allow tax-exempt Move America bonds and Move America tax credits to be used for certain infrastructure projects
- 2019, 2021: KOMBUCHA Amends the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to ensure that kombucha is exempt from any excise taxes and regulations imposed on alcoholic beverages.
- 2019: To require the Secretary of the Treasury to establish a program for the automated disclosure of taxpayer information for third-party income verification, and for other purposes Requires the Internal Revenue Service (IRS) to implement a program to ensure that certain disclosures of tax returns or return information for third-party income verification are fully automated and accomplished through the Internet, and accomplished in as close to real-time as is practicable.
- 2019, 2022, 2023: No Tax Subsidies for Stadiums Act Amends the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to ensure that bonds used to finance professional stadiums are not treated as tax-exempt bonds.
- 2019, 2021: BUILD Act Amends the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to increase the national limitation amount for qualified highway or surface freight transfer facility bonds from \$15 billion to \$20.8 billion. *Enacted on November 15, 2021, in the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act.*
- 2019: Renewable Energy Transferability Act Amends the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to allow for transfers of the tax credits for renewable electricity production and renewable energy property. *Enacted on August 16, 2022, in the Inflation Reduction Act.*
- 2019, 2021, 2023: Historic Tax Credit Growth and Opportunity Act Amends the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to modify the rehabilitation credit for certain small projects and eliminates the requirement that the taxpayer's basis in a building be reduced by the amount of the rehabilitation credit determined with respect to such building. *Passed the House in the Build Back Better Act on November 19, 2021*.
- 2019: Rebuild America Act Provides for an incremental increase in the excise taxes on

- gasoline, diesel, and kerosene fuels over a five-year period.
- 2019: Charities Helping Americans Regularly Throughout the Year Act Modifies several tax provisions in the Internal Revenue Code affecting charitable contributions and tax-exempt organizations.
- 2019, 2021: Renewable Energy Investment Act Provides taxpayers the option to receive tax-excludable elective payments for energy property and electricity produced from certain renewable resources. *Enacted on August 16, 2022, in the Inflation Reduction Act.*
- 2019, 2021: Energy Efficient Commercial Buildings Act Reinstates and extends the tax deduction for energy efficient commercial buildings through 2024 and modifies efficiency standards for commercial buildings. *Enacted on August 16, 2022, in the Inflation Reduction Act.*
- 2020, 2021: Revitalizing Economies, Housing, and Businesses Act (formerly the REHAB Act Amends the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to modify provisions relating to the rehabilitation tax credit, allowing an increased 15% credit for non-historic buildings placed in service 50 years prior to the current calendar year.
- 2020, 2021: Rural Wind Energy Modernization and Extension Act Amends the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to expand the energy tax credit to include qualified distributed wind energy property. *Enacted on August 16, 2022, in the Inflation Reduction Act.*
- 2021: First-Time Homebuyer Act Modifies the first-time homebuyer tax credit by increasing the allowable dollar amount of the credit from \$8,000 to \$15,000, revising the income formula for determining the maximum allowable credit amount, replacing the limitation on the credit based on purchase price with a limitation based on area median purchase price, and revising rules relating to recapture of the credit and to members of the Armed Forces.
- 2022: SPACE Tax Act Imposes excise taxes on the taxable space transportation of a passenger other than crew or a government astronaut, and on each taxable space launch of a space vehicle (i.e., any launch vehicle and any reentry vehicle).
- 2022: To amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to stipulate that a parking benefit is not a qualified parking fringe benefit unless an employer offers employees the option to receive an equivalent cash benefit or alternative tax-exempt benefit in lieu of the parking benefit Denies a tax exclusion for qualified parking fringe benefits unless employers providing such benefits offer their employees the option to receive, in lieu of the parking benefit, the fair market value of the parking.
- 2022, 2023: Restaurant Revitalization Tax Credit Act Provides a partially refundable credit against payroll taxes for certain restaurants affected by the COVID-19 pandemic, in

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#### Appendix

- an amount up to 100% of the wages paid to their employees and not to exceed \$25,000 in any calendar quarter.
- 2023: Travel for Care Act Allows a tax exemption for employer-reimbursed travel expenses for abortion-related care.

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## Tribal

Throughout his career, Congressman Earl Blumenauer has tirelessly advocated for the rights and well-being of Native American communities, addressing critical issues such as healthcare, environmental protection, and treaty rights. Cognizant of the fact that he represents one of the nations' largest urban Indian populations, his legislative efforts reflect a deep commitment to rectifying historical injustices, ensuring that tribal voices are heard, and making the federal government a better partner to Tribal nations.

One of his primary focuses has been upholding Tribal sovereignty and treaty rights. Earl has actively collaborated with bipartisan colleagues to address the crisis facing salmon populations in the Columbia River Basin. Recognizing the cultural significance of salmon to tribal communities, he has supported comprehensive solutions aimed at restoring habitats and securing federal commitments to protect these vital species.

His commitment to improving conditions for tribal communities extends to the "in-lieu" Treaty Fishing Access Sites along the Columbia River. He enacted the Columbia River In-Lieu and Treaty Fishing Access Sites Improvement Act to enhance safety and sanitation at these sites, ensuring that tribal members can exercise their treaty rights while living in safe and dignified conditions. To repair some of the damage that was done to Tribal communities that were flooded due to the construction of the Columbia River dam system, Earl directed the Army Corps of Engineers to create a plan to replace the villages that were previously inundated and destroyed.

Another significant achievement includes his work to integrate tribal co-stewardship traditional ecological knowledge public land management. Following years of conversations with indigenous stakeholders, Earl introduced the Wy'east Tribal Resources Restoration Act to protect lands around Mt. Hood, emphasizing the importance of tribal input in managing their ancestral territories, especially amid increasing climate challenges like wildfires.

In addition to natural resources, Earl has also acknowledged the unique challenges faced by urban Native populations, advocating for their rights and representation. His approach underscores the need to understand and address the diverse needs of these communities, which often lack the resources available to those on reservations. Health care is a prime example where he has fought for full funding to ensure comprehensive health care access for Native Americans who experience significantly poorer health outcomes than other racial groups. He has worked to secure more funding and more consistency for the Indian Health Service which is funded through the annual appropriations process and therefore subject to unpredictability and delay.

Over his nearly 30 years in office, Earl has sought to uplift and empower Indigenous

## Tribal

Oregonians. By focusing on healthcare, environmental justice, and the restoration of treaty rights, he has made significant strides toward promoting equity and honoring the commitments made to Indigenous peoples. His work serves as a model for continued engagement and collaboration with Native communities as the nation moves forward.

# Image: Constraint of the second stateImage: Constraint of the second stateUS House Passes Bill To ImproveTribal Fishing SitesBy Cassandra Profita April 29, 2019

On Monday, the U.S. House of Representatives passed a bill that would provide \$11 million to improve unsafe and unsanitary living conditions at tribal fishing sites on the Columbia River.

Over time, the federal government created 31 inlieu fishing sites for Native American tribes to make up for the land that was flooded when the Columbia River dams were built.

The tribes were also promised new housing to replace what was lost. But that promise still hasn't been fulfilled. In the meantime, many tribal fishermen have created makeshift residences at the in-lieu fishing sites.

U.S. Rep. Earl Blumenauer, D-Ore., visited one of those sites near The Dalles a few years ago.

"It was really horrific," he said. "Sewage, electrical lines patched together. It really wasn't safe for human habitation and there were dozens of people there."

Blumenauer sponsored the bill, which would pay for upgrades to the kind of conditions he saw.

The bill now moves to the Senate.

Wilbur Slockish, chief of the Klickitat Tribe within the Yakama Nation, said he was grateful to Blumenauer for getting some money to upgrade the fishing sites. However, he said, those sites were once tribal villages, and the government never replaced what was lost when they were flooded.

Slockish said his family fished for generations in one of the flooded areas below Bonneville Dam.

"All of a sudden we hear the government owns them, but we were never compensated," he said. "My grandfather, my grandmother, my aunts, my uncles and some of my cousins that utilized that area, they've all left this world. I'm 74 and I'm hoping my children don't have to wait another 70 years. It should be viewed as replacing what was lost to the original families that occupied that area." Blumenauer called Monday's House vote "a good start," though it doesn't provide the tribal housing that was promised decades ago.

"We have not met our obligations to native people," Blumenauer said. "What things have happened have been only after a struggle and they have not been adequate. The native people have been waiting for decades."

## **COLUMBIA GEORGE NEWS** Preserve and protect: Blumenauer leads tribal co-management plan

By Noah Noteboom,

Nov 29, 2023

OREGON — On Oct. 30, Oregon Congressman Earl Blumenauer, 75, announced he will not run for reelection when his term expires. The representative for Oregon's 3rd Congressional District will leave office in 2024, but until then, he has a "laundry list" of things he wants to accomplish.

On Nov. 15 he announced, along with Sen. Ron Wyden and Sen. Jeff Merkley, they are reintroducing the Wy'east Tribal Resources Restoration Act. The bill will direct the U.S. Forest Service to collaborate with the Confederated Tribes of the Warm Springs to create a co-management plan. Blumenauer hopes the bill will protect and enhance Tribal Treaty resources and protect the Reservation from wildfire within agreed-upon "Treaty Resources Emphasis Zones." Recreation, transportation, and conservation on Mount Hood and the Columbia River Gorge will also be enhanced.

"This is this is part of my bucket list as I wrap up my service in Congress, but it's something I plan on being involved with going on into the future. This is this is part of everybody's legacy," Blumenauer told Columbia Gorge News.

The co-management bill is the first of its kind in the country and Blumenauer spoke to the importance of including the tribal partners in this endeavor.

"I mean, they've been doing this for millennia and in a very real sense, this is their land," Blumenauer said. "We want to make sure that we are doing a better job harnessing traditional ecological knowledge, together with the best available scientific information to use in the forest and resource management areas." The legislation also requires implementation of the Cultural Foods Obligations which were included in the Public Lands Management Act of 2009 but were never carried out. Blumenauer said the transition between the Obama and Trump administrations made it difficult to implement. Blumenauer hopes the Biden Administration can build on the existing foundations.

The bill will provide \$3.5 million in annual appropriations to better ensure the Tribe is a full participant in developing the management plan. "We think an ongoing appropriation [of \$3.5 million], would give us the capacity to make sure that the details of the legislation are dealt with," he said. Blumenauer also pointed to the impact tourism can have and how they are balancing tourist accessibility and land preservation.

"Being able to spotlight our history with indigenous people is important," Blumenauer said. "Part of what we're doing with the co-management is making sure that the resources are protected."

He wants visitors to appreciate the heritage of the indigenous people. They were and continue to play a part in Oregon's history.

In roughly 13 months, Bluemanuer will leave office, but he says there will be opportunities where he can continue to make a difference. He said some are already giving suggestions for his next step, but he is looking forward to taking a moment to relax.



## Blumenauer invites Tribal input on marijuana policy issues

06.12.2014 - Ron Karten

Oregon Rep. Earl Blumenauer told the Grand Ronde Tribal Council on Tuesday, June 3, that he thinks Oregon and Alaska will be the next states to legalize the use of marijuana, joining Washington and Colorado.

"It is a movement that is taking place across the United States," Blumenauer said during a two-hour visit to the Grand Ronde Tribal campus.

As the Democratic representative for Oregon's Third Congressional District, which includes Portland east of the Willamette River and lies within the lands ceded by the Grand Ronde Tribe in the Willamette Valley Treaty of 1855, Blumenauer said he is working in Congress to keep the federal government from interfering with what states decide to do regarding marijuana legalization.

The issue is important to the Grand Ronde Tribe, Tribal Council Secretary Toby McClary said, because the Tribe follows federal regulations. In addition, Tribal Attorney Rob Greene said, there are jurisdictional issues since the Tribe has to certify for some federal grants that Grand Ronde is a drug-free workplace.

So, what does the Tribe do if Oregon makes the use of marijuana legal while the federal government still considers it a crime? What does the Tribe do if an employee is found to have lingering traces of marijuana in their body during a urinalysis test, but is otherwise sober at work?

"We need to clean up the conflicts," Blumenauer said, "and seek a clarification for Indian Country."

Blumenauer called the federal government's expensive war on drugs, and marijuana specifically, part of its "misplaced priorities" that lead to more than 750,000 arrests annually that disproportionately affect young people of color. "I would appreciate having a representative from the Tribes," Blumenauer said about upcoming meetings he will hold about the topic. "This is going to be tricky territory." Blumenauer, who has been a congressman since 1996, said he sees positives to the legalization of marijuana in Oregon. Illegal growers would stop destroying vast tracts of public and Tribal land through pollution. A legalized and regulated trade in marijuana would raise tax revenue that could be spent on addiction treatment and hopefully reduce or end the violence of drug cartels.

"This could save the American people \$100 billion a year between the revenue raised and not spending money fighting something that most people think is all right," Blumenauer said. "We need to clear out the gray areas. Tribes should not be caught in the middle."



McClary called the potential legalization of marijuana in Oregon a "real issue" and vowed that the Grand Ronde Tribe would work with Blumenauer's office about providing Tribal input.

After being greeted to the Tribal Governance Center with a welcome song performed by Tribal employees Bobby Mercier, Brian Krehbiel, Jan Looking Wolf Reibach, Reina Nelson, David Harrelson, Travis Stewart and Jordan Mercier, Blumenauer and his aide Hilary Barber were escorted to the Tribal Council Conference Room for a sit-down with McClary and Tribal Council members Cheryle A. Kennedy, June Sherer and Jon A. George. Acting General Manager Chris Leno, Greene and Public Affairs Director Siobhan Taylor also attended.

He received a crash course in the Tribe's ceded lands from Harrelson, the Tribe's Cultural Protection specialist, and listened to stories from Kennedy, Sherer and George about living through Termination in 1954 and Restoration in 1983.

Harrelson and Tribal Council members stressed that the 29year break in federal recognition created a "gap in voice" that the Grand Ronde Tribe is still dealing with in not having a say in Columbia River issues.

# NEW MEMBER LETTER

For 16 years Congressman Earl Blumenauer hand-delivered a letter to each new member of Congress. This is the distillation of advice that he wished had been shared with him and his and family when he was first elected.

#### 2024 New Member Letter:

Dear Representative:

#### **Congratulations! Now What?**

You just joined an exclusive club. Fewer than 12,500 people in American history have had the honor to be elected to Congress. Since 1789, we all share the same experience. We leave the whirlwind of the campaign to an even more intense storm of activity as we take office.

I was luckier than most because I arrived after a special election, long after everything in Congress was up and running. Because I arrived late in the session, I felt almost irrelevant but had eight months to see how things worked. Then I was basically a freshman for two more years. I even went to new member orientation the following year with my newly elected colleagues to see what I had missed.

Now with more than two and a half decades under my belt, I have some thoughts about what I wished people told me and my family when I was first elected.

Whether you're a Republican, Democrat, or Independent, here is my list of items that are important to all of us.

#### Take Time for Family and Friends

Despite political pressures and social media that depersonalize members of Congress, one of the best ways to keep your balance is to use family and friends as an anchor. This is the single, most important lesson for success in Congress and as a human being. Since we all know family and friends are important, take time for them. The first rule for you and your team should be to guarantee time for your family and friends (real friends, not just political junkies or likeable people who are campaign supporters).

**Insist** that at least one family/personal weekend be scheduled every month, <u>no matter what</u>. You should also reserve time when you are in D.C. to phone the kids, and fight for time when you are home to attend that recital or school play.

Staff should understand that birthdays and anniversaries matter. Nail these dates down on the long-term calendar as soon as possible.

If you're not careful, personal time evaporates. While you can always meet brilliant people or give speeches, you can never recover missed time with family and friends.

#### Maintain Your Personal, Mental, and Physical Health

Congressional service can take a terrible toll not just due to long, irregular hours, constant travel and being away from home. Uncertain schedules are a reality. Even if the House leadership has good intentions and plans, we are all hostage to the Senate, the Administration, and unpredictable events.

We appear more polarized than ever, but it is not new. I think about Lyndon Johnson's complaint about Republicans being our "enemy," Speaker Sam Rayburn corrected young Lyndon, "Son; the Republicans are not the enemy. They are our opponents. The Senate is the enemy." It is a humorous example, but it illustrates our challenges.

It is also critical to protect your physical well-being and to keep your perspective and balance. There are simple steps you can take to stay in shape physically and mentally.

Key examples are,

- Walk or climb steps instead of taking elevators, the subway or being driven. These steps add up and are the easiest exercise possible.
- Schedule at least three "meetings on the move" per week, no matter what your level of fitness. Whether you walk, bike, run, or just stroll around the Capitol, your time will be better spent and you will be healthier. Make a list of a hundred friends, constituents, supporters, and staff who would love to have a "meeting on the move" with you. Instruct your scheduler to make that part of your routine.
- Use the walk to the House floor to vote as a chance to meet with staff, colleagues or constituents. **Try not to walk alone.** You will spend hundreds of hours going back and forth at all hours of the day and night. Make those minutes count (and not just on your cell phone but that's better than nothing).
- Bring a bike to D.C. It's cheaper and healthier than driving, and it's often faster to get to your meetings, which are generally less than a mile from your office. If you don't want to

- have your own bike, Capital Bikeshare (http://www.capitalbikeshare.com/) is a great option. It has thousands of bicycles available across more than 500 stations, over 200 of which are in the district. In addition, there are a variety of scooter systems that can be accessed from your phone and are both inexpensive and convenient.
- If you need a car, consider signing up for a car sharing option. Zipcar and Car2Go have vehicles located in several locations near the Hill, including Eastern Market and Navy Yard, that you can reserve and rent by the hour. This is cheaper and less of a hassle than bringing your own car. Uber and Lyft are also convenient alternatives to the ever-present D.C. taxis.
- The D.C. Metro is convenient and service is improving, with new trains and better infrastructure. It usually is a good option and a great alternative to driving. It is often faster to reach many locations. The House even subsidizes your Metro pass, so learn how to use it.
- Work hard to have a "buddy" or two who are not in your freshman class and <u>at least two</u> <u>friends across the aisle</u>. This will provide stability and valuable information.
- The sad truth is in Congress, **NO ONE PERSON REALLY KNOWS WHAT'S GOING ON**. The more sources you have, the better you can evaluate information, both good and bad.
- ALWAYS HAVE HEALTHY FOOD fruits, nuts, and vegetables in your office for snacks. You will constantly be surrounded by rich, unhealthy food and alcohol at the unending parade of receptions. With uncertain and sporadic meals, the temptation to nibble to satisfy your hunger can be very bad for your health. Having healthy food within reach minimizes the temptation and protects your metabolism.

#### They aren't "PERKS," they are Essentials

In your <u>first three weeks</u>, discover the House gym, the Library of Congress, and the Attending Physician's office.

• The House gym can be an island of bipartisan retreat and mental salvation for both men and women, if you treat it that way (having more women members will encourage House leadership to invest more in facilities and programs for women). It's convenient to use and

- is a great way to make connections with other members while you pursue the important task of remaining healthy. Use this opportunity to link with others with workouts or yoga.
- The Library of Congress is the greatest collection of information in the history of the world and too few people adequately take advantage of it. Whether it's the magnificent Members-Only Reading Room, the Congressional Research Service, or access to the various collections, time here is well spent. It's also one of the most spectacular places you can direct a constituent, or better yet, lead a personal tour. While you're at it, join the Library of Congress Caucus to show your support and learn more (more about caucuses later).
- The Attending Physician's office is at your service every minute the House is in session. From physical therapy to checkups to emergency care to flu shots, it is available almost anytime and only four minutes away from the House Floor. With your new schedule you're going to find it extraordinarily difficult to visit your own physician at home. The office has attentive, skilled staff. There is no excuse not to take advantage of this resource and it is well worth the fee.

Travel with a Congressional delegation (Codel) or an approved "think tank" sponsored trip with your spouse or child. This will give you an opportunity to have new experiences and to become better acquainted with your fellow members and their families on a personal level. This is invaluable to being a more successful member and can be a deeply enriching time which you can share with your family and new colleagues. One of the best opportunities is sponsored by the Aspen Institute, who host fascinating weekly breakfasts on Capitol Hill featuring excellent speakers almost every week we are in session.

Several times per year, Aspen sponsors a week of travel featuring key areas of interest. They also pay for a family member to attend, and House Ethics rules allow you to extend the trip 2 or 3 days (at your own expense). It is well worth thinking about.

Discover our nation's capital. Washington, D.C. is a rich cultural and historic backdrop for you, your family, and friends. Being a member of Congress gives you a unique entrée to the many fascinating aspects of our nation's capital. It is one of the world's top tourist destinations for a reason. You should take advantage of the opportunity. Get to know and enjoy it. Again, this is a great opportunity to connect with family, friends, and constituents.

#### Starting Your Congressional Office

Why is it we always have time to do something over but never take the time to get it right the first time?

This is the second most important lesson: <u>Do not make snap decisions</u>. Remember that you'll be overwhelmed with input from friends, supporters, well-wishers, and people who now wished that they had supported you.

Don't treat the day you take office as the key date to have everything done. Instead, you really should think about Spring, after you are sworn in as the time to be fully up and running. By then, you will have been in office for eight weeks, you will have had Presidents' Day recess in the district behind you, soon you will be facing the of onslaught of supporters, constituents, and special interests. Often termed "March Madness," this is a ten week long, heavy concentration of legislative conferences for groups large and small from across the country. Every state sends hundreds, if not thousands, of people in professional, business, social service, and educational delegations to flood Capitol Hill to learn about the new session of Congress and to start their intense lobbying process.

You will be pressed to make immediate decisions about committee memberships, requests for support from various colleagues competing for leadership positions, while deciding hundreds of personal matters. Make a priority list of the decisions that are most important <u>for you</u>. It is not necessary to make all of these decisions at once and you shouldn't even try.

- Your three important, immediate, decisions will be your chief of staff, your living situation, and your schedule for the months ahead.
- Another important consideration is which congressional colleagues you're going to rely on, not just for advice, but to actually help you. These friendships matter.
- Ask for advice and reach out now. You will be stunned at how many people will help if asked.
- Do not make hasty decisions about opening district satellite offices. If you subsequently find out that, for whatever reason, it's not working out, closing one could create a firestorm.

- Do not make hasty decisions about opening district satellite offices. If you subsequently find out that, for whatever reason, it's not working out, closing one could create a firestorm.
- Above all, do not make snap hiring decisions. Every hire should be with the expectation that this person's experience, talents, and personality is the right fit for the task at hand, the dynamics of your office, and your needs. Having to fire someone can be traumatic, disruptive, and expensive. Taking time to get this right will pay dividends many times over.
- If you do make a hiring mistake, let that person go. You cannot afford investing time and money in people who aren't performing the way that you need.
- Consider hiring people on a temporary basis. On several occasions, I have been able to get extraordinarily talented and capable people to work with me for a limited period of time, including during my transition into Congress. Some business people, lawyers, recently retired individuals, and former Capitol Hill staff will accept a paid assignment for a few weeks or months. They can be extraordinarily valuable in "jumpstarting" the operation and can provide you with the unbiased feedback of somebody who just wants you to get it right, not make their next career step. Also, keep in mind that in a new congressional office, you may not have to hire at the top end of the salary level; offices that have been around longer usually have more experienced (and expensive) staff. Note that House rules prohibit volunteers or people paid below the minimum payroll for the House.
- That said, as you are interviewing people for permanent staff positions, remember that experience counts. It is very important that some people in your operation have Capitol Hill experience.
- • Always have a six-to ten-week review for each new hire to make sure it's working out for both you and the employee.
- • The key hires, after the chief of staff, are the office manager and scheduler (some can be combined in the same position), a district director, a legislative director, and a technical computer person. Somebody in this core group really needs to know you, and several key staff need to know your district.
- • Have your core staff interview the final candidate for every position before they're hired. It's worth 20 minutes of everybody's time to get their feedback and cement the relationship.

• Computers, iPads, and iPhones are about to become even more important in your life, if that's possible. Fall behind in technology and your entire operation loses a huge potential advantage. This is critical now and is becoming more important for the future. Invest in technology, training, and personnel.

"March Madness" is also the time when committees really start and floor action begins. Constituents, arriving in droves, will feel you've had half a year to get set up, even though it's only actually less than two months. They will be comparing you to other members, many of whom have been around forever. Their patience may wear thin. Keep in mind that they consider their congressional visits to be about them and their agenda, not about you and your recent success. Be ready for it.

#### **Committee Assignments**

The committees on which you serve can play a huge role in your congressional career. This is where you spend a great deal of day-to-day time. You will be given priority on that committee's bills during debate on the floor of the House and even the opportunity to manage the debate. Fellow committee members will become some of your closest associates. It is important to give it careful thought and to have both long term and short term objectives.

Typically, new members want to serve on the "exclusive" committees. Ways and Means, Commerce, Appropriations, and Financial Services are sought after assignments with broad jurisdiction and tremendous influence. It would be extraordinary for a new member to draw such an assignment. That does not mean you should not set your sights for an exclusive committee. Don't just make your wish known, but make your case as to why you would be a valuable member of the committee. Work the system and build momentum for when lightening will strike and you are appointed to a coveted committee.

Take the time to look carefully at the list of committees, the membership, and the jurisdiction. Understanding committees' jurisdiction will give you a sense what you can do with the committee, who your colleagues will be, and potential openings both to secure membership and what the path may be for leadership.

**REMEMBER, THERE ARE NO "BAD COMMITTEES."** One of the advantages of the nonexclusive committees, including some that are typically not as highly sought, is that all of them provide a platform for some issues you care about and the path to the top as chair or ranking member is typically much shorter. It is not unusual for new Members of Congress to be

chairs or ranking members of subcommittees where there is a lot of turnover.

It is important to assess what committees serve your interests and what are your qualifications for each one. It is useful to think about the needs of your district or the state. A member from New York City is typically very interested in Financial Services. Likewise, those with major military instillations are keenly interested in Armed Services or Veterans Affairs.

There are some committees like Budget or Government Reform that are both interesting and useful because they expose you to a wide array of issue opportunities.

You can also usually attend subcommittee hearings where you may not be a member. The courtesy is often extended to not just sit on the panel for hearings that are not particularly well attended; you may be able to speak, and question witnesses. You can learn a lot and use that to your advantage.

It is important to stay with your plan for your long term objective and not confuse the leadership with too many, or worse, even conflicting requests. Have one exclusive committee you care about, have a short list of other committees that make sense and do not be shy about pushing for a waiver of the rules for an extra assignment. As long as it is done politely and intelligently, you should advance your interests—nobody else will.

Whatever the assignment, take it seriously. Meet the committee staff of both the majority and the minority. These are important people who can be extremely helpful and can make your committee experience more rewarding.

#### Your Issues

Think about becoming involved with lesser profile, "third tier" issues that are important to you but are not in the headlines or on the Sunday morning talk shows.

There are very important, high octane, contentious issues that you should be involved in, but candidly, as a new member of Congress, you can seldom move the needle on the most bitterly contested battles.

There are hundreds of important issues below the radar, where you can exercise leadership easier and more quickly. And just because they aren't on Fox News or MSNBC doesn't mean they don't matter to hundreds, even thousands of people back home.

Progress on many of these issues is possible through hard work, careful preparation, and investing the time.

Instead of just working through committees, think about being involved in the hundreds of caucuses that exist on Capitol Hill. Many are not the contested issues that divide people but instead can bring them together. International water and sanitation has proven to be one of these issues for me. Another one is animal welfare. As co-chair of the bipartisan Animal Protection Caucus, I've had great success in raising awareness of the issue and moving an agenda that matters to millions of Americans. I have also found that it's something that unites members of Congress of both parties, rather than divides them. After the last couple years in American politics, we should **all** commit to some issues that are good for America where there is common ground. Look for and seek out those issues.

There are countless areas where you can exercise leadership. More than ever, we need to show the American public that Congress can make progress and work together. This will help enhance your leadership, pay long-term dividends, and protect your mental health.

#### A Few Words on Voting

- Don't be afraid to miss a vote early in your career; you will miss one someday anyhow. Don't let a meaningless perfect 100% voting record get in the way of doing your job. Although it may sound far-fetched, the choice can actually come down to an inconsequential vote to name a post office versus delivering a commencement speech at your child's graduation. You do want to maintain a good voting record, but do not make that an obsession. You will hear this repeatedly from experienced people. Listen to them. They are right.
- You don't have to take a position on everything. People will try to find out what you think and pin you down, often on issues that aren't fully developed, sometimes on the way to your committee or to the House floor for a vote. Take your time, listen, and think about it, but don't commit unnecessarily. Ultimately, you will save yourself a lot of heartburn and your decisions, when you are ready to make them, will be better.
- Don't vote against your conscience and/or best judgment: it is the one thing that you cannot explain to your family and close supporters. While the campaign is still fresh, think about the lies and outrageous claims that were said during this brutal election season. This

• awareness will make it easier for you to vote for what you think is in the best interests of your constituents and your country. Special interests can twist, distort, and outright lie about your record anyway. Don't make the mistake of thinking you can avoid this by fudging your votes or voting against your conscience.

#### Final Word

I know I already said this but it really is so critical, it should be repeated. Insist that a family/personal weekend be scheduled every month, no matter what. Nail these and other important family dates down on the long-term schedule as soon as possible. Every congressional or political opportunity that sounds too good to resist will be followed by something else that is spectacular. If you're not careful, the personal time evaporates and the great opportunities or pressing business just becomes a blur.

Don't carry any of the bitterness or divisiveness of your campaign into your new experience. Congressional service is truly an experience of a lifetime. If you are healthy and connected, that experience will be memorable for you, your family, and your constituents.

Again, congratulations on your election to Congress. I look forward to working with you in Washington, D.C.

Sincerely,

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Earl Blumenauer Member of Congress

# MAJOR VOTES

#### <u>104th Congress (1995 – 1996)</u>

**Illegal Immigration Reform and Immigrant Responsibility Act:** Strengthened U.S. immigration laws by adding penalties for undocumented immigrants who commit crimes while in the U.S. or who stay in the U.S. for statutorily defined periods of time. oPub. L. 104-208 o Rep. Blumenauer's vote: NO o Final Passage: 278-126; 72-27

Mental Health Parity Act: Provided that large group health plans cannot impose annual or lifetime dollar limits on mental health benefits less favorable than limits on medical and surgical benefits. o Pub. L. 104-199 o Rep. Blumenauer's vote: YES o Final Passage: 392-17; 95-2

**Food Quality Protection Act**: Standardized and streamlined EPA's regulation of pesticides used in foods, specifically protected infants and babies from dangerous pesticides. o Pub. L. 104-170 o Rep. Blumenauer's vote: YES o Final Passage: 417-0; Unanimous consent

National Invasive Species Act: Mandated regulations to prevent the introduction and spread of aquatic nuisance species into the Great Lakes through ballast water. o Pub. L. 104-332 o Rep. Blumenauer's vote: YES o Final Passage: Unanimous consent, Unanimous consent

#### Health Insurance Portability and Accountability

Act: Created national standards to protect sensitive patient health information from being disclosed without the patient's consent or knowledge. o Pub. L. 104-191

o Rep. Blumenauer's vote: YES o Final Passage: 421-2; 98-0

**Defense of Marriage Act**: Banned federal recognition of same-sex marriage by defining marriage as between one man and one woman. o Pub. L. 104-199 o Rep. Blumenauer's vote: YES o Final Passage: 342-67; 85-14

#### <u>105th Congress (1997 – 1998)</u>

**Taxpayer Relief Act of 1997**: Reduced tax rates and introduced new tax credits such as the child tax credit, tax benefits related to education incentives, and the Roth IRA. o Pub. L. 105-34 o Rep. Blumenauer's vote: NO o Final Passage: 253-179; 80-12

**Transportation Equity Act for the 21st Century**: Authorized over \$200 billion to improve transportation infrastructure, enhance economic growth and protect the environment. o Pub. L. 105-178 o Rep. Blumenauer's vote: YES o Final Passage: 337-80; Unanimous consent

**Internal Revenue Service Restructuring and Reform Act**: Established an IRS oversight board, changed the organizational structure

and transferred the burden of proof in tax dispute cases to the IRS. o Pub. L. 105-206 o Rep. Blumenauer's vote: YES o Final Passage: 402-8; 96-2

#### **Credit Union Membership Access Act:**

Authorized multiple group chartering for Federal credit unions, imposed new requirements on financial statements and audits, loans, and conversions, and established a system of tiered capital requirements.

o Pub. L. 105-219 o Rep. Blumenauer's vote: YES o Final Passage: 411-8; 92-6

**Iraq Liberation Act**: Declared that it should be the policy of the US to seek to remove the Saddam Hussein regime from power in Iraq and to replace it with a democratic government. o Pub. L. 105-338

o Rep. Blumenauer's vote: YES

o Final Passage: 360-38; Unanimous consent

#### <u>106th Congress (1999 - 2000)</u>

#### Wireless Communications and Public Safety

Act: Directed the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) to designate 911 as the universal emergency telephone number, provided immunity from liability for providers of wireless service and authorized call location information to be provided in emergency situations.

· Pub. L. 106-81

- · Rep. Blumenauer's vote: YES
- · Final Passage: 424-2; Unanimous consent

#### Iran Nonproliferation Act of 2000: Authorizes

the President of the United States to take punitive action against individuals or organizations known to be providing material aid to weapons of mass destruction programs in Iran.

- · Pub. L. 109-112
- · Rep. Blumenauer's vote: YES
- · Final Passage: 420-0; 98-0

#### African Growth and Opportunity Act:

Established a non-reciprocal U.S. trade preference program that provides duty-free access to the U.S. market for most exports from eligible sub-Saharan African countries.

- · Pub. L. 106-200
- · Rep. Blumenauer's vote: YES
- · Final Passage: 309-110; 77-19

#### **Agriculture Risk Protection Act of 2000:**

Provided for direct financial assistance to producers of various crops; changed USDA nutrition, commodity and credit programs; funded biomass research and established the Plant Protection Act.

- · Pub. L. 106-224
- · Rep. Blumenauer's vote: YES
- · Final Passage: 422-1; 91-4

#### United States-China Relations Act of 2000:

Authorized the President to extend normal trade relations treatment to the PRC.

- · Pub. L. 106-286
- · Rep. Blumenauer's vote: YES

· Final Passage: 237-197; 83-15

**Child Citizenship Act**: Allowed certain foreign-born, biological and adopted children of U.S. citizens to acquire citizenship automatically.

- · Pub. L. 106-365
- · Rep. Blumenauer's vote: YES
- · Final Passage: Unanimous consent;
- Unanimous consent

#### <u>107th Congress (2001 – 2002)</u>

**Bipartisan Campaign Reform Act**: Prohibited political parties, candidates and officeholders from the solicitation of soft money contributions in federal elections; and barred corporations and unions from using treasury funds to finance issue advertisements.

- · Pub. L. 107-155
- · Rep. Blumenauer's vote: YES
- · Final Passage: 240-189, 60-40

**Trade Act of 2002**: Granted "trade promotion authority" to the President and allowed for expedited legislative procedures for trade agreements, made labor rights and environmental protection principal negotiating objectives.

- · Pub. L. 107-210
- · Rep. Blumenauer's vote: NO
- · Final Passage: 215-212; 64-34

Authorization for Use of Military Force Against Iraq Resolution: Authorized the President to use armed forces to defend U.S. •national security against threats posed by Iraq and enforce Security Council resolutions regarding Iraq.

- · Pub. L. 107-243
- · Rep. Blumenauer's vote: NO
- · Final Passage: 296-133; 77-23

**Sudan Peace Act**: Authorized assistance to support democratic governance and humanitarian programs to assist parties in Sudan to find a just, permanent peace to the conflict.

- · Pub. L. 107-245
- · Rep. Blumenauer's vote: YES
- · Final Passage: 359-8; Unanimous consent

Help America Vote Act: Created a new federal agency to serve as a clearinghouse for election administration information, created minimum standards and provided funds to states to improve election administration.

- · Pub. L. 107-252
- · Rep. Blumenauer's vote: YES
- · Final Passage: 357-48; 92-2

Homeland Security Act: Created the Department of Homeland Security and the cabinet-level position.

- · Pub. L. 107-296
- · Rep. Blumenauer's vote: NO
- · Final Passage: 295-132; 90-9

**E-Government Act**: Created the Federal Chief Information Officer within the Office of Management and Budget to require using internet-based tech for government citizen

#### services.

- Pub. L. 107-347
- · Rep. Blumenauer's vote: YES

· Final Passage: Passed without objection; Unanimous consent

#### Authorization for Use of Military Force:

Authorized the use of force against those responsible for the 9/11 attacks.

· Pub. L. 107-40

- · Rep. Blumenauer's vote: YES
- · Final Passage: 420-1; 98-0

**USA PATRIOT Act**: Authorized multiple measures to enhance the ability of domestic security services to prevent terrorism.

- · Pub. L. 107-56
- · Rep. Blumenauer's vote: NO
- · Final Passage: 357-66; 98-1

#### Aviation and Transportation Security Act:

Created the Transportation Security Administration (TSA).

- Pub. L. 107-71
- · Rep. Blumenauer's vote: YES
- · Final Passage: 397-0; 100-0

No Child Left Behind Act: Reauthorized the Elementary and Secondary Education Act and also required states to develop assessments in basic skills in order to receive federal funding.

- · Pub. L. 107-110
- · Rep. Blumenauer's vote: YES
- · Final Passage: 381-41; 87-10

#### <u>108th Congress (2003 - 2004)</u>

### Bunning-Bereuter-Blumenauer Flood Insurance

**Reform Act**: Reduced losses to properties for which repetitive flood insurance claim payments were made.

· Pub. L. 108-264

· Rep. Blumenauer's vote: YES

• Final Passage: Voice vote; Unanimous consent

#### Syria Accountability and Lebanese Sovereignty

**Restoration Act**: Provides for the imposition of a series of sanctions against Syria, absent a determination that Syria meets certain requirements.

- · Pub. L. 108-175
- · Rep. Blumenauer's vote: YES
- · Final Passage: 408-8-1 present; 89-4

#### Keeping Children and Families Safe Act:

Reauthorized the Child Abuse Prevention and Treatment Act (CAPTA), the Adoption Opportunities program, the Abandoned Infants Assistance Act and the Family Violence Prevention and Services Act. o Pub. L. 108-36 o Rep. Blumenauer's vote: YES o Final Passage: 421-3; Unanimous consent

**Prison Rape Elimination Act**: Granted funding to support efforts to prevent and eliminate prisoner rape between inmates in state and local prisons, jails and police lockup facilities and safeguard the communities to which inmates return.

- · Pub. L. 108-79
- · Rep. Blumenauer's vote: YES
- · Final Passage: Without objection;
- Unanimous consent

**Partial-Birth Abortion Ban Act**: Prohibited all partial-birth abortions expect when necessary to save the life of the mother.

- · Pub. L. 108-105
- · Rep. Blumenauer's vote: NO
- · Final Passage: 281-142; 64-34

Unborn Victims of Violence Act: Provided that persons who commit certain Federal violent crimes and cause the death, or injury, to a child who is in utero shall be guilty of a separate offense.

- · Pub. L. 108-212
- · Rep. Blumenauer's vote: NO
- · Final Passage: 254-163; 61-38

#### Medicare Prescription Drug, Improvement,

and Modernization Act: Created new benefits for preventative care and established subsides for companies that maintain retiree health insurance plans with prescription drug coverage.

- · Pub. L. 108-173
- · Rep. Blumenauer's vote: NO
- · Final Passage: 220-215; 54-44

Healthy Forests Restoration Act: Contained provisions to expedite hazardous fuel reduction and forest restoration projects on specific types of Federal land that are at risk of wildland fire or insect and disease epidemics.

- · Pub. L. 108-148
- · Rep. Blumenauer's vote: NO
- · Final Passage: 286-140; 80-14

**Project Bioshield Act**: Authorized the Secretary of Health and Human Services to conduct research regarding countermeasures to treat, identity and prevent public health emergencies affecting national security.

- Pub. L. 108-276
- · Rep. Blumenauer's vote: YES
- · Final Passage: 414-2; 99-0

#### <u>109th Congress (2005 – 2006)</u>

# **Stem Cell Research Enhancement Act**: Required the Secretary of Health and Human Servies to conduct and support research that utilizes donated human embryonic stem cells.

· H.R. 810

· Rep. Blumenauer's vote: YES

• Final Passage: 235-193 (failed to override veto), 63-37

**Border Protection, Anti-terrorism and Illegal Immigration Control Act:** Expanded the expedited removal process, criminalized administratively unlawful presence in the U.S., and set new minimum punishments for a number of crimes.

- · H.R. 4437
- · Rep. Blumenauer's vote: NO
- · Final Passage: 239-182; 36-62

#### Personal Responsibility in Food Consumption

Act: Prevents civil liability actions to be brought against food manufactures and sellers

for claims of injury relating to weight gain or obesity.

- · H.R. 554
- · Rep. Blumenauer's vote: NO
- · Final Passage: 306-120

**REAL ID Act**: Established minimum security standards for license issuance and production and prohibited certain federal agencies from accepting identification not meeting such standards.

- · Pub. L. 109-13
- · Rep. Blumenauer's vote: NO
- · Final Passage: 368-58; 100-0

#### Patient Safety and Improvement Act:

Established a voluntary reporting system to assess and resolve patient safety and health care quality issues and authorizes Health and Human Services to impose penalties for violations of patient safety confidentiality.

- · Pub. L. 109-41
- · Rep. Blumenauer's vote: YES
- · Final Passage: 428-3; Unanimous consent

#### Stem Cell Therapeutic and Research Act:

Created a new Federal program to collect and store core blood and expanded the bone marrow registry program to include cord blood.

- · Pub. L. 109-129
- · Rep. Blumenauer's vote: YES
- · Final Passage: 413-0; Unanimous consent

#### Fannie Lou, Rosa Parks, and Coretta Scott King Voting Rights Act Reauthorization and Amendments Act: Reauthorized and amended

the Voting Rights Act of 1965 to prevent discrimination against minority voters.

- · Pub. L. 109-246
- · Rep. Blumenauer's vote: YES
- · Final Passage: 390-33; 98-0

### Bankruptcy Abuse Prevention and Consumer

**Protection Act:** Imposed more stringent eligibility requirements for personal bankruptcy filing.

- · Pub. L. 109-8
- · Rep. Blumenauer's vote: NO
- · Final Passage: 302-126; 74-25

#### **Telephone Records and Privacy Protection Act:**

Prohibited the obtaining of confidential phone records information from carriers and providers through fraudulent means.

- · Pub. L. 109-476
- · Rep. Blumenauer's vote: YES
- · Final Passage: 409-0; Unanimous consent

#### Postal Accountability and Enhancement Act:

Established a modern system for regulating rates and standards for market-dominant products and a Postal Service Competitive Products Fund.

- · Pub. L. 109-435
- · Rep. Blumenauer's vote: YES
- · Final Passage: 409-0; Unanimous consent

#### Pandemic and All-Hazards Preparedness Act:

Requires the Secretary of Health and Human Services to lead all federal public health and medical response to public health emergencies and incidents.

· Pub. L. 109-417

Rep. Blumenauer's vote: YES
Final Passage: Passed without objection; Unanimous consent

Secure Fence Act: Directs the Secretary of Homeland Security to take actions to achieve operational control over U.S. borders including systematic border surveillance and physical infrastructure enhancements to prevent unlawful border entry.

- · Pub. L. 109-367
- · Rep. Blumenauer's vote: NO
- · Final Passage: 283-138-1 present; 80-19

**Federal Deposit Insurance Reform Act**: Raised the deposit insurance coverage for retirement accounts to \$250000, created the Deposit

Insurance Fund and established a designated reserve ratio for banks.

· Pub. L. 109-171

- · Rep. Blumenauer's vote: YES
- Final Passage: Passed without objection; Unanimous consent

#### **Oman-United States Free Trade Agreement**

Act: Eliminated duties and commercial barriers to trade in goods and services between the U.S. and the Sultanate of Oman. • Pub. L. 109-282

- · Rep. Blumenauer's vote: NO
- · Final Passage: 221-205; 62-32

#### **Bahrain-United States Free Trade Agreement**

Act: Eliminated duties and commercial barriers to trade in goods and services between the U.S. and Bahrain. • Pub. L. 109-318 • Rep. Blumenauer's vote: YES

· Final Passage: 327-95; Voice vote

**Dominican Republic-Central American Free Trade Agreement Act**: Eliminated duties and commercial barriers to trade in goods and services between the U.S. and Central American countries including Costa Rica, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, Nicaragua and the Dominican Republic.

- · Pub. L. 109-55
- · Rep. Blumenauer's vote: NO
- · Final Passage: 227-183; 60-28

#### <u>110th Congress (2007 – 2008)</u>

**Protect America Act**: Amended the Foreign Intelligence Surveillance Act of 1978 to provide additional procedures for authorizing certain acquisitions of foreign intelligence information.

- · Pub. L. 110-182
- · Rep. Blumenauer's vote: NO
- · Final Passage: 217-215; 54-45

America COMPETES Act: Increased funding for research in physical sciences and resources to improve mathematics instruction, and expanded low-income students' access to AP/IB coursework.

- · Pub. L. 110-69
- · Rep. Blumenauer's vote: YES
- · Final Passage: 367-57; Unanimous consent

#### Honest Leadership and Open Government Act:

Amended the House and Senate Ethics Rules and the Federal Election Campaign Act, introduced new disclosure requirements for

bundled contributions, prohibited spending campaign funds for travel on private jets.

- · Pub. L. 110-81
- · Rep. Blumenauer's vote: YES
- · Final Passage: 411-8; 83-14

**Economic Stimulus Act of 2008**: Provided extra tax rebates of up to \$600 plus \$300 for every child, increased limits on depreciating assets for tax purposes for business, and increased caps on conforming loans.

- · Pub. L. 110-185
- · Rep. Blumenauer's vote: YES
- · Final Passage: 380-34; 81-16

#### Housing and Economic Recovery Act:

Allowed the Federal Housing Administration to guarantee up to \$300 billion in new 30-year fixed-rate mortgages for subprime borrowers and established minimum down payment standards for FHA loans.

- · Pub. L. 110-289
- · Rep. Blumenauer's vote: YES
- Final Passage: 272-152; 72-1613

An Act To provide authority for the Federal Government to purchase and insure certain types of troubled assets for the purposes of providing stability to and preventing disruption in the economy and financial system and protecting taxpayers, to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to provide incentives for energy production and conservation, to extend certain expiring provisions, to provide individual income tax relief, and for other purposes: Authorized the Treasury secretary to buy up to \$700 billion of troubled assets and restore liquidity in financial markets.

- · Pub. L. 110-343
- · Rep. Blumenauer's vote: NO
- · Final Passage: 263-171; 74-25

#### **Genetic Information Nondiscrimination Act:**

Prohibited discrimination in employment based on genetic information.

- · Pub. L. 110-233
- · Rep. Blumenauer's vote: YES
- · Final Passage: 414-1; 95-0

#### Medicare Improvements for Patients and

**Providers Act**: Replaced the 2008 Medicare Physician Fee Schedule rate reduction of –10.6 percent with a 0.5 increase, reinstated the therapy caps exceptions process, and created the Durable Medical Equipment Competitive Bidding Program.

- · Pub. L. 110-275
- · Rep. Blumenauer's vote: YES
- · Final Passage: 383-41; 70-26

#### **Medicare Prescription Drug Price Negotiation**

Act: Would have required the Secretary of Health and Human Services to negotiate lower drug prices for Part D.

- · H.R. 4
- · Rep. Blumenauer's vote: YES
- · Final Passage: 255-170; 55-4

#### <u>111th Congress (2009 – 2010)</u>

#### Lilly Ledbetter Fair Pay Act: Overturned

Ledbetter v. Goodyear Tire & Rubber Co. (2007) which severely restricted the time period for filing complaints of employment

discrimination concerning compensation.

- · Pub. L. 111-2
- · Rep. Blumenauer's vote: YES
- · Final Passage: 250-177; 61-36

Affordable Care Act: Provided consumers with subsidies that lower health insurance costs for households with incomes between 100% and 400% of the federal poverty level, expanded the Medicaid program to cover all adults with income below 138% of the FPL and supported innovative medical care delivery methods.

- · Pub. L. 111-148
- · Rep. Blumenauer's vote: YES
- · Final Passage: 219-212; 60-39

#### Health Care and Education Reconciliation Act:

Required each State to establish an

"American Health Benefit Exchange", set eligibility requirements for health care affordability tax credits, appropriated \$1 billion to carry out "Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act".

- · Pub. L. 111-152
- · Rep. Blumenauer's vote: YES
- · Final Passage: 220-207; 56-43

#### **Don't Ask, Don't Tell Repeal Act**: Repealed the 1993 "Don't Ask, Don't Tell" policy in which gay service members were not required

to disclose their sexual orientation, but still could be discharged if discovered.

- · Pub. L. 111-321
- · Rep. Blumenauer's vote: YES
- · Final Passage: 250-175; 65-31

#### American Recovery and Reinvestment Act:

Economic stimulus package in response to the Great recession, aimed to save existing jobs and create new ones, as well as provide relief programs and investment into infrastructure, education, health, and renewable energy.

• Pub. L. 111-5

· Rep. Blumenauer's vote: YES

· Final Passage: 246-183; 60-38

#### Helping Families Save Their Homes Act: Aimed to prevent mortgage foreclosures and enhance mortgage credit availability, including allowing bankruptcy judges to modify mortgages on primary residences.

- Pub. L. 111-22
- · Rep. Blumenauer's vote: YES
- Final Passage: 367-54; 91-5

**Credit CARD Act**: Increased transparency for credit card terms and conditions as well as placed limits on fees and interest charges.

- · Pub. L. 111-24
- · Rep. Blumenauer's vote: YES
- · Final Passage: 279-147; 90-5

#### **Family Smoking Prevention and Tobacco**

**Control Act**: Authorized the FDA to regulate the manufacturing, distribution and marketing of tobacco products.

- · Pub. L. 111-31
- · Rep. Blumenauer's vote: YES
- · Final Passage: 307-97; 79-17

**Small Business Jobs Act**: Created the Small Business Lending Fund Program.

- · Pub. L. 111-240
- · Rep. Blumenauer's vote: YES
- · Final Passage: 237-187; 61-38

#### **Unemployment Compensation Extension Act:**

Allowed states to provide 47 additional weeks of federally funded unemployment compensation.

- · Pub. L. 111-205
- · Rep. Blumenauer's vote: YES
- · Final Passage: 272-152; 59-39

#### **Dodd-Frank Wall Street Reform and**

**Consumer Protection Act**: Improved accountability and transparency in the financial system and created the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau.

- · Pub. L. 111-203
- · Rep. Blumenauer's vote: YES
- · Final Passage: 237-192; 60-39

#### Tax Relief, Unemployment Insurance Reauthorization, and Job Creation Act:

Extended tax cuts and provisions passed during the Bush presidency.

- · Pub. L. 111-312
- · Rep. Blumenauer's vote: YES
- · Final Passage: 277-148; 81-1

**Tribal Law and Order Act**: Expanded punitive abilities of tribal courts by allowing them to increase jail sentences in criminal cases.

- · Pub. L. 111-211
- · Rep. Blumenauer's vote: YES
- · Final Passage: 326-92; Unanimous consent

#### Worker, Homeownership, and Business

**Resistance Act**: Extended unemployment benefits by 20 weeks for states with 8.5 percent unemployment and 14 weeks to states with lower unemployment rates.

- Pub. L. 111-92
- · Rep. Blumenauer's vote: YES
- · Final Passage: 403-12; 98-0

#### Hiring Incentives to Restore Employment Act:

Provided tax incentives for businesses to hire unemployed workers.

- · Pub. L. 111-147
- · Rep. Blumenauer's vote: YES

· Final Passage: 217-201; 68-29

#### Emergency Aid to American Survivors of the

Haiti Act: Amends title XI of the Social Security Act (SSA) to increase the funding cap under the U.S. Repatriation Program to \$25 million for FY2010 for temporary assistance to U.S. citizens returning from foreign countries in the event of crisis.

- Pub. L. 111-127
- · Rep. Blumenauer's vote: YES
- · Final Passage: 250-177; 61-36

#### <u>112th Congress (2011 – 2012)</u>

Leahy-Smith America Invents Act: Amended federal patent law, switching the patent system from "first to invent" to a "first inventor to file" system, as well as eliminating interference proceedings, and developed post-grant opposition.

- · Pub. L. 112-29
- · Rep. Blumenauer's vote: YES
- · Final Passage: 304-117; 89-9

#### **United States-South Korea Free Trade**

Agreement Act: Approved and implemented the free trade agreement between the United States and Korea, which increased the number of duty-free exports to Korea, created stronger protection and enforcement of intellectual property rights in Korea, and increased access to services market between the countries.

- · Pub. L. 112-41
- · Rep. Blumenauer's vote: YES
- · Final Passage: 278-151; 83-15

#### **United States-Colombia Trade Promotion**

Agreement Implementation Act: Approved the United States-Colombia Trade Promotion Agreement, which provided for the immediate Magnitsky Act: This Act intended to punish or staged elimination of duties and barriers to bilateral trade in goods and services originating in the United States and/or Colombia.

- · Pub. L. 112-237
- · Rep. Blumenauer's vote: NO
- · Final Passage: 304-117; 89-9

#### **Panama-United States Trade Agreement Act:**

Approved the United States States-Panama Trade Promotion Agreement, which provided elimination of tariffs and removed barriers to U.S. services for Panama.

- · Pub. L. 112-43
- · Rep. Blumenauer's vote: YES
- · Final Passage: 300-129; 77-22

#### Middle Class Tax Relief and Job Creation Act:

Extended the payroll tax holiday, unemployment compensation and benefits, and Medicare reimbursements and physician payment, as well as, among other actions, adjusted funds and commitments for pension contribution and public safety.

· Pub. L. 112-96

· Rep. Blumenauer's vote: YES

· Final Passage: 293-132; 60-36

#### Stop Trading on Congressional Knowledge

(STOCK) Act: Prohibited the use of non-public information for private profit, including insider trading by members of Congress and other government employees.

- · Pub. L. 112-105
- · Rep. Blumenauer's vote: YES
- · Final Passage: 417-2; 96-3

Russian officials responsible for the death of Russian tax lawyer Sergei Magnitsky in a Moscow prison in 2009 through entry and property sanctions.

- · Pub. L. 112-208
- · Rep. Blumenauer's vote: YES
- · Final Passage: 365-43; 92-4

American Taxpayer Relief Act: This Act made multiple tax cuts introduced between 2001 and 2010 permanent and extended several other forms of tax relief up to five years.

- · Pub. L. 112-240
- · Rep. Blumenauer's vote: YES
- · Final Passage: 256-167; 89-8

#### <u>113th Congress (2013 – 2014)</u>

Bipartisan Student Loan Certainty Act: Set

federal student loan rates to the financial market rate, ending a lower, federal rate.

- · Pub. L. 113-28
- · Rep. Blumenauer's vote: YES
- · Final Passage: 392-31; 81-18

**Pay Our Military Act**: Appropriated funds for military members for fiscal year 2014 in case the government shuts down; the government shut down a few hours after being signed into law.

- · Pub. L. 113-39
- · Rep. Blumenauer's vote: YES
- · Final Passage: 423-0; Unanimous consent

**HIV Organ Policy Equity Act**: Allowed for organs from HIV positive donors to be received by HIV positive patients.

- · Pub. L. 113-39
- · Rep. Blumenauer's vote: YES
- · Final Passage: 423-0; Unanimous consent

**Community Fire Safety Act**: Required all new fire hydrants to be lead free starting in 2014. • Pub. L. 113-64

- · Rep. Blumenauer's vote: YES
- · Final Passage: 384-0; Unanimous consent

#### **Emergency Afghan Allies Extension Act:**

Authorized 1,000 SIVs for Afghan translators that served with U.S. troops during the war in Afghanistan.

- · Pub. L. 113-160
- · Rep. Blumenauer's vote: YES

· Final Passage: Voice vote; Voice vote

**Ukraine Freedom Support Act**: Established it is U.S. policy to aide Ukraine and restore its sovereignty and territory after the invasion of Crimea by the Russian Federation.

- · Pub. L. 113-272
- · Rep. Blumenauer's vote: YES

· Final Passage: Unanimous consent; Voice vote

#### **Government Reports Elimination Act:**

Eliminated 18 reports federal agencies were required to provide Congress and 85 reports they were tasked to prepare.

- · Pub. L. 113-188
- · Rep. Blumenauer's vote: YES
- · Final Passage: 382-0; Unanimous consent

#### <u>114th Congress (2015 – 2016)</u>

**Iran Nuclear Agreement Review Act**: Allowed Congress the right to review any agreement with Iran to prevent Iran from obtaining or building nuclear weapons.

- · Pub. L. 114-17
- · Rep. Blumenauer's vote: YES
- · Final Passage: 400-25, 98-1

**Every Student Succeeds Act**: Reauthorized the 1965 Elementary and Secondary Education Act by replacing the No Child Left Behind Act and modernizing standardized testing.

- · Pub. L. 114-95
- · Rep. Blumenauer's vote: YES
- Final Passage: 359-64; 85-12

**Global Food Security Act**: Created a comprehensive strategy for American foreign assistance for global poverty, hunger, food security and sustainable agriculture.

- · Pub. L. 114-195
- · Rep. Blumenauer's vote: YES
- · Final Passage: 369-53; Voice vote

#### Sexual Assault Survivors' Rights Act:

Established- for the first time- federal statutory rights for survivors of sexual assault and rape.

- · Pub. L. 114-236
- · Rep. Blumenauer's vote: YES
- · Final Passage: 399-0; Voice vote

#### Justice Against Sponsors of Terrorism Act:

Narrowed scope of foreign sovereign immunity and establishes federal court jurisdiction over civil claims.

- · Pub. L. 114-122
- · Rep. Blumenauer's vote: NO
- · Final Passage: 348-77-1 present; 97-1

#### Keystone XL Pipeline Approval Act:

Authorized the construction of the Keystone XL Pipeline.

- **S**. 1
- · Rep. Blumenauer's vote: NO
- · Final Passage: 270-152; 62-37

#### <u>115th Congress (2017 – 2018)</u>

**Tax Cuts and Jobs Act**: Reduced tax rates for businesses and individuals.

- · Pub. L. 115-97
- · Rep. Blumenauer's vote: NO

· Final Passage: 224-201; 51-48

#### **Countering America's Adversaries Through**

Sanctions Act: Imposed sanctions on Iran, North Korea, and Russia.

· Pub. L. 115-44

· Rep. Blumenauer's vote: YES

· Final Passage: 419-3; 98-2

**Taiwan Travel Act**: Allowed high officials from Taiwan to visit the United States and U.S. officials to visit Taiwan.

- · Pub. L. 115-135
- · Rep. Blumenauer's vote: NO
- · Final Passage: 224-201; 51-48

#### Economic growth, Regulatory Relief, and

**Consumer Protection Act**: Raised the threshold for which banks are deemed too big to fail, easing Dodd-Frank Wall Street Reform and Consumer Protect Act regulations.

- · Pub. L. 115-174
- · Rep. Blumenauer's vote: NO
- · Final Passage: 258-159; 67-31

#### American Health Care Act: Would have

partially repealed the Affordable Care Act.

- · H.R. 1628
- · Rep. Blumenauer's vote: NO
- · Final Passage: 217-213

**Unborn Child Protection Act**: Would have made it a federal crime for any person to perform or attempt an abortion after 20 weeks, unless it was necessary to save the life of the pregnant person or if the pregnancy was the result of incest or rape.

#### · H.R. 36

- · Rep. Blumenauer's vote: NO
- · Final Passage: 234-187; 46-51

#### <u>116th Congress (2019 - 2020)</u>

#### **Coronavirus Preparedness and Response Supplemental Appropriations Act 2020**:

Provided emergency supplemental appropriations for 2020 to combat the coronavirus pandemic.

- · Pub. L. 116-123
- · Rep. Blumenauer's vote: YES
- · Final Passage: 415-2; 96-1

**Families First Coronavirus Act**: Responded to the COVID-19 pandemic by mandating paid sick leave for two weeks, increasing federal unemployment assistance, Medicaid, food aid programs, free coronavirus tests.

- · Pub. L. 116-127
- · Rep. Blumenauer's vote: YES
- · Final Passage: 363-40-1 present; 90-8

**CARES Act**: Provided economic stimulus funding as well as one-time direct cash payments to taxpayers, increased unemployment benefits and established the Paycheck Protection Program.

- · Pub. L. 116-136
- · Rep. Blumenauer's vote: YES
- · Final Passage: 419-6; 96-0

**Uyghur Rights Policy Act**: Required several U.S. government agencies to report human rights abuses committed by the Chinese Communist Party and Chinese government

against the Uyghurs in Xianjiang, China.

- · Pub. L. 116-145
- · Rep. Blumenauer's vote: YES
- · Final Passage: 413-1; Unanimous consent

#### **Government Employee Fair Treatment Act:**

Required retroactive pay and leave accrual for employees affected by the 2018-19 government shutdown and any future shutdowns.

- · Pub. L. 116-1
- · Rep. Blumenauer's vote: YES
- · Final Passage: 411-7; Voice vote

#### Hong Kong Human Rights and Democracy Act:

Established sanctions on mainland China for human rights abuses committed in Hong Kong and requires an annual review of U.S. and Hong Kong trade relations.

- · Pub. L. 116-76
- · Rep. Blumenauer's vote: YES
- · Final Passage: 417-1; Unanimous consent

### Impeaching Donald John Trump, President of the United States, for high crimes and

**misdemeanors**: Impeached President Trump for abuse of power (article I) and obstruction of justice (article II).

· H.Res. 755

· Rep. Blumenauer's vote: YES

• Article I Final Passage: 230-197-1 present; 48-52

• Article II Final Passage: 229-198-1 present; 47-53

#### **Relating to a national emergency declaration declared by the President on February 15, 2019**: Would have terminated President Trump's

mergency declaration for the southern border which allowed him re-allocate funds for a border wall.

- $\cdot$  H.J.Res. 46
- · Rep. Blumenauer's vote: YES
- · Final Passage: 248-181; 59-41

Save the Internet Act: Would have re-imposed FCC net neutrality rules.

- · H.R. 1644
- · Rep. Blumenauer's vote: YES
- · Final Passage: 232-190

### Resolution to remove the deadline for the ratification of the equal rights amendment:

- What the title says!
- H.J.Res. 79
- · Rep. Blumenauer's vote: YES
- · Final Passage: 232-183

#### John R. Lewis Voting Rights Act: Restores the

Voting Rights Act of 1965 and upholds the right to vote.

- · H.R. 4
- · Rep. Blumenauer's vote: YES
- · Final Passage: 228-187

#### Elijah Cummings Lower Drug Costs Now Act:

Gives the federal government the power to negotiate prescription drug prices in order to lower costs.

- · H.R. 3
- · Rep. Blumenauer's vote: YES
- · Final Passage: 230-192

#### For the People Act: Expands voter

registration and voting access, establishes

independent nonpartisan redistricting commissions, addresses campaign spending, and requires Presidential and VP candidates to submit 10 years of tax returns.

- · H.R. 1
- · Rep. Blumenauer's vote: YES
- · Final Passage: 234-193

**Equality Act**: Prohibits discrimination based on sex, sexual orientation, and gender identity in a wide variety of areas including public accommodations and facilities, education, federal funding, employment, housing, credit, and the jury system.

- H.R. 5
- · Rep. Blumenauer's vote: YES
- · Final Passage: 236-173

American Dream and Promise Act: Cancels and prohibits removal proceedings against certain aliens and provides such aliens with a path toward permanent resident status.

- H.R. 6
- · Rep. Blumenauer's vote: YES
- · Final Passage: 237-187

**Paycheck Fairness Act**: Amends equal pay provisions of the Fair Labor Standards Act of 1938 to address wage discrimination on the basis of sex.

- · H.R. 7
- · Rep. Blumenauer's vote: YES
- · Final Passage: 242-187

**Bipartisan Background Checks Act**: Establishes new background check requirements for firearm transfers between private parties.

#### H.R. 8

· Rep. Blumenauer's vote: YES

· Final Passage: 240-190

Washington, D.C., Admission Act: Admits certain portions of Washington, DC as the 51st state.

- · H.R. 51
- · Rep. Blumenauer's vote: YES
- · Final Passage: 232-18

**SAFE Banking Act:** Prohibits a federal banking regulator from penalizing a depository institution for providing banking services to a legitimate marijuana- or hemp-related business.

- · H.R. 1595
- $\cdot$  Rep. Blumenauer's vote: YES
- · Final Passage: 321-103

**MORE Act**: Decriminalizes marijuana, removing it from the list of scheduled substances under the Controlled Substances Act.

- · H.R. 3884
- · Rep. Blumenauer's vote: YES
- · Final Passage: 228-164

#### George Floyd Justice in Policing Act:

Increases accountability for law enforcement misconduct, restricts the use of certain policing practices, enhances transparency and data collection, and establishes best practices and training requirements.

- · H.R. 7120
- · Rep. Blumenauer's vote: YES
- · Final Passage: 236-181

#### <u>117th Congress (2021 – 2022)</u>

**Inflation Reduction Act**: Historic investment in clean energy, climate, tax credits, lowers prescription drug prices.

· Pub. L. 117-169

· Rep. Blumenauer's vote: YES

· Final Passage: 220-207; 51-50

**Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act**: Historic investment in infrastructure projects, broadband access, clean water and electric grid support.

- Pub. L. 117-58
- · Rep. Blumenauer's vote: YES
- · Final Passage: 228-206; 69-30

American Rescue Plan Act: Economic stimulus legislation that included direct payments to individuals, aid to state and local governments, aid to restaurants and small businesses, vaccine distribution support, and expanded Child Tax Credit.

- · Pub. L. 117-2
- · Rep. Blumenauer's vote: YES
- · Final Passage: 220-211; 50-4

#### Medical Marijuana and Cannabidiol Research

**Expansion Act**: The first standalone marijuanarelated bill approved by both chambers of Congress; required the Department of Health and Human Services to investigate the medical utility of cannabis.

- · Pub. L. 117-215
- · Rep. Blumenauer's vote: YES
- · Final Passage: 325-95; Voice vote

**Bipartisan Safer Communities Act**: Extended background checks for firearm purchasers younger than 21 years old, partial closure of the boyfriend loophole and funds state red flag laws.

- · Pub. L. 117-159
- · Rep. Blumenauer's vote: YES
- · Final Passage: 234-193; 65-33

#### **Capitol Police Emergency Assistance Act:**

Allowed the Chief of the Capitol Police to request federal agency assistance in the case of emergencies.

- Pub. L. 117-77
- · Rep. Blumenauer's vote: YES
- Final Passage: Unanimous consent; Unanimous consent

#### Juneteenth National Independence Day Act:

Established the federal holiday of Juneteenth, allowing federal government employees to take off June 19.

- · Pub. L. 117-17
- · Rep. Blumenauer's vote: YES
- · Final Passage: 415-14; Unanimous consent

**COVID-19 Hate Crimes Act**: Condemned racism tied to the pandemic against Asian Americans and allowed the Justice Department to review hate crimes related to COVID-19.

- · Pub. L. 117-13
- · Rep. Blumenauer's vote: YES
- · Final Passage: 364-62; 94-1

**Postal Service Reform Act**: Addressed the finances and operations of the U.S. Postal

Service and removed budget requirements previously legislatively imposed.

- · Pub. L. 117-108
- · Rep. Blumenauer's vote: YES
- · Final Passage: 342-92; 79-19

#### Ukraine Democracy Defense Lend-Lease Act:

Allowed the supply of materiel to Ukraine in their battle against Russia, similar to the World War II Lend-Lease Act.

- · Pub. L. 117-118
- · Rep. Blumenauer's vote: YES
- · Final Passage: 417-10; Voice vote

**CHIPS and Science Act**: Increased funding for domestic research and manufacturing for science, technology and semiconductor industries.

- · Pub. L. 117-167
- · Rep. Blumenauer's vote: YES
- · Final Passage: 243-187-1 present; 64-33

#### Respect for Marriage Act: Repealed the Defense

of Marriage Act and required all U.S. states, territories and the federal government to recognize the validity of same-sex and interracial marriages.

- · Pub. L. 117-228
- · Rep. Blumenauer's vote: YES
- · Final Passage: 258-169-1 present; 61-36

#### **Resolution to remove Rep. Marjorie Taylor Greene from her committee assignments**:

Specifically removed her from the Education and Labor Committee and the Budget Committee. • H.Res. 72

Rep. Blumenauer's vote: YES
Final Passage: 230-199

Recommending that the House of Representatives find Stephen K. Bannon in contempt of refusal to comply with a subpoena duly issued by the Select Committee to Investigate the Attack on the United States Capitol: Resolution held Bannon in criminal contempt.

- · H.Res. 730
- · Rep. Blumenauer's vote: YES
- · Final Passage: 229-207

**Resolution to censure Rep. Paul Gosar and remove him from his committee assignments**: Specifically removed him from the Oversight Committee and the Natural Resources Committee for posting an animated video of

him killing Rep. Ocasio-Cortez.

- · H.Res. 789
- · Rep. Blumenauer's vote: YES
- · Final Passage: 223-207

Recommending that the House of Representatives find Mark Randall Meadows in contempt of Congress for refusal to comply with a subpoena duly issued by the Select Committee to Investigate the Attack on the United States Capitol: Resolution held Meadows in criminal contempt.

- H.Res. 851
- · Rep. Blumenauer's vote: YES
- · Final Passage: 222-208

Recommending that the House of Representatives find Peter Navarro and Dan Scavino Jr. in contempt of Congress for refusal to comply with a subpoena duly issued by the Select Committee to Investigate the Attack on the United States Capitol: Resolution held Navarro and Scavino in criminal contempt. • H.Res. 1037

· Rep. Blumenauer's vote: YES

· Final Passage: 220-203

For the People Act: Expands voter registration and voting access, establishes independent nonpartisan redistricting commissions, addresses campaign spending, and requires Presidential and VP candidates to submit 10 years of tax returns.

- · H.R. 1
- · Rep. Blumenauer's vote: YES
- · Final Passage: 220-210

John R. Lewis Voting Rights Act: Restores the Voting Rights Act of 1965 and upholds the right to vote.

- · H.R. 4
- · Rep. Blumenauer's vote: YES
- · Final Passage: 219-212

**Equality Act**: Prohibits discrimination based on sex, sexual orientation, and gender identity in a wide variety of areas including public accommodations and facilities, education, federal funding, employment, housing, credit, and the jury system.

- · H.R. 5
- · Rep. Blumenauer's vote: YES
- · Final Passage: 224-206

American Dream and Promise Act: Cancels and prohibits removal proceedings against certain aliens and provides such aliens with a path toward permanent resident status.

- H.R. 6
- · Rep. Blumenauer's vote: YES
- · Final Passage: 228-19

Paycheck Fairness Act: Amends equal pay<br/>provisions of the Fair Labor Standards Act of<br/>1938 to address wage discrimination on the<br/>basis of sex.Pub. L. 118-5<br/>Rep. Blumenauer's vote: YES<br/>Final Passage: 314-117; 63-36

- H.R. 7
- · Rep. Blumenauer's vote: YES
- · Final Passage: 217-210

#### **Bipartisan Background Checks Act:**

Establishes new background check requirements for firearm transfers between private parties.

- · H.R. 8
- · Rep. Blumenauer's vote: YES
- · Final Passage: 227-203

#### Washington, D.C., Admission Act: Admits

certain portions of Washington, DC as the 51st state.

- H.R. 51
- · Rep. Blumenauer's vote: YES
- · Final Passage: 216-208

**SAFE Banking Act**: Prohibits a federal banking regulator from penalizing a depository institution for providing banking services to a legitimate marijuana- or hemp-related business.

· H.R. 1996

Rep. Blumenauer's vote: YES Final Passage: 321-101

#### <u>118th Congress (2023 – 2024)</u>

Fiscal Responsibility Act: Raised the debt ceiling until January 2025 and caps discretionary spending for FY24 and FY25. • Pub. L. 118-5 • Rep. Blumenauer's vote: YES • Final Passage: 314-117; 63-36

Continuing Appropriations Act, 2024 and Other

Extensions Act: Funded the government from September 30- November 17, 2023. • Pub. L. 118-15 • Rep. Blumenauer's vote: YES

• Final Passage: 335-91; 88-9

### Relating to a national emergency declared by the **President on March 13, 2020:** Ended the

COVID-19 national emergency.

- · Pub. L. 118-3
- · Rep. Blumenauer's vote: NO
- · Final Passage: 229-197; 68-23

### Declaring the office of Speaker of the House of Representatives to be vacant: Removed Rep.

Kevin McCarthy as Speaker.

- · H.Res. 757
- · Rep. Blumenauer's vote: YES
- · Final Passage: 216-210

#### Providing for the expulsion of Representative George Santos from the United States House of Representatives: Removed Rep. George Santos as a Member of Congress.

· H.Res. 878

- · Rep. Blumenauer's vote: YES
- · Final Passage: 311-114-2 present

#### **Israel Security Supplemental Appropriations**

Act, 2024: Provided supplementary appropriations to respond to the conflict in Israel.

· Pub. L. 118-50

- · Rep. Blumenauer's vote: NO
- · Final Passage: 366-38

#### **Ukraine Security Supplemental Appropriations**

Act, 2024: Provided supplementary appropriations to respond to the conflict in Ukraine.

- · Pub. L. 118-50
- $\cdot$  Rep. Blumenauer's vote: YES
- · Final Passage: 311-112-1 present