

# OREGON PSR

PHYSICIANS FOR SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY

*Preventing  
what we  
cannot cure*

MARCH  
2026  
NEWSLETTER



# OREGON PSR

## PHYSICIANS FOR SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY

Dear Joshua,

As we begin the Spring season, it is important that we literally take a moment to smell the roses (and, if you're reading this in time, the cherry blossoms). Take time for yourself and enjoy the beauty of an Oregon spring. Remind yourself what we are fighting for. I know how hard it is to wake up, put one foot in front of the other, and continue to fight the good fight when so much is happening. Every day brings new challenges, and it would be easy for all of us to divorce ourselves from the madness.

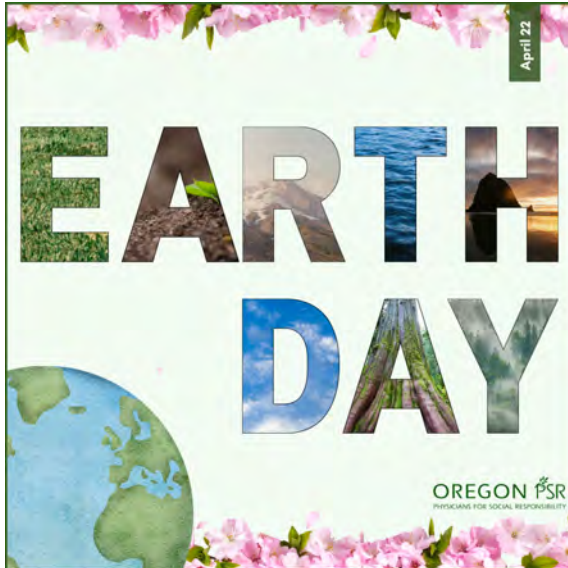
Like anyone else, I too can feel overwhelmed at times, but I will tell you where I find inspiration: our staff. As we celebrate Women's History Month, I would like to take this time to recognize and thank our Healthy Climate Program Director, Samantha Hernandez. I am continually in awe of Samantha, and what she's able to accomplish. From educating others and speaking at events, to leading coalitions and providing talking points for those who testify at various hearings, her commitment to saving this planet knows no bounds. She works tirelessly on an ever-growing number of climate issues, such as risk bonds, Zenith oil trains, the CEI Hub, and more. Those of you who attended last night's Rumble on the River were able to see her speak on the health impacts of the fossil fuel lifecycle. Samantha is the reason we will be successful. She is an example for younger women and all environmentalists as to how one person can make a difference. OPSR is truly lucky to have her on our team and I am honored that I get the chance to work with Samantha every day.

Samantha (along with Josh, the director of our Nuclear Free program) plays an indispensable role in our organization. As she goes, so too does OPSR. I am inspired by her, just as I am inspired by all of you who take the time out of your day to volunteer, reach out to elected officials, or support our cause in any way that you can. So, as you enjoy your first Spring hike, I urge you to remember all those who get up each morning and work daily to make Oregon and our planet safe and healthy for your grandchildren and their children. And if you feel overwhelmed by the world, I encourage you to try, in whatever small way you can, to take a step toward a better tomorrow. You never know what step will make all the difference. Together we will march, rally, testify, organize, and in the end, we will be victorious. Thank you as always for your support.

FROM THE DESK OF  
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR  
VINCENT INTONDI



OREGON   
PHYSICIANS FOR SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY



We're now just a few weeks away from Earth Day, an ever-relevant reminder of our collective responsibility to cherish and protect our planet. This past winter brought its own reminders of this issue, as it tied the record for the warmest Oregon winter ever and it was the second warmest winter in the recorded history of the United States. These are alarming facts; but we hope that rather than filling you with despair, they reaffirm your resolve. If we do nothing, we will lose this battle. And it is a battle that we cannot afford to lose.

In order to stop climate change, and we will stop climate change, we cannot rely on a single strategy, effort, or method. It will require a mixing of approaches and creativity - each of us maximizing our individual skills and passions. Sometimes this will necessitate approaches rooted in specific policy shifts and legislative goals, sometimes it will involve cultivating joy and building a sense of community. Here are a few examples of different approaches Oregon PSR, and our allies, have used this month (and will use in the coming weeks) to address some of these issues:



**Eugene Clean Energy Fund**  
Earlier this month, OPSR officially [endorsed](#) the **Eugene Clean Energy Fund (ECEP)**, a ballot initiative to charge a fee on the profits of the largest businesses in Eugene to fund local climate justice projects, job training programs and green infrastructure, while protecting public health.



The initiative is modeled after the [Portland Clean Energy Fund \(PCEF\)](#), passed in 2018, with some key changes to make it more suited for the Eugene community and to avoid some of the challenges PCEF faced. It will consist of a 2% fee on gross profits of businesses making over a billion dollars in gross profits nationally and \$500,000 in gross profits locally, and is expected to raise around \$15M annually to invest in the Eugene community.

Visit [eugenecleanenergyfund.org](http://eugenecleanenergyfund.org) to learn how you can get involved.




## [CEI Hub Press Conference](#)


Join Oregon PSR and community partners on Tuesday, March 31 at 11:00 a.m. for a press conference urging city leaders to prioritize public health and safety in decisions about the CEI Hub.


Oregon PSR, along with more than 80 organizations and neighborhood associations have signed a letter calling on City Council to prioritize the health and safety of Portland communities and our environment, during upcoming decisions on the CEI Hub.

This includes urging them to vote for amendments which would halt the expansion of flammable, combustible, and toxic materials at the seismically unstable site, which stores 90% of Oregon's fuel. The letter, initiated by the CEI Hub Task Force, will be delivered to **Mayor Keith Wilson, Portland City Council** and **City Manager**

**Raymond C. Lee III.** Oregon PSR board member **Patricia Kullberg, MD, MPH,** will be among those speaking at the event.

 **Date:** Tuesday March 31

 **Time:** 11:00 a.m.

 **Where:** Augustana Lutheran Church - 2710 NE 14th Ave., Portland, OR 97212

**Remarks by:**

- **Khanh Pham;** Oregon State Senate District 23
- **Susheela Jayapal;** Former Multnomah County Commissioner
- **Patricia Kullberg, MD, MPH;** Multnomah County Medical Director 1988-2008, Oregon Physicians for Social Responsibility
- **David Labby;** Retired Physician, Tank the Tanks
- **Nikki Mandell;** CEI Hub Task Force
- **Taylor Villucci;** Vernon Neighbor

Join us in calling for safer, healthier communities.

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**Make Polluters Pay: Community Town Hall (April 7)**

In times like these, it is worth recognizing the kinds of progress that can be easy to overlook. Not every step forward comes with a clear finish line, but building awareness, momentum, and community are victories in their own right.

Even though the Climate Resilience Superfund bill did not pass this session, it drew significant attention. Out of more than 300 bills and resolutions, it was the 9th most tracked bill in Oregon.



That level of engagement matters. It shows that this issue is breaking through, that decision-makers are paying attention, and that the foundation for future success is already being built.

Whether you were part of the effort this session through Advocacy Day, public testimony, petitions, or sharing your story, or were following along and hoping to get more involved, this is a chance to come together and reflect on what we accomplished. Join the Make Polluters Pay coalition for a post-session Community Town Hall to celebrate the work that's been done, hear where things stand, and build momentum for what comes next.



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## **April showers bring May flowers. April also brings tax season.**

Taxes are an important part of our social contract. We pool resources to support the common good and protect those most vulnerable. That is the goal. But a substantial portion of U.S. tax dollars fund policies and programs that do not make us safer and in many cases increase risk.



The ongoing U.S. and Israel war against Iran, which [Oregon PSR strongly opposes](#), comes with enormous costs. These include the immediate [financial burden](#) of military operations, the [environmental harms](#) caused by [bombing](#) and infrastructure damage, and long-term [consequences](#) that make nuclear disarmament harder to achieve and the world less stable.

At the same time, the United States continues to spend staggering sums on nuclear weapons. Depending on how you measure it, the U.S. spent roughly \$56.8 billion on nuclear weapons in 2024, or more than \$100 billion annually when accounting for the full range of programs that exist only because nuclear weapons exist. These costs are only rising. With last month's expiration of the New START treaty, limits on U.S. and Russian nuclear arsenals have eroded. The Trump administration has signaled a willingness to [expand nuclear forces](#), and the President has declared his intent to return to nuclear testing. All of these developments risk fueling a new nuclear arms race and driving even higher levels of spending.

These numbers can be difficult to grasp. How much is any of this in real terms? What could a year's worth of spending on nuclear weapons (\$56.8 billion) do instead? [Let's break it down.](#)

Every second spent could provide funding for nearly 17,000 MMR vaccines. A minute? We could pay for a million trees to be planted. A single hour, funded at that rate, could allow more than 500 homes to convert to solar power. A week? That could supply clean water sanitation for tens of millions of people. If we take the whole year, we could feed over 40 million people for over a decade.

Every dollar spent on nuclear weapons is a choice to not spend it elsewhere.

Here in Oregon, we can only imagine how we could improve our state if our dollars weren't being spent paying for nuclear weapons programs. [For fiscal year 2025, more than \\$1.41 billion Oregon tax dollars were sent out to cover these programs.](#) That's more than \$261 million dollars from Portland. More than \$37 million from Beaverton. Over \$110 million from Lane County and more than \$17 million from Corvallis. That is money that could instead be invested in public health, affordable

housing, clean energy, climate resilience, and the well-being of our communities.

At a time when so many needs go unmet, we are left with a simple question:

[Where would you like your money to go?](#)

[Oregon PSR strongly opposes any return to nuclear testing](#) and calls for renewed leadership toward disarmament. We also call on Oregon's congressional delegation to push for an end to the war in Iran and to support the United States signing the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons.

Our safety, and how we choose to spend our shared resources, depends on it.

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## **International Chernobyl Disaster Remembrance Day**

April 26 marks 40 years since the Chernobyl disaster, when reactor no. 4 at the Chernobyl Nuclear Power Plant exploded. Multiple factors contributed to the catastrophe, but one key contributing cause was the [“deficient safety culture”](#) across design, operations, and regulatory organizations. Experts widely agree that a strong culture of safety requires a strong and [independent regulator](#).

As this anniversary approaches, the United States is not learning the lessons of history. Instead, we are living through an era in which regulations around nuclear energy are being recklessly slashed and previously independent regulators are being [hollowed out and co-opted](#). This erosion of independence was highlighted by reporting from ProPublica, which revealed that the chief counsel for nuclear policy at the DoE said in a meeting last summer to “assume the NRC is going to do whatever we tell the NRC to do.” At a time when the federal government is prioritizing rapid deployment of new nuclear reactors, undermining independent oversight raises serious concerns about safety, accountability, and public trust.

Oregon PSR is committed to pushing back against efforts to weaken oversight, including community oversight, as well as environmental protections and safety regulations. This March, we officially endorsed multiple statements opposing the Department of Energy's declaration that new nuclear reactors would be exempt from environmental review, joining organizations from across the country. We also submitted our own [comment](#) opposing this categorical exclusion.

The lessons of Chernobyl are not only about reactor design and regulation, but also about the limits of managing risk in complex systems. Even strong safety systems cannot anticipate or control every risk, especially under conditions of stress or

conflict. Recent attacks on [nuclear facilities](#) in [Iran](#) and [Israel](#), along with last year's [drone strike on the protective shelter at Chernobyl](#), highlight a growing danger. When nuclear infrastructure is exposed to geopolitical instability, even low probability events can have catastrophic consequences.

**Chernobyl was not just a failure of technology. It was a failure of oversight, accountability, and political decision-making.** Those are choices. Oregon PSR will continue working to ensure that safety, transparency, and strong independent regulation are not treated as optional, but as the minimum standard for protecting our communities.

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## [Stewart Udall and The Politics of Beauty](#)

Join Havurah Shalom's Climate Action, Oregon PSR, and other Community Partners as we continue the Earth Justice Film Series-Stories to Inspire with the showing of Stewart Udall: The Politics of Beauty on Sunday, March 29, 3-5pm. Doors open at 2:30 to allow time for people to connect with community organizations who will be tabling. A discussion with the film maker will follow the showing of the film. Popcorn will be served. The event is Free.



*Stewart Udall and the Politics of Beauty* is a feature documentary that traces the life and legacy of Stewart Udall, from his early years to his influential tenure as U.S. Secretary of the Interior, where he helped shape the modern environmental movement.




The film highlights his evolving views on conservation, his role in protecting iconic landscapes like the Grand Canyon, and his advocacy for Navajo communities and “downwinders” harmed by radiation exposure during the Cold War. It also underscores the lasting relevance of his work, including his early warnings about global warming, while reflecting on a time when Americans confronted the destruction of the natural world and sought to preserve what remained.


Free parking is available on the street and at Legacy - 1919 NW Lovejoy. Park in any spot except 1-10.

For details about the film series, including a flier, go to: <https://linktr.ee/earthjusticefilms>

[Click here to watch the trailer](#)

 **Date:** March 29, 2026

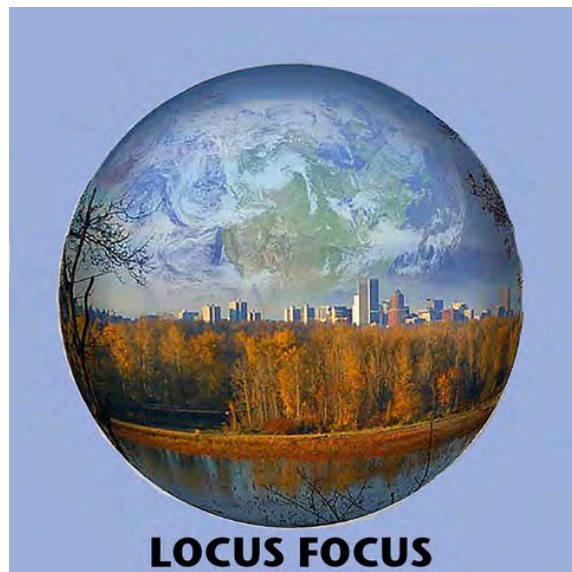
 **Time:** 3:5 pm (Doors at 2:30)

 **Where:** Havurah Shalom (825 NW 18th St, Portland, OR)

**Register Here (Free!)**

### Risk Bond Recap on Locus Focus

For over a century, a massive array of tanks storing explosive fuels and toxic chemicals has posed a serious threat to the Pacific Northwest. That risk remains, but the passage of Oregon’s Risk Bond Bill marks an important step toward accountability. The law requires bulk fuel terminals to carry “risk bonds,” ensuring companies, not taxpayers, pay for damages from spills, accidents, or earthquakes.



In a recent episode of *Locus Focus* on **KBOO**, host **Barbara Bernstein** speaks with **Nikki Mandel** and OPSR Health Climate Action Team volunteer **Melanie Plaut, MD**, about the organizing effort behind the bill and what comes next.

## Listen Here

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As always, we are deeply grateful for your continued [support](#). The forces driving climate change and nuclear risk are powerful and well-resourced, but they are not unopposed. Together, we are building the power, relationships, and momentum needed to win. Your dedication makes it possible for Oregon PSR to protect community health, push back against these escalating threats, and continue working toward a more peaceful and just future.

## Support Oregon PSR



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