

OREGON PSR

PHYSICIANS FOR SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY

*Preventing
what we
cannot cure*

APRIL
2026
NEWSLETTER



OREGON PSR

PHYSICIANS FOR SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY

Dear Friend,

With everything going on in the world right now, I often get asked, “What gives you hope?” There is no better answer to that question than the event I was honored to participate in a few weeks ago.

Tim Swineheart, an educator at Lincoln High School, created and teaches a class on the history of environmental justice. His students received a grant and used the funding to organize, alongside students from Ida B. Wells High School’s EcoAction club, the first-ever Student Voices for Climate Justice Summit on April 11 at Lincoln High.

It was clear from the meetings leading up to the summit, and from the day itself, that these students put in an incredible amount of work to pull this off. And pull it off they did. I was not alone in the amount of praise Tim and those students so deservedly received.



The summit consisted of panel discussions, workshops, music, and tabling by various environmental organizations. I was a speaker on the keynote panel and led a workshop focused on the intersection of race and nuclear weapons. From the students working registration, to those facilitating, to those working behind the scenes ensuring everything ran smoothly, they were amazing.

I was able to engage with students throughout the day who clearly had thought about these issues, asked many astute questions, and were motivated to use their gifts to save this planet and make the world a better place.

Spending the day with these students, I was reminded of Rebecca Solnit's words: "The true impact of activism may not be felt for a generation. That alone is reason to fight rather than to surrender into despair."

What gives me hope? The same thing that has provided me hope throughout my entire career: Students. That includes the incredible students at Sunnyside Elementary, who hosted a wonderful [Earth Day Celebration last weekend](#).

So, as we move forward, let us recognize the great work of this generation and support them any way we can. Thank you to Lincoln High School for hosting this incredible event, and thank you to Tim Swineheart and all of these students, for inspiring us all.



Earlier this week marked the 40th anniversary of the Chernobyl disaster. A catastrophe that resulted in over 400,000 people being displaced, as well as immediate and long lasting [health impacts](#) (including increased occurrences of cancer, heart disease, cataracts, [mental health struggles](#), and [substance abuse issues](#)). These health impacts were not just among those who lived in the impacted area, but also among those particularly among those tasked with cleaning up the mess (research has also shown an increase in [suicide rates among cleanup workers](#)).



This disaster was brought on by a combination of events, but contributing factors include a poor regulatory culture, a workplace environment that prioritized speed and output, a lack of transparency, unproven technologies, and a misguided belief that disaster would never happen. The impacts on the local environment are still being felt to this day (such as [exposed bee colonies](#) reproducing by rates of up to 45% less than unexposed colonies).

While we should use this anniversary as a reminder to do all we can to protect our communities, our workers, and our environment, instead we are in an era of a massive push for the 'rebirth' of nuclear energy and a widespread stripping of our

regulatory protections.

Oregon PSR is asking for your help in pushing back against two regulatory changes that decrease public involvement and independent oversight over the approval of new reactors, with comments being due by May 4 and May 18. The May 4th deadline concerns a proposed NRC (Nuclear Regulatory Commission) rule that would allow nuclear companies to use secret safety authorizations provided by the DOD or DOE instead of needing to go through the NRC's independent safety review, thus cutting the public out of the process.

The May 18th deadline is for guidance for the NRC that would tell staff to defer to the approvals by the DOE or DOD with no clear standards for evidence or independent verification. This would essentially turn the NRC's role in this process into a performative rubber stamp.

For more information on the comment process, please check out the wonderful [comment guide and explainer provided by physicist Lynda Williams](#).

Comments for the May 4th deadline can be submitted [HERE](#).

Comments for the May 18th deadline can be submitted [HERE](#).

We also encourage you to watch the [most recent Nuclear Waste Scholar Series](#) event hosted by our allies at **Hanford Challenge**, where Dr. Arjun Makhijani discusses "As Low As Reasonably Achievable" (ALARA) measures of nuclear protection, that protect the population and workers.. There are currently efforts at the federal level to remove such necessary protection measures.

DATA CENTERS IN OREGON:
Land Use and Economic Impacts
The real economic and land use impacts of data centers. Breaking down tax exemptions, job creation, land impacts, and more.

LIVE WEBINAR
Thursday
May 21, 2026
6:00pm


CO-HOSTING ORGANIZATIONS
Central Oregon LandWatch, MCAT, Oregon Agricultural Trust, Oregon Democrats-Environmental Caucus, Oregon Physicians for Social Responsibility, Oregon Rural Action, Tax Fairness Oregon, and Tualatin Riverkeepers

REGISTER HERE
<https://tinyurl.com/ORDataCenters>

Speakers:
Ben Gordon
Central Oregon LandWatch
Nellie McAdams
Oregon Agricultural Trust
Jody Wiser
Tax Fairness Oregon
AND MORE!

Data Centers in Oregon: *Land Use and Economic Impact*

 **Date:** May 21, 2026

 **Time:** 6:00 pm PT

 **Registration Link:**
tinyurl.com/ORDataCenters

Oregon PSR, in collaboration with a growing coalition of Oregon organizations, is co-hosting a series of webinars on data centers, the impacts, and the policy options. The next in this series, **Data Centers in Oregon: *Land Use and Economic Impacts***, will be held on Thursday, May 21 at 6pm (PT).

Join Oregon PSR, along with **Central Oregon LandWatch, MCAT, Oregon Agricultural Trust, Oregon Democrats-Environmental Caucus, Oregon Rural**

Action, Tax Fairness Oregon, and Tualatin Riverkeepers to evaluate land use impacts and the economics of data centers in Oregon. *Are we getting an economic boost from our tax exemptions for data centers? How much money are we foregoing for job creation? How many jobs do these projects create? These are a few of the questions we will answer.*

Register [HERE](#)

Featured speakers at this event include **Ben Gordon** (Central Oregon LandWatch), **Nellie McAdams** (Oregon Agricultural Trust), **Jody Wisser** (Tax Fairness Oregon), and more. Make sure to register and let us know in the registration what your top questions and concerns about data centers are so we can address them in this edition or in future editions of the series.

Our previous edition, ***Data Centers in Oregon: Water, Wetlands, and the Path Forward***, is now available to watch on demand [HERE](#) using the following password: **jzi*RbT7**

Slides for that event can be found [HERE!](#)

We know that data centers are an issue so many of you care about, and it was great to see so many of you at ***Rumble on the River 30: What's the Deal with Data Centers? Pt. 2***. A video from ***Rumble on the River 28: What's the Deal with Data Centers?***, held in January, can be found [here](#). We also encourage you to watch the recording of the event [The Data Center Frontier](#) from our allies at the **Natural History Museum** on data centers, held a few weeks ago.

No Immunity for Big Oil

According to research by the Center for Climate Integrity, [more than 1 in 4 Americans](#) live in a community fighting Big Oil in court, in order to hold them accountable for their role in the climate emergency and deceiving the public about it. This includes [communities in Oregon](#). However, this April, federal legislation was introduced that would shield energy companies from legal liability tied to the harms caused by their products. It would block lawsuits and other legal actions against companies involved in producing, transporting, or selling energy.



In other words, it would **make Big Oil immune to real accountability**. These laws would undermine all efforts across the US to hold the fossil fuel industry responsible for their role in the climate crisis.

So here is what you can do, right now, to help stop this:

1. Use the [5 Calls Action Tool](#) to contact your local representatives on this issue. Enter your ZIP code and it will guide you through contacting your legislators, with a simple script to help you communicate your concerns.
2. Use this [tool from the Union of Concerned Scientists](#) to email your members of Congress and **demand** that Big Oil be held accountable, and not be placed above the law. The tool includes a template you can edit to reflect your own perspective and insights.
3. [Sign and Share this national petition](#) from the Make Polluters Pay coalition.

We thank you for joining us in this fight to Make Polluters Pay.



🌲 💻 🌲 ***Toxic Roots
of the Silicon Forest:
People, Power, and
Pollution in the
Semiconductor
Industry Conference***

📅 **When:** June 3- 4

📍 **Where:** Portland State University

🔗 **RSVP:** bit.ly/toxicroots

Join Oregon PSR at the ***Toxic Roots of the Silicon Forest: People, Power, and Pollution in the Semiconductor Industry Conference*** on June 3-4, 2026, at Portland State University.


Co-hosted by Portland Jobs with Justice and CHIPS Communities United, this day-and-a-half conference will convene workers, labor organizers, researchers, environmental advocates, and community leaders from across Oregon and beyond. Together, we will explore the legacy of the microchip industry and how it's impacting our own backyard.

RSVP Today

Oregon PSR is proud to be an Event Partner of the **Toxic Roots** conference and are excited to discuss and demand that the AI supply chain be sustainable, equitable, and accountable to the people.

Indoor Air Quality Workshop for Healthcare Professionals – *Free* CME/CEU Event

 **IAQ Workshop for Healthcare Professionals**

 **Dates:** Thursday, **June 11**, 2026 & Tuesday, **June 16**, 2026

 **Time:** 10:00 am - 11:30 am (PT)

 **Who:** American Lung Associations

 **Link:** www.lung.org/IAQWorkshop



Join the American Lung Association for a free CME event: the Indoor Air Quality (IAQ) Workshop for Healthcare Professionals. This virtual, two-day course is designed to help healthcare professionals better understand indoor air pollutants and gain practical tools to support patients in creating healthier indoor environments.

[Register Here](#)

This workshop is ideal for healthcare professionals involved in patient assessment or education, including respiratory therapists, nurses, nurse practitioners, physicians, community health workers, and other frontline practitioners. Participants will learn practical, evidence-based approaches to identifying and addressing indoor air quality concerns and become familiar with [resources](#) from the American Lung Association—such as the IAQ Action Plan and patient education tools—to support patients affected by indoor air pollution.

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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