



Newsletter of Oregon Alliance for Retired Americans Education Fund

## *Broader engagement ahead*

# Oregon Alliance undergoes conversion

Delegates from seven Charter affiliates adopted Bylaws and elected initial officers and Board members in a mid-February Founding Convention for formal establishment of the Oregon Alliance for Retired Americans Education Fund (Oregon ARAEF). The assembly capped nearly a year of work to create and develop a successor organization to the Oregon Alliance for Retired Americans (Oregon ARA).

Creation of the new organization was directed by the 2015 OARA Convention and conducted under the guidance of the National ARA, as part of its effort to re-introduce state organizations as Social Welfare rather than charitable organizations. OARAEF emerged from the work as such an organization exempt from income taxes under IRS Section 501(c)(4). That designation allows it to promote social welfare “to

further the common good and general welfare of the people of the community” according to the IRS. That may include legislation and lobbying, and some political activities, as long as it’s not the organizations primary activity.

The predecessor organization, OARA, was organized as an IRS Section 501(c)(3) which is “may not attempt to influence legislation as a substantial part of its

*turn to ‘Founding’ page 2*



*The new nine-member Board work included three days of facilitated development and training in Board operation and activities.*

## *Board takes aim at education, advocacy issues*

Sharpening its sights for advocacy of issues affecting seniors and aging in Oregon, the Oregon ARAEF Board adopted its issue focus as the new organization unfolds its direction for the foreseeable future.

The action areas recommended by the Board’s Public Policy Committee, include:

- State support for funding senior and aging programs
- Trade agreements and availability and access to reasonably priced medications
- Senior housing stability and effects of escalating

rents and property taxes

- Senior access to healthcare services
- Protecting seniors and aging from financial fraud
- Senior access to comprehensive and reasonably priced health and long-term care insurance

“These areas give us the flexibility to track details in public policies proposals and educate and advocate where developments may do more harm than good,” said OARAEF President Scott Blau.

He added that “these fit squarely within the Vision and Mission Statements adopted by the Board to guide our organization.”

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**MY THOUGHTS . . .**

Scott Blau, OARAEF President

*U.S. Rep. Peter DeFazio right, receives National ARA letter of endorsement from OARAEF President Scott Blau, left, VP Louise Currin and member Dave Tobin*

I recently had the opportunity to sit down with Senator Ron Wyden to express our concerns about costs outrunning the meager Social Security COLA increase again. He tells me he is working on that, as well as the looming increases in the Medicare Part B premiums. His seat on the U.S. Senate Finance Committee should put him in a position to help him serve us well.

\* \* \*

We are expanding from being focused on our internal organizing to active engagement. Supporting Measure 97 is one example. Passing that measure will make the difference in the next legislature between helping to catch up on under-supported programs for seniors, or constantly working to hold off even more cuts in competition with all other programs. Join OARAEF from 4 p.m. to 6 p.m. Monday, November 7, in a bridge action for the measure. Contact Vice-President (Board member) Louise Currin at 503-318-7336 for information.

\* \* \*

Board member Louise Currin and affiliate

member Dave Tobin and I spoke with Rep. Peter DeFazio to encourage him to continue to pursue expanding and improving Social Security and Medicare.

We delivered the Alliance for Retired Americans' endorsement letter to him for his reelection campaign to the House.

\* \* \*

Our newsletter begins as a quarterly publication, but our communications program is being designed to meet members through print and a variety of digital platforms where you'll soon be able to follow us continuously through our website and Facebook.

Stay tuned.

*Affiliate members take time in the summer for picnic and sharing.*



## WHO'S SPENDING THE MOST ON ELECTIONS

Find the detailed report on spending at [www.opensecrets.org/overview/blio.php](http://www.opensecrets.org/overview/blio.php)

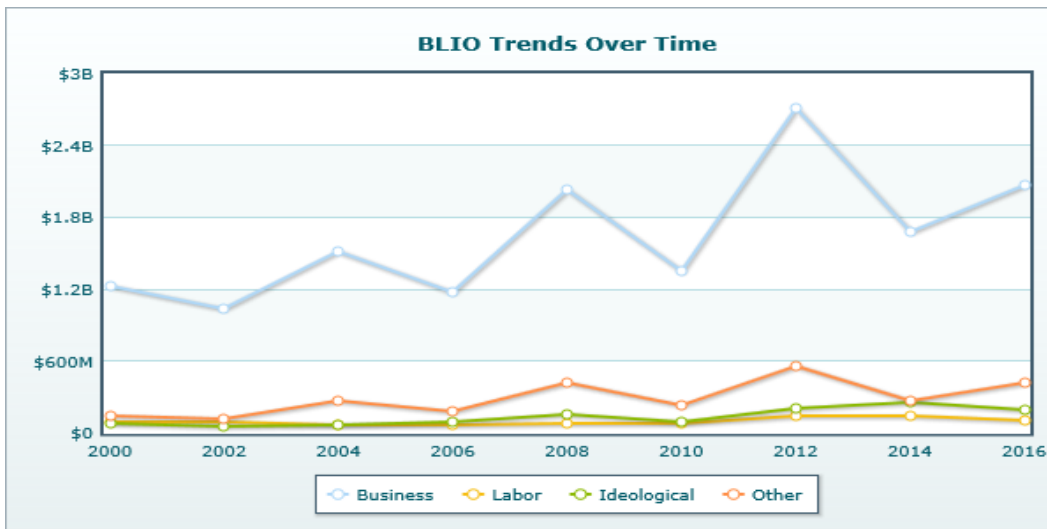
While campaign spending is on a constant upward arc, and subject to chronic complaining, little discussion correctly points to the realities of who's spending the most — business.

Observes, commentators and pundits usually lump unions together with business in decrying

the high dollar cost of elections. But, business outspends unions by as much as 15 to 1, according to OpenSecrets.org produced by the non-partisan Center for Responsive Politics. Through August, 2016 in the current 2015-2016 election cycle business spent some \$2.071-billion compared to \$111.8-

million by labor.

Because of reporting constraints, "totals for business are somewhat overstated, while labor is understated," according to its Business-Labor-Ideology Split in PAC & Individual Donations report. Not included are contributions under \$200 because they are not itemized in reporting.



SOURCE	TOTAL
Business	\$1,157,948,876
Labor	\$808,453
Ideological	\$56,552,713
Other	\$354,355,714

Source: Center for Responsive Politics from August 22, 2016, FEC data; includes PAC and individual contributions to candidates

## SENIOR POPULATION AND MORE STRAIN STATE RESOURCES

Oregon seniors are being left behind, even though the state overall has fared better out of the recession with economic indicators up.

Rising costs for housing and especially health care are among the most notable demands on fixed incomes of seniors and retirees. At the same time those same seniors are likely relying on so-

cial security income and public programs because some two-thirds have little or no retirement savings.

From recent caseload forecasts of the Oregon Department of Human Services (DHS), the seniors needing assistance is expected to increase over the next three years by some 12 percent costing at least \$200-million.

And Oregonians 65 years and older population is expected to nearly double by 2030 to some 950,000 placing more demands on DHS.

Those 75 or older are expected to grow by almost a quarter million, according to Oregon's State Demographer over the 10 years through 2025.

*"Measure 97 will make more funds available for needed increases in DHS costs to keep pace with the growth in Oregon's senior populations."*

Scott Blau  
O.A.R.A.E.F. President

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*“Everyone is trending toward senior status”*

**Founding convention, new organization**

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activities and it may not participate in any campaign activity for or against political candidates. It cannot the IRS says, be an “action organization.”

“Those limitations,” said Scott Blau, OARAEF President, “seriously restricted efforts to pursue issues legislatively and politically that are very important to senior and aging Oregonians.”

New Bylaws created a nine member Board with three principal officers and six vice-presidents – four from labor organization affiliates and two from community organization affiliates. It also set four permanent committees, Bylaws, Communications, Finance and Public Policy.

In addition to Blau (NALC) officers included Secretary Leanna Hakala (OSEA/AFT); and Treasurer Jackie

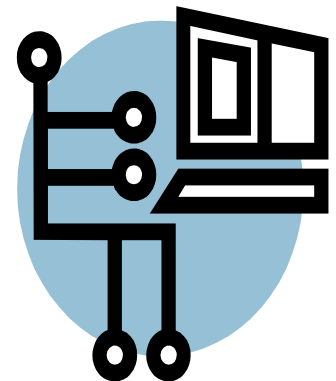
Davais (Teamsters). Vice-Presidents from unions included Jim McKee (Teamsters); Louise Currin (AFT-Oregon); Everice Moro (OSEA/AFT); and Garry Steffey (USWA). Two seats for non-union community organizations remained vacant pending completion of affiliations.

Since its first meeting the Board has spent three days in facilitated training and organizational development sessions to develop appropriate vision and mission statements and organize its processes and procedures to meet its program objectives. At its first regular meeting the Board confirmed Blau’s committee appointments and a budget.

The officers of the predecessor are completing steps to terminate it, consistent with the 2015 directive.

*Vision:  
“Elevating the lives of senior and aging Oregonians”*

*Mission:  
“Create a network of organizations to educate and inform about issues that affect the well-being of senior and aging Oregonians.”*



*Digital communication capacity recommendations for the Board are being developed by the communications committee. Goals, subjected to potential bugs, include web site; Facebook page; and Twitter. Watch for more announcements with each launch.*

***Charter Affiliates***

Charter affiliates sending delegates to the founding convention included:

- AFSCME Council 75 Retirees
- AFT-Oregon Retirees
- CWA Retirees
- NALC Branch 82 Retirees
- OSEA/ROSE
- Teamsters Jt. Council 37 Retired Members Association
- USWA SOAR Chapter 12-7