



Press Statement
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Leading racial justice advocates respond to ballot referral on legislative pay

*Passage of SJR 34 delays needed action to correct legislative and
election inequities*

SALEM, Ore. — The Oregon Legislature approved SJR 34, passing off the decision to raise legislative pay and diversify the Legislature to Oregon voters in the 2024 election. The Opportunity to Serve Coalition, led by APANO, Urban League of Portland, Neighborhood Partnerships, Family Forward and the ACLU of Oregon, issued the following statement in response.

“Through this action, the Legislature is delaying the urgent action needed for our communities to be better represented and heard in Salem. After three legislative sessions advocating for this policy, this is not a satisfying outcome.

“Oregon legislators’ wages currently start at \$32,839, with modest adjustments for people who travel to Salem for the legislative session. This means that without independent wealth, a second job or family money, the job is out of reach for most Oregonians.

“We know that BIPOC, LGBTQ+, women, young people and parents are the groups who face the most barriers to running for and staying in office. It’s not a coincidence that legislators are more likely to be whiter, wealthier and older than the average Oregonian.

“Our coalition advocated for a legislative pathway, with SB 786, because ballot measure campaigns are expensive and time-consuming — resources that the communities who are most impacted by this inequitable system simply don’t have.

“We hope that legislators are prepared to fully support SJR 34 with a well-resourced education campaign and lead an inclusive process for developing the policy language. Without these commitments, it’s difficult to imagine real, lasting change that our communities need and deserve.”

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ABOUT THE OPPORTUNITY TO SERVE COALITION

The Opportunity to Serve Coalition is a grassroots movement of community leaders and organizations who have come together to call for fair salaries in the Oregon Legislature. The coalition is made up of BIPOC-led community-based organizations who have come together to organize toward our collective vision of a democracy that reflects the needs and experiences of BIPOC communities.

MEDIA CONTACT

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