COUNT HER IN
COMPANION BRIEFS
PROMISING POLICIES FOR A STATE THAT CAN’T WAIT
Eight That Can’t Wait

SYSTEMIC RACISM
Women and girls of color in Oregon experience disproportionate barriers to success, including poverty rates that are nearly twice as high as those of white women and girls.

VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN
An estimated 1 million Oregon women and girls—over half of the state’s female population—have experienced some form of sexual or domestic violence. This is one of the highest rates in the country.

COST OF CAREGIVING
Oregon is one of the least affordable states in the nation for child care. A year of daycare is now more expensive than annual tuition at a state university in Oregon.

GAPS IN REPRODUCTIVE HEALTH ACCESS
Hundreds of thousands of women lack access to the information and services they need to decide if, when, and how they become pregnant. Almost half of Oregon pregnancies are unintended, a rate that has barely dropped in 20 years.

WAGE AND WEALTH GAP
Oregon women earn between 53 and 83 cents (depending on race or ethnicity) for every dollar men in Oregon earn. The gender wealth gap, based on the sum of a person’s assets, is even larger: approximately 35 cents on the dollar. Oregon’s gender wealth gap is among the largest in the nation.

ECONOMIC FRAGILITY
Nearly a third of Oregon’s women and girls are struggling to make ends meet. As a result, most cannot cover an unexpected expense of even $100 without having to sell something or borrow money.

MENTAL HEALTH CHALLENGES
Oregon women have the highest incidence of reported depression in the country, as well as the highest rate of alcohol use. Women are almost twice as likely to attempt suicide than men, and Oregon women have higher rates of childhood trauma than the national average.

PUBLIC/PRIVATE GLASS CEILING
In 2016, only one of Oregon’s 39 publicly traded companies is led by a woman CEO. Several Oregon counties do not have a single woman serving in county-wide office.

Introduction
Count Her In, released by the Women’s Foundation of Oregon in 2016, is the most expansive, actionable, and inclusive report on Oregon’s women and girls to date. Among the key findings are the “Eight That Can’t Wait”—a set of profound inequities and startling challenges faced by Oregon’s women and girls.

Count Her In is an irrefutable imperative for change. These companion briefs, “Promising Policies for a State That Can’t Wait,” offer some potential solutions.

The Women’s Foundation worked with experts, advocates, and lawmakers on both sides of the aisle to assemble a set of evidence-based and common sense policies that are already working elsewhere to address the “Eight That Can’t Wait.”

Our hope is that together, we can build an Oregon in which all women and girls thrive.

What Good Looks Like
An Oregon where all women and girls, regardless of race, ethnicity, ability, sexual orientation, religion, citizenship status, or any other facet of identity:

Experience the power of self-determination, autonomy, and choice in every aspect of their lives, including, but not limited to, employment, religion, health, reproduction, education, and residence.

Are safe and free from violence, harassment, discrimination, and oppression in their homes, schools, workplaces, and communities.

Have many paths to economic security, are able to meet basic needs for themselves and their families, and can provide care for loved ones without economic penalty.

Have comprehensive health care and the tools necessary to ensure their physical, mental, and emotional well-being.

Have equitable access to high-quality education.

Can participate and contribute fully in their communities, and have equitable representation at all levels of public, private, non-profit, and political leadership.
VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN

Perpetrators have sexually or domestically assaulted more than 1 million Oregon women and girls. That’s more than half the female population.¹

“[Assault] is something that follows you your whole entire life. You never get over it. The after effects are so, so hard to deal with. I’m 68 years old, and I’m still dealing with it. And I think I always will.”—Carolyn, Newport

WHY IT MATTERS IN OREGON

Violence against women is a(n) . . .

HOUSING
TRANSPORTATION
RACIAL EQUITY
ECONOMIC
WORKFORCE
PUBLIC HEALTH
EDUCATION . . . issue.

Lack of economic security, stable housing, and reliable transportation can trap women in abusive relationships

In 2015, requests for emergency shelter from more than 10,000 domestic violence survivors went unmet due to lack of funding²

Assailants attack women of color at the highest rates³

Almost 50% of female survivors in the U.S. are raped before age 18⁴

> The aftermath can push girls behind in, or out of, school⁵

COST OF THE STATUS QUO

$50 million cost each year of domestic violence in Oregon in medical costs and lost days of work⁶

$122,000 lifetime cost of rape per survivor⁷

PROMISING POLICIES from experts, advocates, and other states

PREVENT VIOLENCE

- Invest in primary prevention beyond just college campuses to also include K–12 education.
- Keep guns out of the hands of domestic abusers.

SUPPORT SURVIVORS

- Sufficiently fund the statewide network of confidential shelters, safety planning, and support services for survivors and their children so no one in danger is turned away.
- Prioritize access to safe, stable, and affordable housing and transportation for abuse survivors and their families by protecting survivors against housing discrimination, retaliation, and displacement.
- Ensure sufficient services to the communities most affected—including tribal nations—with disparity-reduction targets and accountability measures.

80% of voters in Oregon support education in public schools about healthy relationships, consent, and personal boundaries⁸

1 in 5 Oregon homicides is related to intimate partner violence⁹

Half of these deaths involve guns¹⁰

CountHerIn.org
GOOD POLICYMAKING FOR WOMEN AND GIRLS REQUIRES...

UNDERSTANDING SYSTEMIC RACISM

The “Eight That Can’t Wait” Issue That Intersects with All Others

For an Oregon where all women and girls thrive, all women and girls need to have equitable access to the opportunities it takes to thrive. But right now, many of Oregon’s women and girls of color do not.

Addressing these inequities requires looking at our state’s history of systemic racism—in particular, the policies and practices that benefited white people and harmed people of color. Throughout the years, laws and practices fostered discrimination in housing, healthcare, education, employment, and pay.

The 2015 Oregon Racial Equity Legislative Report reminds us that the cumulative effect of these policies and practices is the root cause of the economic, social, political, and health disparities identified in Count Her In.

Therefore, public policy must play a major role in correcting these disparities. And as the Women’s Foundation of Oregon develops its own capacity to advocate on behalf of all Oregon’s women and girls, we will continue to lift up the voices of those that have led the way for racial justice in our state.¹¹

EMBRACING INTERSECTIONALITY

Good policymaking incorporates an understanding of the multiple, overlapping factors that play a large role in the life of every Oregonian.

Gender and race are important components of identity, but there are many others. Age, location, disability status, income, religious affiliation, sexuality, gender identity, citizenship status, and primary language are just a few of the many elements that come together to shape our experiences and needs.

WE’RE HERE TO HELP

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Sources
1. Count Her In, pages 24-25
2. Count Her In, page 25
3. Count Her In, page 25
5. U.S. Department of Education, Office for Civil Rights, 2011
6. Oregon Department of Human Services, 2005
7. U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, 2016
8. DHM Survey for the Women’s Foundation of Oregon, September 2016
9. Oregon Health Authority, 2013
10. Oregon Coalition Against Domestic and Sexual Violence, 2015
Caregiving costs in Oregon are among the least affordable in the nation. A year of daycare is more expensive than annual tuition at a state university, and elder care costs upward of $45,000 a year.¹ Yet the average care worker earns just $20,000 annually.² Oregon’s caregiving market is badly broken.

“When I was pregnant with my second child, we could not afford child care for two kids. I had to quit my job, as my husband made more than I did. I was home for nine months [unemployed], really wanting to work.”—Sara, Portland

WHY IT MATTERS IN OREGON

Unaffordable caregiving is a(n) . . .

- ECONOMIC
- WORKFORCE
- EDUCATION
- RACIAL EQUITY
- HOUSING
- TRANSPORTATION

. . . issue.

$12,000: average annual cost of child care in Oregon—that’s 50% of a single parent’s median income and 15% of a couple’s³

Unaffordable caregiving prevents women from fully participating in the workforce and/or completing their education

Gentrification and displacement make child care even less affordable for women—disproportionately women of color—who rely on family and neighbors for informal childcare

Oregon’s 70,000 caregivers are underpaid and nearly all women—disproportionately women of color⁴

COST OF THE STATUS QUO

- $210 billion boost in national GDP annually from women’s increased workforce participation if child-care costs were no more than 10% of family income⁵

PROMISING POLICIES from experts, advocates, and other states

- Ensure paid family and medical leave for all working Oregonians.
- Invest in high-quality early childhood education so it’s available, accessible, affordable, and culturally appropriate across the state.
- Ensure access to quality, affordable, and culturally competent elder care and care for people with disabilities across the state.
- Invest in a diversified “care force” of skilled professionals by providing training opportunities, living wages, benefits, and working conditions that allow for dignity, economic security, and access to care themselves.
- Provide unpaid family caregivers with information, training, and support.

What’s happening elsewhere?

° MN Infant child-care subsidy
° NY Paid family leave
° NC Early childhood initiative
° DC Paid family leave
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Sources
1. Count Her In, page 32
2. Oregon’s Care Economy, 2017
3. Count Her In, page 32
4. Oregon’s Care Economy, 2017
5. Economic Policy Institute, 2016
GAPS IN REPRODUCTIVE HEALTH ACCESS

Hundreds of thousands of women in Oregon lack access to the information and services they need to decide if and when to have children.

“Birth control is challenging. I have had difficulty making appointments with primary care providers and the cost. I have had to go weeks without medication.”—Alix, Portland

“I had to go to three doctors to get one who would give me an IUD.”—Anonymous, Salem

WHY IT MATTERS IN OREGON

Access to the full range of culturally responsive reproductive and sexual health care, including contraception and abortion:

- Increases educational and economic opportunities
- Reduces poverty
- Leads to healthier mothers, children, families, and communities

Cost is a big barrier to reproductive health care

Co-pays, high deductibles, or lack of meaningful access to care can jeopardize a family’s financial security and push them deeper into poverty

Race, geography, gender identity, and income influence access to information and services, which need to address histories of reproductive oppression and more effectively serve all Oregonians

$51 million annual health care cost to Oregon’s Medicaid system due to unintended pregnancy (prenatal care, delivery, and infants’ first year of life)

Gaps in reproductive health access are a(n) . . .

PUBLIC HEALTH
ECONOMIC
WORK FORCE
EDUCATION
RACIAL EQUITY

. . . issue.

PROMISING POLICIES from experts, advocates, and other states

Invest in sex ed that is comprehensive, age-appropriate, evidence-based, medically accurate, culturally competent, and based in positive youth development.

Ensure all women and people who can become pregnant have access to the contraceptive method of their choice at no cost to the user.

Ensure all women and people who can become pregnant have access to affordable preconception, prenatal, abortion, and postpartum care.

Establish cultural competency standards and requirements for health care facilities.

Integrate preventive reproductive health care like the One Key Question® program into primary care clinician visits.

Provide pregnant and parenting teens access to health information, support, and resources.

50% of the women we heard from faced obstacles to accessing reproductive health care

Long-acting reversible contraceptives (LARCs)—such as intrauterine devices (IUDs) and implants—are 99% effective but can cost up to $1,000

What’s happening elsewhere?

CA

“Crisis pregnancy center” transparency

WA

Family planning, including LARCs (Family PACT)

Family planning, including LARCs

Support for pregnant and parenting teens

CountHerIn.org

WOMEN'S FOUNDATION OF OREGON
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Percentage of women who are women of color, by county
- 5.7-10.0%
- 10.1-15.0%
- 15.1-25.0%
- 25.1-38.4%

Source: Decennial Census 2010

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Sources
1. Count Her In, page 58
2. World Health Organization, 2016
4. Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, 2017
5. Oregon Health Authority, 2016
6. onekeyquestion.org
Oregon women earn between 53 and 83 cents—depending on race/ethnicity—for every dollar men in Oregon earn. The gender wealth gap (total assets) is 35 cents on the dollar.

"I had been on the job for a few months when I found out that they were paying me almost half as much as they had been paying the previous person...who was a man.”

—Jessica, Portland

WHY IT MATTERS IN OREGON

The wage/wealth gap is a(n) …

ECONOMIC WORKFORCE CAREGIVING RACIAL EQUITY EDUCATION HOUSING … issue.

The wage gap hurts women and their families with each paycheck and results in lower retirement savings and less wealth to pass on to the next generation.

Scheduling is part of the reason for the wage gap.

> Women tend to be in jobs with unpredictable and irregular scheduling, which leaves them in chronic part-time, lower-paying jobs.

The gender and race wealth gap in Oregon is created and perpetuated by discrimination, wage gaps, barriers to workforce participation, a lack of equitable opportunities, disproportionate criminal justice involvement, and unaffordable caregiving.

The Wage/Wealth Gap is linked to Economic Fragility—and to its solutions.

COST OF THE STATUS QUO

$4 billion combined total wages lost each year due to the gender wage gap for Oregon women who are working full time.

PROMISING POLICIES from experts, advocates, and other states

TO CLOSE THE WAGE GAP

Ensure pay equity among workers by strengthening existing equal pay statutes to require that employees are paid equally for “comparable work” regardless of their gender, race, religion, or sexual orientation; and by prohibiting employers from asking candidates about salary history.

Fund educational materials and training for employers to adopt new requirements.

Ensure paid family and medical leave, affordable child care, and fair and predictable scheduling.

Help prevent and remedy caregiver and pregnancy discrimination against workers.

TO CLOSE THE WEALTH GAP

Ensure that women, particularly women of color, have access to safe, affordable, and stable housing and homeownership opportunities.

Continue to implement the Oregon Retirement Savings Plan.

Invest in Children’s Savings Accounts, new homeowners savings programs, and preserve Individual Savings Accounts and College Savings Accounts.
GOOD POLICYMAKING FOR WOMEN AND GIRLS REQUIRES...

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Sources
1. Count Her In, pages 40-42
1 in 3 Oregon families can’t cover an unexpected expense of even $100 without having to sell something or borrow money.¹

“A few months ago, my landlord unexpectedly terminated my lease. I wasn’t able to find a house right away. In order to keep my kids in their school, I commute three hours each day to drop them off, go to work, and then pick them up again.”—Anonymous, Southern Oregon

WHY IT MATTERS IN OREGON

The causes and effects of economic fragility are deeply intertwined. An Oregon where all families can achieve self-sufficiency will require both addressing economic fragility’s root causes and providing support to families currently struggling.

48% of Oregon households led by women with children experience food insecurity.²

51% of female Oregon renters are “cost-burdened” by housing expenses.³

Caregiving responsibilities and costs push women out of the workforce or into part-time, low-wage work.

Economic Fragility is linked to the Wage/Wealth Gap—and to its solutions.

PROMISING POLICIES from experts, advocates, and other states

AFFORDABLE CAREGIVING
- Ensure paid family and medical leave for all working Oregonians.
- Invest in high-quality, accessible, affordable, and culturally appropriate care.

AFFORDABLE HOUSING
- Protect safe, stable, affordable housing for women and their children.
- Invest in transportation infrastructure, particularly in rural areas.

SELF-SUFFICIENCY
- Increase utilization rates of the EITC and Child Tax Credit; expand the EITC to include low-income individuals without children.
- Protect self-sufficiency programs that help vulnerable Oregonians meet basic needs.

ECONOMIC SECURITY
- Protect against pay discrimination and firing in the workplace for women, particularly pregnant women, mothers, and women of color.
- Continue to implement the Oregon Retirement Savings Plan.
- Invest in Children’s Savings Accounts and preserve Individual Savings Accounts.
- Support new homeowners savings programs and college savings accounts.

PUBLIC HEALTH

EDUCATION

FOOD INSECURITY

HOUSING

TRANSPORTATION

CAREGIVING

ECONOMIC

. . . issue.

COST OF THE STATUS QUO

$29 million in additional federal dollars would go to Oregonians if we increased Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC) participation by just 10%.⁴ Oregon has the 3rd-lowest EITC participation rate in the nation;⁵ the majority of EITC recipients are women.

What’s happening elsewhere?

HI Increasing SNAP and EITC participation

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Sources
1. Count Her In, pages 46-47
2. Oregon State University, 2016
3. Count Her In, page 50
4. Count Her In, page 53
5. Internal Revenue Service, 2016
MENTAL HEALTH CHALLENGES

Nearly half of Oregon’s women and girls have experienced childhood trauma, such as abuse or neglect. Oregon women have the highest incidence of reported depression in the country.¹

“I experience suicidal thoughts weekly and fight wishing I were dead each morning. Care is necessary. I have amazing insurance, but it will be five weeks before I will be seen by a professional. There are not enough providers to help me when I need help.”—Anonymous, Pendleton

WHY IT MATTERS IN OREGON

Mental health challenges are a(n)...

PUBLIC HEALTH
ECONOMIC
WORKFORCE
RACIAL EQUITY
EDUCATION
HOUSING

... issue.

Oregon women have higher rates of childhood trauma (adverse childhood experiences, or ACEs) than the national average.

This trauma can lead to lifelong mental and physical health problems, lower educational attainment, increased likelihood of juvenile and adult criminal justice involvement, houselessness, and/or suicide.

The compounding effects of the other “Eight That Can’t Wait”—particularly violence against women, systemic racism, economic fragility, and gaps in reproductive health access—all contribute to the mental health challenges of women in Oregon.

> Improving mental health outcomes for women and girls will require tackling all of these in tandem.

COST OF THE STATUS QUO

$210,000: average lifetime cost per survivor of child abuse and neglect²

PROMISING POLICIES from experts, advocates, and other states

₁ Ensure that culturally competent mental health services are covered and accessible for all Oregonians.

₂ Support public-private collaboration to reduce childhood trauma, such as “Pay for Success/Pay for Prevention” 3-way funding models among government, providers, and private investors/philanthropy.

₃ Establish a Governor’s Children’s Cabinet to set shared priorities, align policies and programs, launch and support cross-agency initiatives, and foster collaboration among state agencies.

₄ Incorporate ACEs, trauma-informed, and culturally responsive approaches into child abuse prevention, family support services, and health care provision, specifically postpartum screening.

₅ Require trauma-informed approaches be integrated into all law enforcement agencies and correctional facilities, and provide multi-agency support services for families affected by the criminal justice and foster care systems.

What’s happening elsewhere?

UT “Pay for Success” in school readiness
VA Children’s Cabinet
WA Adverse Childhood Experiences

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Sources
1. Count Her In, pages 22, 60
2. U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, 2016
Women make up only 33% of the Oregon Legislature. In 2016, only one of Oregon’s 39 publicly-traded companies was led by a woman CEO.

“I was elected the first female judge in my county. It’s challenging to change the perception of a woman in a position of authority. For example, people struggle with what to call me—Ms. or Mrs.—the correct term is ‘Judge.’ I know they would not struggle with how to address a male judge in court.”—Anonymous, Oregon Coast

WHY IT MATTERS IN OREGON

Oregon’s low rates of women in leadership are linked to the other “Eight That Can’t Wait,” particularly cost of caregiving, wage/wealth gap, systemic racism, gaps in reproductive health access, and economic fragility.

- Improving representation of women in leadership will require tackling all of these.

Rates of representation for people of color, and women of color in particular, do not exceed even 5% of statewide elected leadership.

Oregon’s citizen legislature means that to both serve in office and support their families, elected officials must have another full-time job, be retired and not on a fixed income, or be independently wealthy.

- This closes the door to leadership on people who are disproportionately likely to be women and people of color.

PROMISING POLICIES from experts, advocates, and other states

- Continue to professionalize the state legislature by providing elected officials with a living wage, adequate staff, and sufficient support.

- Establish and/or support existing women’s caucuses, commissions, and alliances at the state and local level to advocate on behalf of the diverse interests of women and girls and to support women in elected office.

- Improve and expand the infrastructure of the state’s Minority & Women Business Enterprises certification efforts.

- Shift local-level election structures from city- or county-wide elections to zoned districts that better represent specific communities and lower the cost of running for office.

- Establish gender and racial diversity goals for all state boards and commissions.

- Require that state contractors report on the gender and racial/ethnic makeup of their boards, senior leadership teams, staff, and subcontractors.

In 2016, four Oregon counties had no women in county-wide leadership positions.
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EMBRACING INTERSECTIONALITY

Percentage of women who are women of color, by county

Source: Decennial Census 2010

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Sources
1. Count Her In, pages 76-77
2. Count Her In, page 76
The Women’s Foundation of Oregon’s vision is an Oregon where every woman and girl can thrive. Our mission is to focus the power of women’s collective resources to improve the lives of women and girls throughout Oregon.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Our Generous Funders
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The Board & Members of the Women’s Foundation of Oregon
**Five Things Oregon Leaders Can Do**

1. **Demand Better Data.** Our decisions are often only as good as our information. Right now, a startling amount of Oregon’s data is old, inaccurate, or simply nonexistent. What gets measured, gets done. And we need better measurements—particularly for underrepresented and underserved populations. In an era of big data, it’s time to collect and share information that reflects the daily realities of Oregon’s 2 million women and girls.

2. **Make Decisions with a Gender Lens.** Interrogate every decision—from policies and programs to services and outreach—based on the impact it will have on women and girls. Are women and girls likely to be disproportionately affected? Are gender-specific needs being considered and met? Are women and girls, particularly those who are most affected, being asked for their input?

3. **Fund Gender-Specific Programs and Services.** Women and girls often have different needs than the state’s men and boys. From health care options to youth development programs to job training opportunities, we can better meet the needs of Oregon’s women and girls if we choose to support thoughtful, effective, gender-specific programs and services.

4. **Embrace Intersectionality.** It’s a big word, but it has a simple meaning: People don’t come in pieces. Gender is an important component of identity, but it’s not the only one. Race, age, location, disability status, income, religious affiliation, sexuality, gender identity, immigration status, and primary language are just a few of the many elements that come together to shape our experiences and needs. Until we all acknowledge that every person falls into multiple categories, and begin to make decisions accordingly, every Oregonian will be disserved by one-dimensional policies and systems.

5. **Find Common Ground.** The issues identified in this report—like safety, opportunity, and education—are not inherently partisan issues. We can and should collaborate to find innovative solutions that work.

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**A Gender Lens for Policymakers**

1. Is it good for women and girls? How?
2. Have you conducted a racial impact statement to fully understand the policy’s impact on communities of color?
3. Have women and girls from the communities most affected been meaningfully heard from in the policymaking process?
4. Are leaders who represent the communities most affected sitting at the decision-making table?
5. Have you consulted the best available data and research about the communities most affected, as well as the likely impact of the policy?
6. Have you considered the adverse impacts or unintended consequences of the policy on women and girls?
7. Is the policy realistic and adequately funded, with mechanisms to ensure successful implementation, utilization, and enforcement?
8. Are there provisions to ensure ongoing data collection, public reporting, stakeholder participation, and public accountability?

*Adapted from Race Forward*

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