

**Heads up**

- Sign up for Oregon Health Authority Corona Virus updates at: <https://tinyurl.com/sy9petk>
- Read Gov. Brown's COVID-19 Executive Orders at : <https://govstatus.egov.com/or-covid-19#executiveOrders>

## Payroll tax gambit Social Security survival threatened

The life of both Social Security and its Disability Insurance program are in danger of extinction according to a letter in late August from the programs chief actuary.

In a letter to U.S. Sen. Ron Wyden, one of four senators who requested an estimate of the impact of President Trump's payroll tax cut, Stephen Goss wrote that the Old Age and Sur-



turn to *THREAT* Page 3

# Actively Retired in Oregon

AFT-OREGON RETIREES

### MEMBERS TAKE NOTE

## Notice of Nomination and Election

### NOMINATIONS

AFT-Oregon Retirees Chapter is taking nominations for the office of Secretary and Treasurer. Nominations will be accepted from the floor at the September 16, 2020 membership meeting which will be convened electronically via Zoom at 10 a.m.. Members will receive by e-Mail, notice of the meeting and a link for joining the meeting.

Nominations may also be made in writing and must be received by President Louise Currin at the AFT-Oregon Retirees office, 10228 SW Capitol Highway, Portland, Oregon 97219; or, by e-Mail to [retirees@aft-oregon.org](mailto:retirees@aft-oregon.org) no later than 11 a.m., September 16, 2020.

The Secretary and the Treasurer will serve until our regular election of officers in May, 2021.

### ELECTION

A secret ballot election for the offices of Secretary and Treasurer is being conducted by U.S. Mail. Ballots for this election will be mailed to members on Friday, September 18. Any eligible member who has not received a ballot in the mail at home by September 23, 2020 or any member who spoils a ballot may request a new ballot by contacting President Louise Currin at [retirees@aft-oregon.org](mailto:retirees@aft-oregon.org). If you request and return another ballot, only the replacement ballot will be counted.

Returned ballots must be postmarked no later than October 2, 2020. A stamped envelope will be included for voter convenience. Counting of ballots will take place at 10 a.m., October 7, 2020 at the AFT-Oregon Retirees office 10228 SW Capitol Highway, Portland, Oregon 97219.

## Dear Retiree Members . . .



Louise Currin  
President

Learn here how to store your emergency information on your phone:  
<https://tinyurl.com/yyt5st94>.

In March, I thought that the Covid19 pandemic would be winding down by now and that we would be resuming our normal activities including our monthly member meetings.

Earlier this summer I learned from AFT-Oregon President, Jaime Rodriguez, that AFT Oregon Retirees is eligible for a Zoom subscription. We started using it for our board and committee meetings in July.

September 16, 2020 at 10 a.m., will mark our trial virtual membership meeting using Zoom. If you do not have the computer capability to use Zoom, the link that will be sent to participants also will offer a phone option. If that meeting is successful, we may continue to use Zoom to include more members statewide.

At the meeting, nomina-

tions will be accepted for offices of Secretary and Treasurer. Nominations and elections required from changes in our governing documents that split the office of Secretary-Treasurer into two positions, were delayed from our normal May meeting, because of restrictions on gatherings during the pandemic.

The election will be conducted by mail ballot following the September member meeting. We will be mailing out ballots to our current membership list. Details are in the Notice of Nomination and Election in this newsletter.

We encourage you to vote and return your ballot as soon as soon as you receive it..

To facilitate this, we will be including a stamped envelope to return your ballot. We will be tallying

votes October 7, 2020.

In our society, seniors have been respected and honored, but frequently we are undervalued in many ways. Our umbrella organizations AFT and AFT-Oregon have taken steps this summer to show retirees that we are valued and respected.

The AFT-Oregon Executive Council voted this summer to give the AFT Retiree President a vote at council meetings. Our president has always had a voice, but now we have a vote.

The AFT Convention passed a constitutional amendment to add a Program and Policy Council for retiree members.

Please continue to stay safe and healthy and wear a mask to protect others.

*Louise*

President  
louisecurrin@comcast.net

### Actively Retired in Oregon

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Find us on Facebook

## What we're learning about the pandemic

Now that scientists have had some time to study this absolutely new virus, what do we know that matters to us and our loved ones?

### Prevention and Protection

- *Cotton masks* of 2 or more layers provide important protection. Cotton plus a layer of silk is better. *Socially distancing* of six or more feet is essential. The disease travels in droplets, some so tiny as to be invisible to the eye. Many people may look well but still be carriers of Covid-19.

- *Handwashing* with soap and water is as

effective as hand sanitizer.

- *Flu Shots* are very important, especially for seniors.

. Scientists report that it affects more than the lungs. Doctors have reported observing that blood clots appear disturbingly in different locations in the body, including but not limited to heart and lungs.

Recovery often does not end all the symptoms. Survivors report mental and physical chal-



Deanna Woods  
Secretary-Treasurer



Greg Monahan  
VP Legislative

**PERS Decision**  
*The Supreme Court decision upholding the “reforms” enacted in SB 1049 can be found at:*  
<https://tinyurl.com/y54rrkzb>

## Legislature

Sadly, the Oregon Supreme Court has now unanimously upheld Senate Bill 1049, the so-called PERS “reform” that took part of the contribution to the pension funds of active members and redirected it to paying down the debt.

That was bad news for those still employed by the state, since it means a reduction in their pensions when they retire.

It will *not* affect those already retired, but it represents an unfortunate setback to all our friends and colleagues still working.

That decision, combined with the Pandemic and formidable unrest over the George Floyd murder, will almost certainly push fur-

ther PERS “reforms” pretty far off the legislative table, at least in the short term.

AFT and other unions were furious with them over the “reforms” in Senate Bill 1049, and they are still smarting from that. Of course, the main session early next year could be a different story, as state agencies battle over a much smaller pot of money, and we will have to stay vigilant to make sure that legislators do not again try to violate the contract the state has made with us in the past.

The Legislature recently held a special session devoted entirely to police reform and Covid-19 is-

sues. There were worries a second special session in August might look at further PERS cuts. It did not. The second special session was devoted to balancing the budget after it was thrown into crisis by the plunge in revenues caused by lockdowns and closures.

In one legislative bill it did further address policing, adopting HB 4301 on use of “choke holds” by police and corrections officers, and use of physical force and deadly force by police officers.

As always, that means that all of those reading this report should stay involved, alert, and active! Question candidates and vote, vote, vote!

## Threat continued from Page 1

vivor’s Insurance trust fund would permanently run out of funds by mid-2023. The letter added that the Disability Insurance funds would run out even earlier, in mid-2021. Goss’ letter explained there then would be no money to pay to disabled workers, their spouses and children qualifying for benefits.

The President issued an Executive Order in early August for a temporary break in the payroll tax, but vowed later to make it permanent if he is re-elected. Given that prospect, the Senators requested the estimates, which are based on the change effective January 1, 2021.

The payroll tax of 6.2 percent for Social Security and 1.45 percent for Medicare is paid each by the employee and the employer on wages and salaries up to a maximum for 2020, of \$137,000. Many have

argued that the cap itself should be removed. The President’s order would temporarily suspend the withholdings on those earning less than \$100,000 annually, but require they be paid back next year, prompting his vow to make them permanent.

The Executive Order was one of four signed by the President amid his fight with Congress as a substitute for a legislative agreement between the House, Senate, and the White House. Along with the deferral in payroll tax, the orders provide an interest break for those with student loans, that as well have to be paid back in 2021.

In another end run around Congress, another order authorized \$400 additional weekly unemployment benefits, but requiring states to pay \$100 of that. Oregon and Washington have been approved for the \$300, but may not add the additional \$100. Only Six states have begun paying so far.

*Deanna Woods and Dick Schwarz contributed to this article*

*Eliminating the payroll tax, on which Social Security and its Disability Insurance program depend, would crash the programs in the next two years.*

## AFT-Oregon Retirees



10228 SW Capitol Highway  
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E-mail: [retirees@aft-oregon.org](mailto:retirees@aft-oregon.org)

Visit AFT retirement issues  
[www.aft.org/retirement](http://www.aft.org/retirement)

### Upcoming Events:

#### November 3 General Election

#### Member Meeting Dates 2020:

- September 16 (by Zoom). Includes nominations new positions of Secretary and Treasurer

OHSU provided links to patients and staff for information sources on Coronavirus outbreak (links are live in PDF version of Newsletter):

- [OHA Emerging Respiratory Disease page](#)
- [Multnomah County Health Department](#)
- [Clackamas County Health Department](#)
- [Washington County Health Department](#)
- [CDC COVID-19 page](#)
- [CDC travel notice](#)
- [WHO page](#)

Other include:

Lane County:  
[www.lanecountyor.gov/coronavirus](http://www.lanecountyor.gov/coronavirus)

## Pandemic

*Continued from Page 2*

Challenges: fatigue, aches, organ damage, mental confusion, joint & chest pain, difficulty breathing. There is also evidence that some damage will be permanent.

### Watch list update

Gov. Kate Brown removed Multnomah and Hood River Counties from the state's virus watch list August 30. Removal means success in lowering cases that are untraceable to a known source. The watch list freezes county reopening for three weeks.

Multnomah County re-

mains in Phase 1 for re-opening. Hood River is in Phase 2. Details on the phases are at: <https://tinyurl.com/ybc2j46a>

### Water bill help

The Portland Water Bureau has options that can help with your Covid-19 economic circumstances.

- *Payment arrangements.*

Spread payments over time.

- *Bill discount program.* Potential discounts on water, sewer and stormwater bill.
- *Crisis voucher (credit)* of up to \$500.

Check at: <https://www.portlandoregon.gov/water/69504>

*Deanna Woods, Val Jack and Dick Schwarz contributed to this article*

## Calendar of 2020 Election dates

Important 2020 Oregon general election dates, according to the Secretary of State, include:

- Voter registration deadline October 13;
- Voter Pamphlets delivery begins October 14;
- First day ballots are mailed October 14.

Election day for ballot return is November 3. In Oregon ballots must be received by that date.

Voters can check their registration status at: <https://tinyurl.com/y42tdmva>