

## **Greg Walden's Key Accomplishments for Oregon in 2017-2018**

**Effectiveness:** Greg Walden sponsored more legislation that passed in the House of Representatives than any other member of the Oregon House delegation during the 115<sup>th</sup> Congress.

**Engagement and Constituent Services:** Greg Walden responded to more than 168,400 messages and made 159 county visits in Oregon's Second District in the last two years. Greg Walden assisted 2,387 Oregonians from the Second District with federal casework, including 1,037 veterans and their families.

**Comprehensive Work to Combat Opioid Crisis:** Greg Walden's historic legislation to combat the opioid crisis passed in the House (393-8) and the Senate (98-1) by sweeping bipartisan votes and was signed into law in October 2018. This legislation provides new tools to those on the front lines of the opioid epidemic in Oregon and across the country. Greg Walden also worked to secure grant funding for local communities to help them combat the opioid crisis, and completed thorough investigations into the bad actors contributing to the spread of the opioid crisis.

**Key Visits by Trump Administration Officials:** At Greg Walden's invitation, key members of the Trump Administration visited Oregon's Second District over the last two years. These meetings provided an important opportunity for people on the ground to talk directly to Trump Administration officials about how the actions of their agencies and departments are impacting the livelihoods of people in southern, central, and eastern Oregon. Of note, Air Force Secretary Heather Wilson, Interior Secretary Ryan Zinke, Agriculture Secretary Sonny Perdue, Energy Secretary Rick Perry, Federal Communications Commission Chairman Ajit Pai, and Food and Drug Administration Commissioner Dr. Scott Gottlieb were among the key administration officials who visited Oregon's Second Congressional District over the last two years at Greg Walden's invitation.

**Reforming Federal Forest Policy:** Under Greg Walden's leadership, Congress passed into law the most significant reforms to federal forest policy in more than a decade. That includes a fix to so-called fire borrowing, which will end the vicious cycle of robbing from forest management accounts to pay to fight wildfires. Wildfires burned more than 1.5 million acres in Oregon between 2017 and 2018, and Greg Walden is continuing to work to bring active management back to our forests to help reduce the risk of catastrophic wildfire seasons in the future.

**VA Medical Scribes Pilot Act:** Greg Walden's legislation to implement medical assistants – known as scribes – into the VA system was passed into law. This will allow physicians to focus on the patient and scribes to focus on the paperwork. In the private sector, studies show that this results in a 59% increase in the number of patients a doctor can see per hour.

**Secure Rural Schools Funding Extension:** Greg Walden helped provide two years of full Secure Rural Schools funding. Secure Rural Schools funding helps provide resources for essential local services like schools, roads, and law enforcement in Oregon's rural forested communities, which is a priority for Walden. Importantly, Walden secured a fix for the Secure Rural Schools program to allow local sheriff departments to use the funds for emergency and rescue equipment and training.

**Drought Relief for Klamath Basin Irrigators:** Greg Walden worked hard to secure needed drought relief measures for Klamath Basin irrigators to help them survive an incredibly challenging water year in Oregon. Walden included a provision in the Water Resources Development Act that authorizes \$10 million annually for four years to the Bureau of Reclamation to implement needed drought relief measures for the \$181 million agriculture economy in the Klamath Basin.

**Community Health Center Funding:** Greg Walden led the Congressional effort to boost and extend funding for community health centers. There are 12 community health centers that serve more than 240,000 Oregonians across 63 delivery sites in Oregon's Second District. With this funding increase and extension, community health centers will continue to be able to serve rural and underserved communities across Oregon.

**Historic Children's Health Insurance Program (CHIP) Reauthorization:** Greg Walden led the Congressional effort to provide the largest and most generous funding extension for CHIP in the program's history. As a result of Walden's action, CHIP is now fully funded for a record 10 years, doubling the five year extension that previously held the record for the longest reauthorization. There are more than 122,700 children and pregnant women in Oregon – and more than 9 million nationwide – who rely on CHIP.

**Safe Drinking Water:** Under Greg Walden's leadership, Congress passed the Drinking Water System Improvement Act, which helps local communities modernize their water infrastructure. This bill provides key resources for the Drinking Water State Revolving Loan Fund program, which communities across Oregon use to upgrade drinking water infrastructure and water towers.

**Promoting Hydropower Development:** Under Greg Walden's leadership, Congress passed a landmark water package that encourages the use of clean hydropower by streamlining the regulatory permitting process. This legislation will help get new hydropower projects to market faster and remove barriers to investments in hydropower to help create jobs and provide low-cost, emissions-free electricity to consumers. In Oregon, 43% of electricity is generated by hydropower.

**Rural Broadband Expansion:** Greg Walden is working to expand broadband to rural communities in eastern Oregon and bridge the digital divide. Greg Walden helped pass into law the first reauthorization of the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) in more than two decades. This reauthorization will help boost development of next-generation wireless broadband known as 5G, and improves FCC's ability to expand broadband infrastructure in rural America.

**Reauthorized Brownfields Program:** Greg Walden led the effort to reauthorize the federal Brownfields Program, which is used effectively across Oregon to put contaminated industrial sites back into active and productive use. The Environmental Protection Agency estimates that there are more than 450,000 brownfields across the United States and each of these sites have the potential to encourage economic development in local communities. The Old Mill District in Bend, an old lumber mill that was revitalized into a vibrant retail and restaurant district, is Oregon's most famous brownfield.

## **H.R. 6, the SUPPORT for Patients and Communities Act – SIGNED INTO LAW**

Representative Walden led the most significant legislative effort against a single drug crisis in the nation's history. Over 72,000 Americans died from an overdose in 2017. That's nearly 200 each day. These numbers spiked in recent years, largely due to a growing presence of deadly synthetic opioids—such as fentanyl—in our communities.

At nearly a dozen roundtable meetings in Oregon's Second District with patients, parents, medical providers, and law enforcement, Representative Walden received vital feedback on what is working and what needs to change in the fight against addiction. These meetings helped inform his legislation. This process began several years ago, culminating in the passage of the Comprehensive Addiction and Recovery Act and the 21<sup>st</sup> Century Cures Act, the \$4 billion appropriated in the 2018 government funding bill, and the \$6.7 billion included in a 2019 funding bill for the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS). Much of that money flows into communities in the form of grants, like the \$13 million the state of Oregon received through the State Targeted Response (STR) grants and the \$6.7 million that community health centers in Oregon received directly from HHS.

**H.R. 6, the SUPPORT for Patients and Communities Act**, will advance treatment and recovery initiatives, improve prevention, protect our communities, and bolster our efforts to fight deadly illicit synthetic drugs like fentanyl. The bill addresses several aspects of the opioid crisis:

### **Treatment and Recovery**

- Improve and expand access to treatment and recovery services
- Provide incentives for enhanced care, coordination, and innovation
- Establish comprehensive opioid recovery centers

### **Prevention**

- Encourage non-addictive opioid alternatives to treat pain
- Improve data to identify and help at-risk patients and families
- Address high prescribing rates while enhancing prescription drug monitoring programs

### **Protecting Communities**

- Give law enforcement tools to get dangerous drugs out of our communities
- Better intercept illicit opioids at international mail facilities
- Improve access to federal resources for local communities

### **Fighting Fentanyl**

- Better tackle ever-changing synthetic drugs
- Crack down on foreign shipments of illicit drugs
- Provide grants for local communities to combat fentanyl

## **Key Cabinet Officials Visit Oregon's Second District at Greg Walden's Invitation**

At Greg Walden's invitation, key members of the Trump Administration visited Oregon's Second District multiple times over the last two years. These meetings provided an important opportunity for people on the ground to talk directly to Trump Administration officials about how the actions of their agencies and departments are impacting the livelihoods of people in southern, central, and eastern Oregon.

### **United States Air Force Secretary Heather Wilson – Visit to Kingsley Field Air National Guard Base:**

Greg Walden invited United States Air Force Secretary Heather Wilson to Klamath Falls to tour Kingsley Field Air National Guard Base, hear about the broad community support for the base and the troops stationed there, and meet with local veterans. This was the first time since the base's construction in 1928 that the Secretary of the Air Force visited Kingsley Field.

**Interior Secretary Ryan Zinke – Tour of Cascade-Siskiyou National Monument Expansion:** Greg Walden invited Secretary of the Interior Ryan Zinke to southern Oregon to get a firsthand look at the Cascade-Siskiyou National Monument as part of the Interior Department's review of the Cascade-Siskiyou monument expansion.

**Energy Secretary Rick Perry – Tour of McNary Dam:** Energy Secretary Rick Perry came to eastern Oregon at Representative Walden's invitation to tour McNary Dam and discuss the importance of the Columbia and Snake River hydropower system to the region with local and regional leaders at an energy roundtable in Umatilla County.

**Agriculture Secretary Sonny Perdue – Meeting with Eastern Oregon Farmers and Briefing on Eagle Creek Fire Clean Up:** Greg Walden invited Agriculture Secretary Sonny Perdue to Sherman County and the Columbia Gorge to discuss agricultural issues facing farmers and ranchers, and to receive an update on recovery efforts after the Eagle Creek Fire.

**Federal Communications Commission (FCC) Chairman Ajit Pai – Eastern Oregon Rural Broadband Meetings:** Greg Walden invited FCC Chairman Ajit Pai to eastern Oregon to meet with rural health care providers, first responders, and community leaders to discuss how we can improve Internet connectivity for rural communities in Oregon's Second District.

**Food and Drug Administration Commissioner Scott Gottlieb – Central Oregon Opioid Roundtable and Ag Meeting:** Greg Walden invited Food and Drug Administration's (FDA) Commissioner Scott Gottlieb to Bend to meet with local law enforcement officers and medical providers to hear how Oregonians are working together to combat the opioid crisis and save lives. Walden also organized an on-the-farm tour and discussion with Commissioner Gottlieb and local farmers in central Oregon to discuss the implementation of the Food Safety Modernization Act.

## **Forest Management Reforms – SIGNED INTO LAW**

Greg Walden secured the most comprehensive forest management reforms in over a decade. This provided additional tools for better forest management to prevent catastrophic wildfires that choke Oregon's skies with smoke and threaten communities year after year. These tools build off the reforms included in the landmark Health Forests Restoration Act, which Walden helped pass into law.

### **Provisions:**

- 3,000-acre categorical exclusion to improve forest resiliency to wildfire
- 3,000-acre categorical exclusion for hazardous fuels reduction.
- Fire borrowing fix for eight years starting in 2020, to help end the vicious cycle of depleting resources for fire prevention to pay for fire suppression, which increases the risk of catastrophic wildfires year after year.
- Expands Healthy Forest Restoration Act authority for fuel and fire break projects.
- Give the Forest Service and BLM the ability to offer stewardship contracts with a 20-year term.
- Expands “Good Neighbor Policy” to help states with road maintenance, culverts, and other similar projects on Forest Service land. Also expanded Good Neighbor Authority to counties and tribes.

## **H.R. 1848 VA Medical Scribe Pilot Act of 2017 – SIGNED INTO LAW**

Greg Walden's legislation to improve the care Oregon veterans receive at the VA was signed into law on June 6, 2018. The VA Medical Scribe Pilot Act (H.R. 1848) will help unburden VA doctors by bringing medical scribes into the VA system, which will allow them to see more patients in a timely manner. Research in the private sector shows that the use of medical scribes resulted in a 59% increase in the number of patients physicians see per hour. Walden's VA Medical Scribe Pilot Act will help free up VA doctors to do what they do best: take care of veterans.

Charles Schmidt, Oregon's first National Commander of The American Legion, said of Walden's legislation after its passage in June of 2017, "the VA Medical Scribes Pilot Act of 2017 would greatly assist VA doctors in the course of their duties by providing medical scribes to alleviate their administrative burden. This would enable VA doctors to see more veterans per day and spend more time with each patient. Providing doctors medical scribes would help the VA improve the work environment, reduce physician burnout, and recruit and retain quality physicians."

Additionally, Walden heard from leadership at the VA in White City and Bend that implementing a scribes program within the VA system would improve the care Oregon's veterans receive.

### **What are medical scribes?**

Medical scribes help relieve physicians of administrative burdens such as paperwork and record keeping, which helps doctors focus their attention on caring for patients. Medical scribes can greatly benefit the efficiency of a medical practice while allowing practitioners to focus on their patients.

### **About the VA Medical Scribe Pilot Act**

The Veterans Affairs Medical Scribe Pilot Act of 2017 would create a two-year medical scribes pilot program under which VA will increase the use of medical scribes at ten VA medical centers.

Under this legislation, VA would be required to report to Congress every 180 days regarding the effects the pilot program has had on provider satisfaction, provider productivity, patient satisfaction, average wait time and the number of patients seen per day.

## Two-Year Reauthorization of Secure Rural Schools Funding – SIGNED INTO LAW

Continuing his efforts to support Oregon’s rural forested communities, Greg Walden secured two years of full Secure Rural Schools funding. As Chairman of the House Energy and Commerce Committee, Walden authorized the sale of a portion of the nation’s strategic petroleum reserve to pay for the extension of these vital funds for Oregon counties.

Secure Rural Schools funding helps provide resources for essential local services like schools, roads, and law enforcement in Oregon’s rural forested communities, which is a priority for Walden. Importantly, Walden secured a fix for the Secure Rural Schools program to allow local sheriff departments to use the funds for emergency and rescue equipment and training. Walden has heard from local officials across Oregon about the importance of these funds to their communities.

**Under the government funding measure, Secure Rural Schools** is reauthorized for two years, Fiscal Year 2017 and Fiscal Year 2018. The total estimated Fiscal Year 2017 payment for Oregon from SRS is \$56 million and is in addition to \$27 million already paid in timber receipts. The Fiscal Year 2018 SRS payment for Oregon is estimated to be \$80 million. The Fiscal Year 2017 breakdown in Baker, Crook, Deschutes, Grant, Harney, Jackson, Jefferson, Josephine, Klamath, Lake, Morrow, Union, Wallowa, Wasco, and Wheeler counties (for all titles of SRS) is:

County	Estimated Total Secure Rural Schools Payment for FY 17 & FY 18
Baker	\$828,817
Crook	\$2,662,361.10
Deschutes	\$2,340,764.60
Grant	\$6,276,770.65
Harney	\$2,615,514.20
Hood River	\$1,201,078.00
Jackson	\$9,463,006.55
Jefferson	\$2,286,592.60
Josephine	\$7,760,350.21
Klamath	\$12,790,528.81
Lake	\$3,799,243.55
Morrow	\$246,898.05
Union	\$1,451,015.78
Wallowa	\$1,558,287.35
Wasco	\$1,409,612.95
Wheeler	\$778,021.25

## **Drought Relief for Klamath Basin Farmers – SIGNED INTO LAW**

Greg Walden worked hard to secure needed drought relief measures for Klamath Basin irrigators to help them survive an incredibly challenging water year in Oregon. Walden included a provision in the Water Resources Development Act that authorizes \$10 million annually for four years to the Bureau of Reclamation (BoR) to implement needed drought relief measures for the \$181 million agriculture economy in the Klamath Basin.

In a government funding measure that was signed into law in March, Walden worked to secure more than \$10 million in emergency aid and worked with the Office of Management and Budget to get it released to BoR. The provisions secured in the Water Resources Development Act provides direction to BoR on how the agency is to spend the funds acquired in the government funding measure and any funds that are appropriated in succeeding years.

Walden worked to give BoR the authority to spend \$10 million each year over the next four years to implement measures such as:

- Groundwater pumping to increase the flexibility, reliability, and efficient use of water in the Klamath Basin;
- Temporary and voluntary land idling on BoR property to make additional water available; and,
- Facilitating the movement of non-Project water through BoR facilities to assist irrigators.



## **Children's Health Insurance Program (CHIP) – SIGNED INTO LAW**

Representative Walden is a longtime advocate of the Children's Health Insurance Program (CHIP). That's why earlier this year, he shepherded through Congress the longest and most generous extension of CHIP in the program's history. This extension came in two parts – first with a six-year extension (longer than the previous record extension of five years) in January, then an additional four-year extension in February. Together, these bills assure stability and certainty of health insurance for the 122,700 children and pregnant women in Oregon who rely on CHIP.

**What is CHIP?** The Children's Health Insurance Program is an important bipartisan program that provides coverage for nearly 9 million low-income children and eligible pregnant women. These are families who are just above the federal poverty level but still qualify for federal assistance, including Medicaid in some cases. The program is funded through a formula that matches federal dollars with state resources.

## **Community Health Center Funding – SIGNED INTO LAW**

Representative Walden visited ten community health centers in Oregon's Second District over the past few years, and saw first-hand how important health centers are in rural communities. As Chairman of the House Energy & Commerce Committee, Representative Walden led the charge to extend and increase funding for CHCs in Oregon across the country. In the Bipartisan Budget Act of 2018, CHCs received their highest funding level in history.

**What are Community Health Centers?** Community Health Centers (CHCs), or Federally Qualified Health Centers (FQHCs) are community-based, patient-centered organizations that provide comprehensive health services to medically-underserved populations, regardless of their ability to pay. There are 12 CHCs with 63 delivery sites in Oregon's Second District, serving over 240,000 patients. Nationwide, one in 13 people rely on a CHC for their health needs – over 24 million patients. The primary funding source for health centers is the CHC Fund, which was previously funded at \$3.6 billion/year and is dispersed to individual health centers through grants administered by the Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA). Under Representative Walden's bill, the CHC Fund was increased to \$3.8 billion for FY2018, and \$4.0 billion for FY2019.

## **Special Diabetes Program – SIGNED INTO LAW**

As a longtime member of the Diabetes caucus, Representative Walden worked on a bipartisan basis to advance a two-year extension of the Special Diabetes Program, as well as the Special Diabetes Program for Indians.

**What is the Special Diabetes Program?** The **Special Diabetes Program (SDP)** is a critical resource that provides \$300 million annually for type 1 diabetes (T1D) research at the National Institutes of Health (NIH), the country's premier medical research agency, and to fund treatment, education and prevention programs for American Indian and Alaska Native populations, who are disproportionately affected by type 2 diabetes.

## **H.R. 3387, Drinking Water System Improvement Act – SIGNED INTO LAW**

Greg Walden led the effort in Congress to pass into law legislation that seeks to strengthen the tools used to modernize drinking water infrastructure in Oregon and throughout the country. The Drinking Water System Improvement Act (H.R. 3387) is bipartisan legislation that will help address aging drinking water systems that need to be upgraded, especially in rural communities in Oregon. This legislation modernizes the Drinking Water State Revolving Fund (DWSRF), which helps local communities in Oregon provide their residents with safe drinking water, comply with drinking water rules, and improve infrastructure.

Across eastern Oregon, communities are relying on the DWSRF for upgrading their drinking water infrastructure so families have safe water to drink when they turn on the faucet. This program is used for projects such as upgrading centuries-old water pipes and for constructing new water treatment facilities.

### **About the Drinking Water System Improvement Act**

This bill authorizes more than \$4.4 billion over three years for the Drinking Water State Revolving Loan Fund program.

Other key provisions to improve safe drinking water include:

- Improving accountability by aiding states and utilities with compliance and asset management.
- Protecting communities by updating anti-terrorism and resilience measures at public water systems.
- Enhancing transparency for consumers about the quality of their drinking water.
- Authorization of \$100 million over the next two fiscal years for areas affected by natural disasters that need help repairing their drinking water systems or hooking up to other ones to obtain potable drinking water.

## **Promoting Hydropower Development – SIGNED INTO LAW**

Hydropower plays an important role in the Pacific Northwest's energy mix, generating 43% of the electricity in Oregon. There is great opportunity in the region and across the country for adding renewable power generation to existing water infrastructure.

Greg Walden secured important reforms into law to streamline hydropower permitting to help get projects completed to generate clean, baseload hydropower.

These reforms include streamlining permits for hydropower projects on existing irrigation canals to encourage further development of these hydropower systems.

Central Oregon Irrigation District's hydropower project near Bend generates power off piped irrigation water, conserving water in the process. The reforms Walden helped pass into law will streamline the implementation process for similar projects in Oregon and across the country.

Also included were provisions making it easier to add power generation to existing non-powered dam structures. These important reforms will help take advantage of our hydropower resources, without sacrificing important environmental protections.

These reforms were included in the Water Resources Development Act, a landmark water package that combined several bills from Walden's Energy and Commerce Committee that passed the House, including:

- ❖ H.R. 2880, the Promoting Closed-Loop Pumped Storage Hydropower Act;
- ❖ H.R. 2872, the Promoting Hydropower Development at Existing Nonpowered Dams Act;
- ❖ H.R. 2786, To Amend the Federal Power Act with Respect to the Criteria and Process to Qualify as a Qualifying Conduit Hydropower Facility; and,
- ❖ Key provisions from H.R. 3043, the Hydropower Policy Modernization Act.

### These bills:

- Encourage the use of clean, baseload hydropower by streamlining the regulatory permitting process.
- Get new hydropower projects to market faster, saving time and money.
- Remove barriers to investments in hydropower, which create jobs and provide low-cost, emissions-free electricity to consumers.

## **Reauthorization of the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) – SIGNED INTO LAW**

In August 18, 2017, the President signed into law H.R. 2430, the FDA Reauthorization Act (FDARA) of 2017. Representative Walden introduced this comprehensive legislation in May of 2017, and ushered it through Congress and into law. Walden's bill was passed unanimously in the House and 94-1 in the Senate. This law helps lower the cost of important medication and devices, streamlines FDA process to get innovative cures and treatments to patients faster, and ensures the United States remains the global leader in medical innovation.

**What is FDARA?** The FDA Reauthorization Act involves renewing and updating four FDA user fee programs to fund the FDA. These programs establish payments from participating drug and medical device companies to help fund the agency's safety and efficacy testing processes for new products coming to market. There are four user fee agreements: GDUFA (generic drugs), PDUFA (prescription drugs), BsUFA (biosimilars), and MDUFA (medical devices). This reauthorization brings stability and certainty to the market for the next five years, and makes significant improvements on the previous reauthorization that will benefit patients.

### **Addressing Generic Drug Competition, Lowering Costs for Patients**

- GDUFA ensures FDA has the resources and new authorities to expeditiously review and approve generic drugs.
- A bipartisan provision creates a new expedited review pathway for generic drug applications where there is either a shortage or lack of competition in the market.
- FDA has already used these new authorities to approve the first-ever generic version of the EpiPen auto-injector for the emergency treatment of allergic reactions. EpiPen has come under particular scrutiny as millions of patients who rely on this product have seen their costs rise exponentially over the past few years.

### **Affordable Hearing Aids for Seniors**

- In recent years, new technologies have emerged that have led to much more affordable devices for helping patients with mild or moderate hearing loss. These products have been developed outside the existing structure for prescription hearing aids, which can be cost-prohibitive for many patients. Until FDARA, there was no consistency in labeling, safety, or efficacy standards, causing confusion for patients.
- The bill requires the FDA to categorize certain hearing aids as over-the-counter and issue a common set of safety standards and regulations regarding those hearing aids.
- This will create an affordable option for many seniors and patients with mild or moderate hearing loss.

### **Boosting Biosimilar Development and Competition**

- Biosimilars are essentially generic versions of biologic drugs – a growing class of treatments that can help treat complex diseases but can also be very expensive for manufacturers to develop and for patients to buy.
- The United States has lagged behind Europe in the expansion of its biosimilar market, causing higher prices for patients.
- FDARA reduces barriers to entry for biosimilar developers and encourages more robust participation in this market to increase competition and give patients more options.

## **Mt. Hood Cooper Spur Land Exchange – SIGNED INTO LAW**

Bipartisan legislation authored by Oregon Reps. Greg Walden and Earl Blumenauer, and Sens. Ron Wyden and Jeff Merkley to help protect the local water source for the City of Hood River and upper Hood River Valley, while promoting economic growth and family wage jobs for the local communities was signed into law by President Trump. The Mt. Hood Cooper Spur Land Exchange Clarification Act (H.R. 699) directs the Forest Service to move forward with a land exchange first approved by Congress in 2009.

The 2009 law authorizes a land exchange to allow development of 120 acres of federal land in Government Camp in exchange for 770 acres of non-federal land at Cooper Spur. That law clearly stated that the Forest Service should complete the land exchange within 16 months. However, the exchange has yet to be completed, creating frustration and uncertainty in the local communities around Mt. Hood.

Completing the Cooper Spur land exchange is key to protecting Crystal Springs, the water source for the City of Hood River and the upper Hood River Valley, while also encouraging economic and job growth around Mt. Hood. H.R. 699, introduced by Walden and Rep. Earl Blumenauer (D-Portland), expresses Congress' intent that the Forest Service move quickly to complete the exchange, addresses disagreements over a conservation easement, and allows for a more transparent appraisal process

## **Rural Health Provisions in the 115<sup>th</sup> Congress**

As Chairman of the House Energy & Commerce Committee, Representative Walden had the chance to bring to the forefront many issues of particular importance to patients in rural areas.

**National Health Service Corps – SIGNED INTO LAW** – the National Health Service Corps awards scholarship and loan repayment to primary care providers who agree to practice in health professional shortage areas with underserved populations. Many of these providers work in community health centers. The program was reauthorized for two years in the Bipartisan Budget Act of 2018.

**Medicare Therapy Caps Repeal – SIGNED INTO LAW** – Medicare beneficiaries used to face a cap for all outpatient therapy services, such as physical therapy, speech-language pathology, and occupational therapy. These caps have been continuously delayed by Congress to avoid beneficiary harm, but Representative Walden led the push to fully fund a permanent repeal of these caps.

**Rural Ambulance Add-on Payments – SIGNED INTO LAW** – In order to ensure access to emergency ambulance services in rural communities, Representative Walden successfully secured a five-year extension of Medicare add-on payments. The 3-percent rural and 22.6-percent super rural add-on payments keep ambulance companies viable in remote areas—including much of Oregon’s second district—where lower volume of rides and increased travel costs make typical Medicare reimbursement insufficient. Representative Walden introduced legislation extending these critical Medicare payments in previous years, and as Chairman of the Energy & Commerce Committee was able to usher the extension into law.

**Disproportionate Share Hospital (DSH) Payments Cut Delay – SIGNED INTO LAW** – Hospitals that serve a large share of Medicaid patients are eligible to receive bonus payments from the federal government to compensate them for their work with underserved populations. Under the Affordable Care Act, these hospitals were set to receive a significant cut in these “DSH Payments.” Representative Walden delayed these cuts for the next two years, saving hospitals in Oregon from \$6.8 million in reduced payment for their services.

**Telehealth Expansion under Medicare – SIGNED INTO LAW** – Telehealth is part of the future of health care, and can be especially beneficial in rural areas where specialists and advanced medical professionals can be hours away. A new law championed by Representative Walden will expand the ability of stroke patients to consult with their doctor via telemedicine.

**Nursing Workforce Reauthorization – PASSED THE HOUSE** – this bill, passed through Representative Walden’s committee with his strong support, extends programs that support the recruitment, retention, and advanced education of nurses. The bill also extends grants, scholarships, and loan repayments to help eligible skilled nursing professionals manage the cost of their training.

## Reauthorization of Federal Communications Commission (FCC) – SIGNED INTO LAW

Greg Walden is working to expand broadband to rural communities in eastern Oregon and bridge the digital divide. Greg Walden helped pass into law the first reauthorization of the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) in more than two decades. This reauthorization will help boost development of next-generation wireless broadband known as 5G, and improves FCC's ability to expand broadband infrastructure in rural America.

Greg Walden helped pass the RAY BAUM'S Act into law. This legislation is named after La Grande native and champion of telecommunications policy, Ray Baum, who served as the Energy and Commerce Committee Staff Director during Walden's chairmanship.

RAY BAUM'S Act is a **bipartisan, bicameral law that** reauthorizes the FCC and supports the deployment of next-generation wireless services. The RAY BAUM'S Act will:

- Reauthorize the FCC and include reforms to ensure the commission continues to improve its efficiency and transparency.
- Boost the development of next-generation 5G wireless broadband by identifying more spectrum – both licensed and unlicensed – for private sector use and reducing the red tape associated with building wireless networks.
- Authorize a repack fund to address the shortfall in funding available to relocate broadcasters being displaced following the successful Incentive Auction, and set up new relocation funds for translators, low-power television, and radio stations that will be impacted by the repack – supplemented by a consumer education fund.
- Include a spectrum auction deposit “fix” which allows the FCC to deposit upfront payments from spectrum bidders directly with the U.S. Treasury.
- Direct the FCC to craft a national policy for unlicensed spectrum that includes certain specific considerations and recommendations.
- Advance proposals that would help the FCC and law enforcement protect consumers from fraudulent telephone calls, and to educate Americans about their options to stop these illegal calls.

## **H.R. 3017, the Brownfields Enhancement, Economic Redevelopment, and Reauthorization Act of 2017 – SIGNED INTO LAW**

As Chairman of the House Energy and Commerce Committee, Representative Walden led the reauthorization of the Environmental Protection Agency's (EPA) Brownfields Program. Communities across Oregon use the EPA's Brownfields Program to clean up old industrial sites in order to put them into active and productive use. The Old Mill District in Bend, an old lumber mill that was revitalized into a vibrant retail and restaurant district, is Oregon's most famous brownfield. H.R. 3017 will ensure communities in Oregon and throughout America are able to continue using the Brownfields Program to stimulate their local economies.

**What does the EPA Brownfields Program do?** The EPA Brownfields Program provides grants, tools, and guidance to help states, communities and other stakeholders in the assessment, cleanup, and redevelopment of brownfields. The program was originally authorized in 2002.

As of May 1, 2017, the EPA Brownfields Program has assessed 26,722 sites, and leveraged 124,760 jobs and almost \$24 billion for cleanup and redevelopment. On average, over \$16 is leveraged for every EPA brownfields dollar spent and 8.5 jobs are leveraged per \$100,000 of EPA brownfields funds.

**H.R. 3017, the Brownfields Enhancement, Economic Redevelopment, and Reauthorization Act** reauthorizes and makes several improvements to this important program that will result in more sites being cleaned up. The bill:

- Creates multipurpose grants, which among other things will allow communities to use grant funds for both assessment and remediation and to clean up more than one site in a designated area.
- Provides liability relief for states/local units of government that take title to contaminated property voluntarily by virtue of their function as a sovereign which will allow states and local governments to acquire abandoned or tax delinquent property that is contaminated and to clean up the property without fear of liability.
- Increases the limit for remediation grants from \$200,000 to \$500,000 (with an exemption for up to \$750,000), which will allow communities to do more cleanup using grant funds.
- Allows for the recovery of limited administrative costs.
- Clarifies when a site contaminated by petroleum may be a brownfield site.
- Expands grant eligibility for non-profit organizations and for publicly owned brownfield sites that acquired the property prior to January 11, 2002, which will put more parties into the mix of persons eligible for grant funding which will result in more sites being cleaned up.
- Provides for additional grant funds that the States will be able to distribute to Indian tribes, small, rural, and disadvantaged communities.