



ASSOCIATION OF OREGON RECYCLERS

Advancing Sustainable Materials Management, Together



AOR ANNUAL REPORT 2025

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NOTE FROM THE BOARD CHAIR

This year, as I reflect on AOR's work in 2025, what stands out most to me is the camaraderie, collaboration, and collegiality within the AOR community. I've had multiple board members from other state recycling organizations comment on how great the Oregon events are, and how they are working to replicate them. First time attendees at the conference and forums also shared with me how welcome they felt at our events and how easy it was to engage with our members. AOR is truly the best, so thanks to all of you for contributing to our culture of inclusion.

I would especially like to thank our past and present board members, as well as all those who volunteer for AOR committees. This year we had a significant turnover on the board. Those leaving the board in 2025 included Eric Ahnmark, Laura Leebrick, Holly Stinkorb, Jeff Murray, and Danielle Womble. This group helped pilot AOR through many challenging decisions and the implementation of the Recycling Modernization act, and I learned a great deal from each of them. Thanks also to those who have volunteered to take up the reins, which include Nick Fahey, Nathan Smith, Erin Stein, Lisa Kneller, and most recently, Dan Blue. I look forward to working with this new board along with our ongoing board members Tom Egleston, Elizabeth Cole, and Lexi Howell. Many thanks to you all.

Contributions from our board, our committees, and our members made possible an impressive list of highlights that include:

- Working to nearly pass a better EPR bill and, in doing so, setting a strong foundation that provided a clear path for passage in the 2026 legislative session.
- Completion of the grant funded overhaul and Spanish transcreation of Recycling 101 course.
- A fully sold out 2025 Sustainable Oregon Conference with record sponsorships (for the third consecutive year) and a growing partnership with the Tribal Solid Waste Advisory Network.
- Highly attended Spring and Fall forums supporting the ongoing implementation of the Plastic Pollution and Recycling Modernization Act.

I look forward to seeing you all at our 2026 events and, especially in Eugene, where we will return for the Sustainable Oregon Conference for the first time since 2018.

Sincerely,



Joel Schoening – AOR Board Chair

AOR HIGHLIGHTS





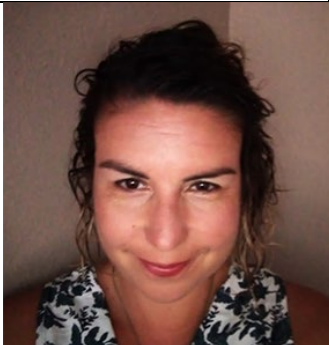

The Association of Oregon Recyclers (AOR) is a nonprofit membership organization that has been dedicated to supporting waste reduction, reuse, recycling, and composting in Oregon since 1977.

- The annual conference was held in Bend with over 250 attendees.
- R101's move to an improved platform was completed along with transcreation into Spanish.
- Total net revenue generated in 2025 did not meet anticipated goals, due to increasing event expenses. But we had another record-breaking sponsorship year!
- Other improvements included moving the website to a new platform, hopefully creating a better experience for our members and an updated logo.



AOR 2025 Annual Conference at the Riverhouse in Bend, Oregon.

AOR BOARD

			
Chair	Legislative Chair	Secretary	Member-at-Large
Joel Schoening Exp. 2026	Thomas Egleston Exp. 2026	Elizabeth Cole Exp. 2027	Dan Blue Exp 2026
RRS	Metro	City of Beaverton	Recology
			
Vice-chair	Member-at-Large	Member-at-Large	
Lexi Howell Exp. 2027	Maya Buelow Exp. 2026	Lisa Kneller Exp. 2027	
North Lincoln Sanitary	Lane County	URT	
			
Member-at-Large	Treasurer	Member-at-Large	
Nathan Smith Exp. 2027	Erin Stein Exp. 2027	Nick Fahey Exp. 2027	
Waste Connections	Washington County	SOS	

LEGISLATIVE SUMMARY

AOR is committed to supporting policies that promote high-quality recycling and composting, thoughtful consumption, and producer responsibility. We believe the producers that manufacture and sell products to Oregonians should have a role in how products are managed at the end of their usable life. Equity, community partnerships, and community restoration are also centered in our guiding principles because we believe the reuse, repair, and recycling economy should benefit all Oregonians, including communities of color and rural areas. AOR's legislative activities are key to achieving this vision and that is one reason why your membership is so important – it makes our lobbying activities possible.

The Oregon Legislative Session in 2025 was a busy odd-year regular session, meaning it lasted 160 days and was packed full of bills relevant to AOR membership. AOR experienced its busiest legislative session to date, tracking over 50 bills in 2025 and taking official positions on 16. The Legislative Chair and members of the Legislative Committee provided direct input and testimony during hearings on seven bills with top priorities focusing on advancing extended producer responsibility for batteries and maintaining the integrity of the Recycling Modernization Act (RMA).

Support

AOR's top priority bill for 2025 regarded extended producer responsibility for batteries (HB 2062). HB 2062 would require battery manufacturers to join a producer responsibility organization to manage the collection and recycling of consumer batteries. The bill was developed by a coalition including Metro, Lane County, and AOR and passed out of the House, Energy and Environment Committee on a bipartisan 11-1 vote. However, following referral to the Joint Ways and Means Committee, the bill did not move forward to a final floor vote.

Additional bills that AOR supported, and passed, in 2025 included an update to Right to Repair (SB 550) that added wheelchairs to the growing inventory of devices that manufacturers must support repair of and an updated plastic bag ban (SB 551) that will completely phase out single-use plastic bags at retail. AOR also supported several bills that did not pass, including HB 2960 which would have prohibited 'chemical recycling' facilities from being sited in Oregon, and SB 680 which would have regulated 'greenwashing' and other false environmental claims.

Opposed

AOR opposed many bills this session, none of which passed, including:

- HB 3940 – placing a surcharge of beverage containers to fund wildfire prevention and response
- HB 3780 – exempting newspaper from the RMA
- HB 3973 – exempting paint containers from the RMA
- HB 2921 – adjusting siting requirements for full-service container deposit redemption centers
- HB 2100 – requiring a study on how banning expanded polystyrene foodservice ware impacted small businesses
- HB 3244 – rolling back air quality standards for municipal solid waste incinerators
- SB 17 – defining energy generated by municipal solid waste incinerators as ‘renewable energy’

Neutral

Additional notable legislation that did not pass, which AOR remained neutral on, included efforts to require large food generating businesses to collect food for composting (HB 3018), add wine bottles to the Bottle Bill (HB 3433), and delay RMA end market standards (HB 3981).

Bills that did pass, which AOR took neutral position on, included adjustments Bottle Bill container redemption standards (SB 992), permitting sharps and non-hazardous pharmaceutical waste to be combined in certain containers (SB 139), and increasing landfill emission monitoring in Benton County by utilizing ‘advanced methane detection technologies’ (SB 726).

Looking Ahead – 2026 Legislative Session

The 2026 legislative session will be an even-year, short session lasting just 35 days. AOR is anticipating a much less crowded field of legislation in the short session as individual legislators are limited to introducing two bills each. AOR's top priority, Battery EPR, will return in 2026 with hopes of continuing the momentum from 2025 and making it across the finish line. Additional bills that would impact membership may also be considered in 2026, including a revisit of the statewide food waste collection requirement and additional efforts to exempt certain products or delay certain aspects of the RMA.

AOR is thankful to the volunteer members of the legislative committee and all membership for your continued support and engagement in legislative efforts. With support from membership, like you, across the state we are excited to push priority legislation over the finish line in the coming sessions!

EQUITY, DIVERSITY, & INCLUSION SUMMARY

In 2020, the Board formed an internal team interested in exploring how structural racism is influencing AOR's own processes and opportunities in our industry. This team became the Board's Equity Committee. The committee is working to identify how AOR could better incorporate equity into the broader goals of the organization, operations and decisions, and what role AOR could play to become a more active leader for the industry in this space.

AOR has been contracting with Start Consulting since 2022 to support and guide this work.

2022-23 | Development of a 2-year work plan with the following focus areas:

- Work around scholarships for the conference
- Create equity content for the website
- Apply an equity lens to the AOR conference.

2024 | Collaboration yielded progress towards work plan priority topics

- Recruitment of AOR members to join the committee
- Development of two living documents; the AOR Equity Statement and the EDI committee Charter, both publicly available on the AOR website.
- Formation of subcommittees to make improvements to the equity content on the AOR website and to elevate EDI considerations for the annual conference.
 - Created an Equity tab/ "Why is AOR talking about Equity" paragraph on the page which links to the living documents mentioned above (EDI Committee - Charter and AOR Equity Statement).
 - Focused effort for the 2024 conference was to lift up the Black community recognition of Juneteenth.
 - Hosted the pre-conference reception at Assembly Brewing Company, a Black-owned brewery, and recognized this in the email invitation to the reception and on a poster at the event
 - Created an EDI conference webpage that linked to the conference page and

included a resource guide with a map of Black-owned restaurants, coffee shops, and bars near the conference venue

- Displayed the Vanport traveling exhibit from the Oregon Historical Society in the conference common area

2025 | A Year of Learning and Deeper Member Engagement

- Start Consulting interviewed committee members individually at the end of 2024 to inform best next steps forward for 2025, and Start Consulting began co-facilitating committee meetings in 2025.
- The committee:
 - Paused on workplan items to focus on building relationships, trust, and knowledge within the group.
 - Attended EDI training across the region and shared out with the group to expand understanding.
 - Provided EDI content for the quarterly AOR newsletter.
 - Collaborated with Start Consulting to bring well attended BIPOC and LGBTQ+ affinity and ally sessions to the 2025 conference where members expressed interest in resource groups.
 - Created map resource for Sustainable Oregon 2025 conference attendees to locate BIPOC, LGBTQ, and Woman-owned businesses near the conference location in Bend.

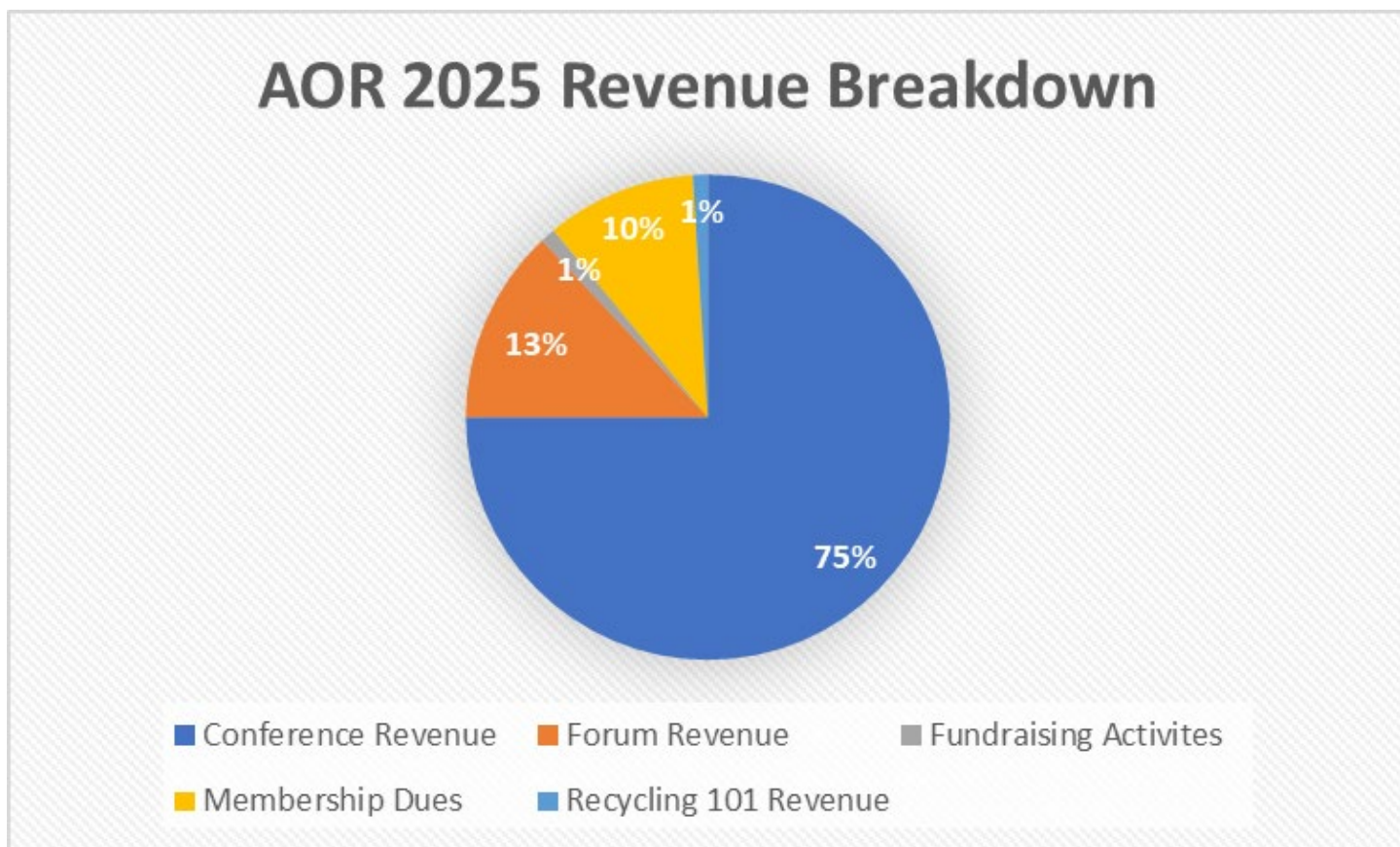
2026 | Looking Ahead

In 2026, AOR will continue working with Start Consulting, and the committee is in the process of planning for the year ahead. Some potential projects include, but are not limited to, organizing resource groups for AOR members around EDI, recruitment and diversification of the AOR board, development of an equity handbook for the board, targeted recruitment for conference scholarships, and applying an equity lens to all conference and forum content.

This work is ongoing and will be an additional lens through which AOR evaluates its initiatives and its members' needs in the future. AOR is committed to creating a more inclusive environment that allows us to reach more people because of our EDI work. AOR is excited to continue recruiting members to serve on the EDI committee, which currently has six committee members, in addition to one AOR board member, who assists the board in broadening the discussion and impact of its' EDI work.

FINANCIAL SUMMARY

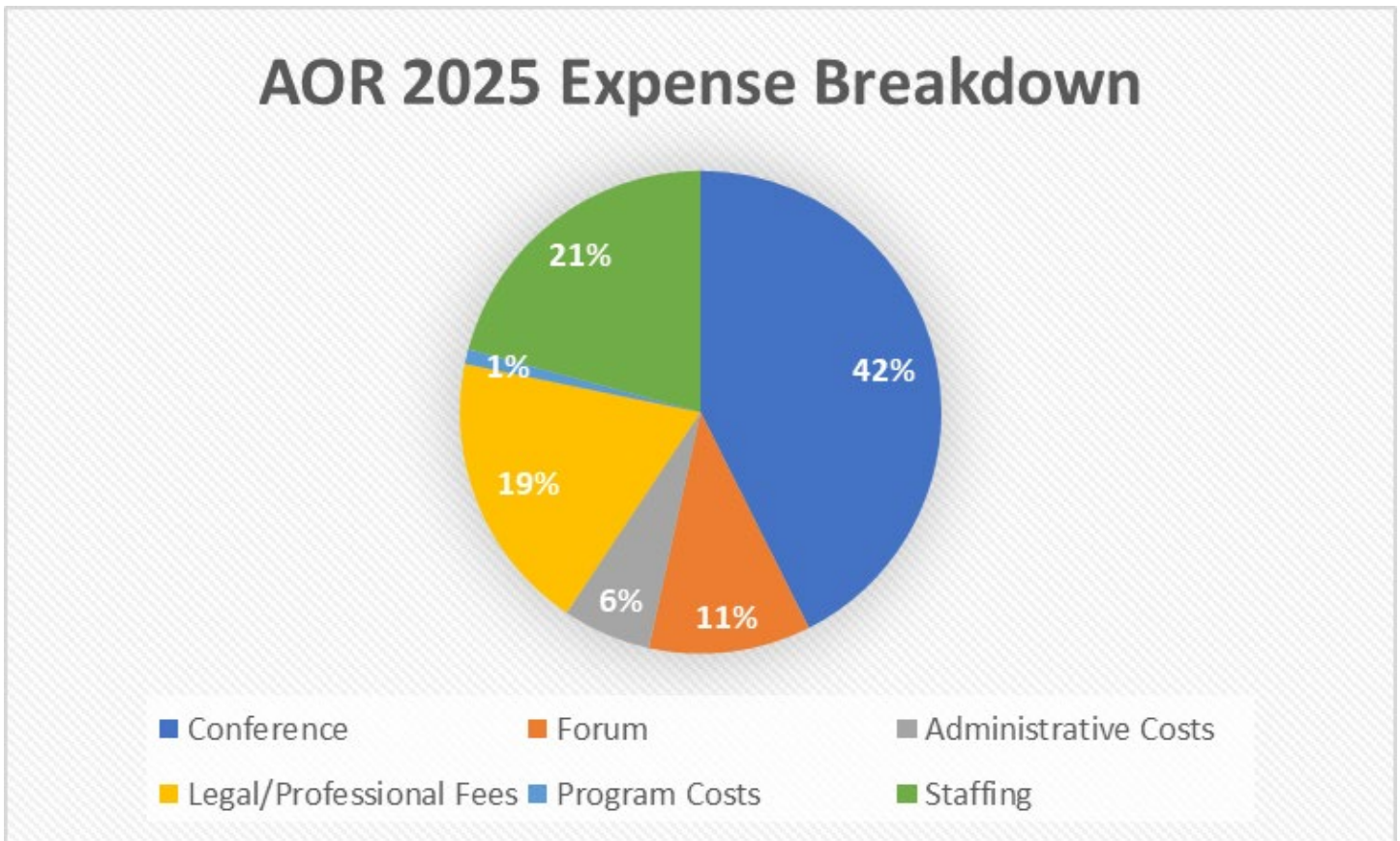
The Board-approved budget for 2025 was optimistic after ending 2024 with a net-positive income for the year. AOR received grant funds from Metro's Investment and Innovation Grant Program at the end of 2023 that was used to fund revisions to our online Recycling 101 course with OSU. AOR hosted two in-person forums in addition to the annual conference. The events were very well attended with generous sponsorships. However, expenses outpaced revenue, which resulted in AOR missing budget goals. Due to AOR's strong cash position going into 2025, AOR remains in the black despite seeing a negative net revenue in 2025.



AOR allocates expenses into four categories:

1. Program Costs - expenses related to carrying out AOR's mission, and that result in goods or services being provided.
2. Administrative Expenses - expenses related to AOR's day-to-day business such as software costs, bank fees etc.
3. Staffing - staff expenses to manage AOR.

4. Legal & Professional Expenses - expenses paid to support AOR's programmatic work including but not limited to our lobbying and EDI efforts.



Despite 2025 total revenue percent over 2024, overall expenditures also declined 8%, and AOR ended the year with net positive revenue at the close of 2025.

SUSTAINABLE OREGON CONFERENCE HIGHLIGHTS

Sustainable Oregon 2025 was held in Bend, Oregon at the Riverhouse Lodge, June 23rd-June 25th. The conference hosted over 250 attendees, 25 speakers, 18 exhibitors and was generously supported by 27 sponsors. This was a big year for Oregon due to implementation of the Recycling Modernization Act (RMA), the first of its kind in the nation. Our conference spanned three days this year with local tours offered on Monday, June 23rd and concurrent sessions and plenaries taking place on Tuesday, June 24th and a half day Wednesday, June 25th.

The Conference Committee put together three tours for attendees to choose from that included: Discover the Journey of Waste – Knott Landfill and Worthy Garden Club/Hopservatory, Waste Reduction Stars – Hayden Homes Amphitheater and Deschutes Brewery, and Creative DIY & Local, Sustainable Brews – DIY Cave & Bevel Craft Brewing. Each tour was jam packed with information and we are incredibly grateful to our tour guides who were able to provide intimate

details about their respective organizations.

For the first time, the conference hosted Tribal Solid Waste Advisory Network's (TSWAN) annual meeting and updates. The conference also offered an LGBTQ Affinity Group & Ally Training, along with a BIPOC Affinity Group & Ally Training during the tours. Our welcome lunch following these events was held in one of the ballrooms at Riverhouse Lodge.

After the Monday night dinner and reception, attendees headed to the GoodLife Brewing Event sponsored by one of AOR's members to network and socialize before the long day of sessions. On Tuesday, attendees were given the ability to sign up for a round table discussion, which lead into the Sustainable Oregon Awards, Board Member nominations, the dinner reception and silent auction, and finally ended with a Casino Night Event.

Our sessions consisted of a diverse variety of topics including the Recycling Modernization Act, legislative updates from the 2025 long session, contamination reduction strategies, per-and-polyfluoroalkyl substances (PFAS) regulation, a "how-to" on communicating complex topics, reuse in Oregon, composting biosolids, and an informational session on TSWAN.

This year we welcomed two plenaries and eleven concurrent sessions that received very positive feedback:

Plenaries:

- Where we've been, where we are, and where we are going? Next Steps for the RMA
- Legislative Update

Concurrent Sessions:

- Can You Talk Like a 5th Grader? The power of simple words to communicate complex topics in materials management and beyond
- Tribal Materials Management Program Successes
- How will physical climate change affect your operation – a peer learning exercise.
- PFAS Regulatory and Technical Essentials for Materials Re-Use
- Q&A with CAA
- The Future of Reuse: Advocacy, Action, and Innovation
- Contamination Reductions Strategies from Across the US and Canada: Research Evaluation and on the Ground Learnings

- Focus on Reuse; Community Innovation Fund; Metro Grant for ReClaim It!
- Composting Biosolids on the Oregon Coast - from a waste byproduct to valuable resource
- The RePatch Program: Achieving Sustainability through the “Tripple Bottom Thread”
- Demo of Service Providers Portal with CAA

2025 SUSTAINABLE OREGON AWARDS

The 2025 Sustainable Oregon Awards were presented to four trailblazing organizations and individuals who have set a new standard for material management and environmental stewardship across the state. The 2025 recipients were selected for their exceptional commitment to waste prevention, innovative recycling processes, and deep integration of diversity, equity, and inclusion within their sustainability programs. By going beyond their standard duties to reduce solid waste and promote circular economies, these winners exemplify the vision and determination required to lead Oregon toward a more sustainable future.

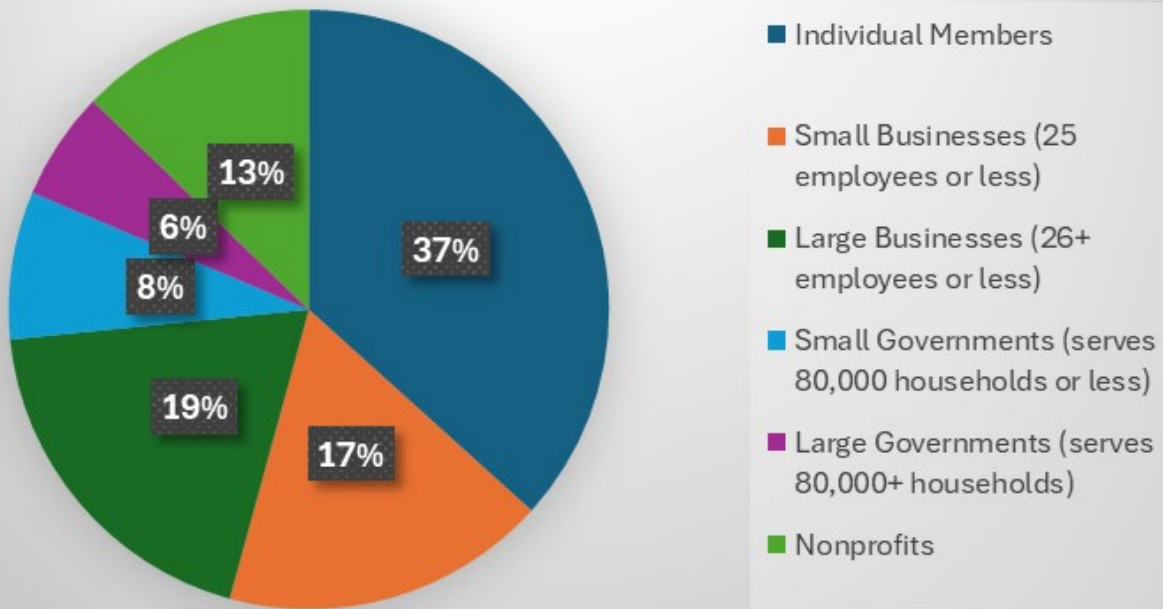
- Brothers Hauling, Corvallis, Oregon
- John Brandsberg, Metro South Transfer Station
- Resource Recycling Systems (RRS)
- Shannon Martin, City of Gresham

You can read more about the 2025 winners on our [website](#).

MEMBERSHIP SUMMARY

AOR members come from all sectors of the industry – collection, processing, manufacturing, consulting, education and outreach, government, and nonprofits. With over 500 members, AOR continues to set the industry standard for encouraging sustainable legislative initiatives and awareness about industry news and trends, educational workshops and conferences, legislative advocacy, and a large, resourceful network of people and organizations that work together to advance a common mission. We love our members and could not do the great work we do without their financial support and contributions.

AOR 2025 Membership Breakdown



AOR COMMITTEES

Committees are small groups comprised of board members, staff, and dedicated AOR members who come together to provide expert guidance on legislative, event and conference planning, membership, and our equity, diversity, and inclusion work. Not only do they help move critical AOR work forward, but they also provide guidance and a diversity of perspectives. A sincere thank you to everyone that volunteers with AOR!

Conference	Legislative	EDI
Chair: Lexi Howell	Chair: Thomas Egleston	Chair: Maya Buelow
Members <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Amy Roth • Danielle Womble • Denise Barnes • Elaine Cole • Catherine Ashcraft • Holly Stirnkorb • Stephanie Kraus 	Members <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Angie Marzano (Government) • Dave Larmouth (Hauler/Processor) • Sara Kirby (Government) • Sonya Carlson (Non-profit) 	Members <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Patiance Hamilton • Stephanie Bowen • Christy Chow • Paige DuBose • Angela Dunham • Dan Leif • Kate Taylor

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Kavi Chokshi • Susan Baker • Jaylen Schmitt • Maurece Underwood • Monica Kelly • Sammy Salgado • Travis Comfort • Sally Spur • Laura Markley 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cindy Rogers (Hauler/Processor) • Devon Morales (Hauler/Processor) • Jerry Powell (Individual) • Kavi Chokshi (Non-profit) • Susan Baker (Government) • Brandon Lesowske (Academic Inst.) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Amy Roth
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THANK YOU, OUTGOING BOARD MEMBERS!

Thank you to our four outgoing board members in 2025: Laura Leebrick, Jeff Murray, Danielle Womble, and Holly Stirnorb, who concluded their service at the Annual Conference and Board Elections in June 2025.

Laura has been deeply involved with AOR over the years, serving on multiple committees and completing four terms as Treasurer. Jeff has contributed to the AOR Board on several occasions throughout his distinguished career, most recently serving two terms in support of the EDI Committee. Danielle volunteered on the conference planning committee for several years before stepping into the role of Conference Chair. After guiding AOR through four successful conferences, she officially stepped off the board and continues to generously volunteer for the annual conference. Holly, like Jeff, has served on the AOR Board multiple times over the course of

her career, most recently completing two terms supporting the EDI Committee.

We are grateful for their leadership, dedication, and lasting contributions to AOR.

AOR STAFF

As always, a huge thanks to our Resource Director, Amy Roth and our Lobbyist Chris Parta! Amy oversees a wide range of responsibilities, including board governance support, event management and the day-to-day business of AOR. Her organization, dedication, and attention to detail are instrumental to the organization's success. Chris Parta serves as our lobbyist, providing ongoing representation of our legislative priorities and keeping the organization well informed throughout the legislative session.



Amy Roth
Resource Director



Chris Parta
Lobbyist