



# OFFICE OF THE SENATE PRESIDENT

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## PRESS RELEASE

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## Legislature Closes Out Historic 2021 Session

SALEM, Ore. – The Oregon State Legislature adjourned its 2021 session on Saturday, June 26th at 5:37 p.m.

“Oregon has never had a session like this,” said Senate President Peter Courtney (D-Salem). “The state was on fire. People were out of work. Families were struggling. We were in the middle of a pandemic... but we came in and did the people’s work. We balanced our budget and made big investments in our communities. There were some bitter fights but in the end, we represented the people well.”

The 2021 session was unlike any other in Oregon’s history due to the observance of COVID-19 safety precautions at the Capitol. Legislators worked with staff, infectious disease experts, and public health officials to [adjust Capitol operations for the 2021](#) session to reduce the risk of transmission while [expanding ways](#) members of the public could take part in the process.

While disrupted by the pandemic, this year’s legislative session saw the passage of groundbreaking legislation and a historic state budget:

### COMMUNITY INVESTMENTS

The legislature approved a 2021-23 budget that includes funding for important construction projects and programs in communities across the state. In the final days of the session, Courtney brought a [map of Oregon showing the location of these investments](#) onto the Senate floor to show how the state budget invests in every corner of the state.

“It is staggering to see the nooks and crannies of Oregon that are reached by this budget,” said Courtney, referring to the map of investments. “This map is not Democrat versus Republican. It isn’t rural versus urban. This is a commitment that the Legislature will be there for every part of Oregon that needs our help.”

## **K-12 SCHOOLS**

Lawmakers approved a State School Fund budget that will [invest a record \\$9.3 billion](#) in K-12 schools this year. This funding is in addition to the [Summer Learning and Child Care Package](#) introduced by Courtney, House Speaker Tina Kotek, and Governor Kate Brown, which directs \$375 million to support enrichment activities, wraparound child care services, summer school for high school students, and early learning programs this summer.

## **HOUSING & HOMELESSNESS**

The session continued efforts to increase Oregon's supply of affordable housing and keep families affected by the pandemic in their homes.

Lawmakers approved Courtney's bill to [encourage the development of affordable housing](#) by expanding areas where affordable housing can be built and removing barriers faced by developers, cities, and nonprofits. The Legislature also sent through a \$160 million housing package that contained funding for affordable housing in cities around Oregon.

The Legislature gave temporary relief to Oregonians struggling to make rent or mortgage payments due to the pandemic. Senate Bill 2009 allowed for an extension of the mortgage foreclosure moratorium until at least September 30, providing foreclosure relief to mortgage holders who do not have a federally backed mortgage. Senate Bill 278 protects tenants waiting on rental assistance from being evicted after the eviction moratorium expires on June 30 and increases relief provided to landlords through the Landlord Compensation Fund.

The 2021-23 legislatively approved budget sent over \$35 million toward shelters, temporary housing for survivors of domestic and sexual violence, and resources for Oregonians who are homeless or at risk of becoming homeless. The legislature released \$18 million for low-barrier, emergency shelters [earlier in the year](#).

## **HEALTHCARE**

In addition to fully funding the Oregon Health Plan, lawmakers approved measures to change how healthcare is delivered in the state, including passing a historic [\\$450 million behavioral health package](#).

A bill introduced by Courtney [requiring health insurers in the state to cover emergency medical services \(EMS\) transports](#) for patients experiencing medical emergencies passed with strong bipartisan support. The Legislature approved measures that expanded the coverage and reimbursement of telemedicine, capped the out-of-pocket cost of insulin to \$75 for a 30-day supply or \$225 for a 90-day supply, and made considerable investments in long-term care.

## **WILDFIRE & WATER RESOURCES**

In response to the devastating 2020 wildfire season, the Legislature approved a [\\$500 million wildfire package](#) to expand wildfire prevention and mitigation efforts, rebuild fire-affected communities, and provide relief to wildfire survivors who have lost everything.

This year's budget also included a [monumental \\$460 million package to invest in water and sewer infrastructure](#). This funding will support access to clean water in cities and counties across the state, which will be an important tool to prepare the state for devastating wildfire and drought conditions.

## **OTHER PRIORITIES**

Lawmakers passed Courtney's bill that [gives college athletes in Oregon the right to receive compensation for the use of their name, image, and likeness](#) beginning June 1st, including through endorsement deals and appearance fees.

The 2021 session saw the passage of many other important pieces of legislation including measures to advance racial equity, a police reform package, protections for workers, a landmark bill to modernize Oregon's recycling system, and the extension of a commercial rent payment grace period to give local businesses time to access rent relief.

The Legislature will continue to work hard for Oregonians in the coming months as lawmakers work to redraw the state's legislative and congressional districts and prepare for the February 2022 short session.

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