



2019 Issue Summaries

Strengthening Our Economy

We are engaging small businesses and encouraging living-wage job growth in every part of the state. We are committed to advocating for working Oregonians with policies that level the playing field, protect workers' right to unionize and bargain collectively, support working families, and ensure a healthy, job-ready workforce.

Passed Into Law

Paid Family and Medical Leave Insurance

HB 2005 creates a state-run paid family and medical leave insurance program that gives all employees the time they need to care for new child, recover from a serious illness, or care for a family member with a serious illness. The bill includes strong protections for low-wage workers, including 100% wage replacement for employees whose average weekly wage is less than 65% of the state average weekly wage. The law will go into effect in 2023. Small businesses with less than 25 employees are not required to pay the employer's share of the insurance premium, but are eligible for grant assistance to cover the cost of replacement workers if they choose to do so.

State Income Tax Reduction

HB 3427 includes provisions to lower Oregon's income tax rates by 0.25%.

Protecting the Rights of Public Employees

HB 2016 codifies collective bargaining best practices into state law and protects the union rights of public employees.

Protecting Social and Environmental Small Businesses

HB 2598 creates a new type of trust for small businesses focused on social or environmental work. The goal is to give the owners of these small businesses a way to retire and take equity out of the business while ensuring that these businesses are able to continue operating into the future.

Oregon's Olive Oil Industry

SB 390 supports Oregon's growing olive oil industry by allowing farmers to sell their olive oil directly to consumers.

Wine Labeling

HJM 8 urges the federal government to adopt and enforce regulations to ensure the accuracy of wine labeling, packaging, and advertising and urges states to enter into agreements related to the enforcement of wine laws. States are also urged to enter into mutual agreements related to enforcement of wine laws. Given the federal government's role in enforcing labeling laws, this memorial to Congress works to protect Oregon's renowned wine industry and reputation.

SB 829 supports Oregon's largest wine region, the Willamette Valley, by requiring sub AVAs to also include "Willamette Valley" on their labels to further the region's branding and economic significance.

Winery Licensing

HB 3113 allows wineries to expand their production, transport, and sales locations from three to five, helping to expand the state's thriving wine industry.

Farm Breweries

SB 287 extends tasting room and event spaces allowed on farm land at wineries and cideries to farm breweries, supporting local brewing businesses.

Marijuana Exports

SB 582 sets Oregon's marijuana industry up for economic success by preparing for exportation when federal law allows.

Broadband Internet Access Support from the Public Utility Commission (PUC)

SB 69 expands the purposes of the PUC's Oregon Telephone Assistance Program to include support for broadband internet access.

Regional Infrastructure for Oregon Tribes

SB 219 allows Oregon tribes to apply directly for loans and grants from the Regional Infrastructure Fund to support capital projects and drive economic development.

Fully Funding Career-Technical Education, Dropout Prevention Investments from Measure 98

HB 3427 (The Student Success Act) fully funds career-technical education (CTE), dropout prevention, and college level opportunities that voters approved via Ballot Measure 98 in 2016.

STEM and CTE Teacher Recruitment and Retainment in Eastern Border Region

HB 2457 directs Teacher Standards and Practices Commission, Oregon Department of Education and Office of Child Care to make specified evaluations to increase the number of educators in Eastern Oregon Border Economic Development Region who are available to teach courses in secondary math and science and in career and technical education programs. The goal is to make educator positions in the region more competitive with positions in Idaho.

Tax Credits

HB 2164 extends and modifies several tax expenditures for six years, including:

- Earned income tax credit extension and increase from 8% to 9% and an increase from 11% to 12% of income for individuals with dependents under the age of three.
- Short line railroad rehabilitation tax credit to help railroad owners maintain, reconstruct, or replace critical short line rail infrastructure across Oregon.
- Agricultural workforce housing construction tax credit of 50% of the eligible construction, rehabilitation, or acquisition costs provided to workers.
- Crop donation tax credit for growers who donate crops to food banks or other charitable organizations. Growers are eligible for a credit of 15% of the donated crop value.
- Food processing equipment is exempted from property taxation for five years.

Funded

SB 5524, Business Oregon's budget included:

- \$629,000 lottery funds for the Oregon Growth Fund to promote economic development and support early-stage small businesses throughout the state.
- \$750,000 lottery funds for the Rural Opportunity Initiative grant program to support entrepreneurship-based economic development in Oregon's rural communities.

- \$581 million for Business Oregon's Infrastructure Division for municipal infrastructure, water and wastewater facilities that ensure compliance with federal law, seismic rehabilitation for schools and emergency facilities, port and airport facilities, levee improvements, marine navigation improvements, and other facilities that support economic and community development.