



PRESS RELEASE

OREGON HOUSE DEMOCRATS

For Immediate Release
June 26, 2020

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Oregon House Adjourns First Special Session of 2020 *Legislation addressed COVID-19 response, police accountability*

SALEM, Ore. – The Oregon House of Representatives adjourned today after completing the business of the first special session of 2020 which included COVID-19 response and sweeping police accountability reforms.

House Majority Leader Barbara Smith Warner (D-Portland) issued the following statement on the conclusion of the first special session of 2020.

“This special session, we took critical steps toward dismantling structural racism, which begins by reckoning with the ongoing legacy of our state’s racist history. I want to thank the legislature’s People of Color Caucus for their extraordinary leadership in advocating for and advancing this legislation. This includes changes to police discipline, a statewide police misconduct database, a committee to review use of force policies, a requirement that officers must report abuses committed by their fellow officers, and a ban on tear gas and chokeholds. These represent just the first step in a reckoning process that is long overdue. In the coming weeks, months and years, we are committed to working closely with frontline community organizations to pass new laws with a focus on racial justice and undoing generations of discriminatory legislation that has harmed Black, Indigenous and people of color Oregonians.

“We also made significant progress in protecting struggling families and small businesses from the financial impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic. To help working families keep roofs over their heads and to help small businesses stay in business, we extended foreclosure and eviction moratoriums. We protected individuals’ CARES Act payments and gave local governments and the courts the flexibility they need to continue operations. For rural Oregonians, we provided the Eastern Oregon Border Board more flexibility to support economic development and will expand rural broadband internet development.”

“At a time when the failures of the Trump Administration and Republican leadership across the country are worsening the COVID-19 pandemic, actively undermining critical social safety net programs, and working to divide Americans instead of bringing them together, I am so proud of what we have been able to accomplish here.

“In these unprecedented times, we have been given an opportunity to work toward a better Oregon for all. This special session was an important first step.”

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