



NEWS

Oregon Legislature - House Democratic Caucus

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House Unanimously Passes Cool Schools Bill

HB 2960 is a key job creation measure for House Democrats

SALEM – The Oregon House today unanimously passed HB 2960, the Cool Schools Bill. HB 2960 will allow us to repair and retrofit aging schools to help create jobs while enhancing student learning, reducing operational costs and building healthy learning environments.

Cool Schools is a top priority of Governor Kitzhaber and is a key component of the House Democratic plan to “Revitalize Oregon.”

“Our Cool Schools plan will finance energy-efficiency projects at public schools across the state, creating jobs for Oregonians in the hard-hit construction industry,” said Representative Jules Bailey (D-Portland), a chief sponsor of the bill. “Best of all, the plan is a bargain for taxpayers, reducing costs for school districts and allowing more dollars to go directly into our classrooms and fewer dollars to utility bills.”

HB 2960 establishes the Clean Energy Deployment Fund, which will be administered by the Oregon Department of Energy. The Department of Energy will establish grant and loan program to support retrofits in aging school buildings.

The program will also include provisions to ensure that a skilled workforce is being built for increasing energy efficiency activity across public buildings as well as in commercial and industrial building stock and processes. This will include a focus on building career pathways for a diverse group of workers.

“Cool schools is a fiscally responsible plan that will put Oregonians back to work in the areas that need it most,” said Representative Jefferson Smith (D-Central Multnomah County), another chief sponsor of the bill. “In addition, Cool Schools will create a healthier, more productive learning environment for students and teachers, while moving forward our state’s energy efficiency goals. This should be the start of a broader effort to revitalize our schools and public infrastructure.”

HB 2960 now moves to the Senate for consideration.

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