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Contact: Andrew Fromm

Email: andrew.fromm@oregonlegislature.gov

Republicans force vote to consider bill that gives Legislature oversight on Governor's emergency powers

Republicans attempted to pull bill with Democrat and Republican sponsors out of committee to House floor

SALEM, Ore. – Today, Oregon House Legislators voted to consider a bill on the House floor that would give the Legislature oversight on Governor Kate Brown's emergency powers and sole authority over the COVID-19 response.

Republicans moved to pull HB 2243 out of committee directly to the House floor for a vote.

The motion did not receive the required number of votes to pass. All Republican members voted in favor to make the Governor accountable to the Legislature. 28 Democrats voted against the motion, maintaining the Governor's sole authority over COVID-19 and unchecked ability to shut down businesses.

The decision is in response to the Governor's announcement last week to unilaterally extend her own emergency powers again, granting her the ability to issue shutdowns without involving another governing body.

County commissioners have repeatedly asked the Governor to be more targeted in her decisions. Currently, the statewide threshold for "extreme risk" designation disregards the fact that hospital cases of COVID-19 are decreasing in some counties where businesses must now close.

"The Legislature is in Session and we have a duty to engage," House Republican Leader Christine Drazan (R-Canby) previously said. "Oregonians deserve a balance of power between their separate branches of government again."

HB 2243 (chief sponsors Rep. Wilde, Lewis, regular sponsors Rep. Cate, Evans, Hayden, Leif, Levy, Moore-Green, Morgan, Owens, Post, Reschke, Wallan, Wright) - Requires that declarations and extensions of states of emergency under certain statutes be accompanied by written explanations.

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