



OREGON HOUSE REPUBLICAN OFFICE

What They Are Saying: 2017 Legislative Session

LEADERSHIP

The Portland Tribune: "...there are far more agonizing defeats than thrilling victories to tally." (Editorial: [Keep bipartisan PERS bill on track](#), 7/4/2017)

Daily Astorian on Governor Brown: "...her lack of leadership was evident throughout the session." (Daily Astorian: [Legislators left Salem with unfinished business](#), 7/11/2017)

The Herald and News: House Republican Leader Mike McLane said he "believed the session was marked by a lack of leadership....He got it right. (Editorial: [The Legislature: the good, the bad and the really ugly](#) 7/11/2017)

Senate President Peter Courtney: "At best, our successes are tempered by disappointment." (News Release: [Senate President Peter Courtney's Statements on the 2017 Session](#), 7/7/2017)

BUDGET

The Oregonian: Democrats "failed to find votes to reform Oregon's tax system and make a serious dent in public pension costs, leaving the toughest decisions to future sessions." (The Oregonian: [Oregon lawmakers hail session of progressive wins, but big budget problems lurk ahead](#), 7/9/2017)

The Register-Guard: "The structural problem in Oregon's public accounts can go on unaddressed in the two-year budget period that began July 1, but it can't go on forever, with double-digit spending increases every two years. The Legislature let slip an opportunity to stop the unsustainable trend on its own terms." (Editorial: [Success and frustration](#), 7/11/2017)

The Oregonian: "Legislators were able to leave with a balanced budget, thanks to better than expected revenue, the controversial hospital and health-insurance tax and a host of Band-Aids. But their inaction on PERS, spending and revenue means those problems will continue to grow, unchecked." (Editorial: [Inching toward a win](#), 7/14/2017)

Bend Bulletin: "Oregon's Public Employees Retirement System was the focus of multiple bills this legislative session, but lawmakers failed to make meaningful progress on this critical issue, despite the system's \$22 billion unfunded liability. The tone was set from the top, with House Speaker Tina Kotek, D-Portland, and Democratic Gov. Kate Brown saying early in the session that no viable methods existed to curb the crushing budgetary effects of the convoluted PERS system." (Editorial: [PERS demands visionary leadership](#), 7/12/2017)

Ashland Daily Tidings: "Two key factors lawmakers failed to address this year were the continued increase in Public Employee Retirement System premiums to meet the unfunded liability in the pension system, and health insurance costs for public employees that far outstrip anything most private-sector workers receive. If majority Democrats in the Legislature had taken the tough steps to address those and other costs, they might have attracted enough Republican support to restructure state taxes on

corporations, raising more money for colleges and other needs.” (Editorial: [Better, but not great](#), 7/18/2017)

EDUCATION

The Oregonian: “When students return to school this fall with fewer teachers, larger class sizes and shorter school years, they should write thank-you notes - on paper donated by parents, of course - to the three people responsible for such cuts: Gov. Kate Brown, Senate President Peter Courtney and House Speaker Tina Kotek.” ([Oregon needs leaders now - not in 2019](#), 6/23/2017)

Jim Green, Oregon School Boards Association Executive Director on K-12 Budget: "This budget, like this entire session, should be filed under 'missing' -- for missing leadership that led to missed opportunity." (The Oregonian: [Lawmakers reluctantly pass \\$8.2 billion schools budget they say is not enough](#), 6/27/2017)

Ed Ray, Oregon State University President: "This has been a session of minimal progress, missed opportunities and unrealized potential." (The Oregonian: [Lawmakers back \\$100 million for Elliott State Forest, \\$50 million for UO campus](#), 7/3/2017)

The Oregonian: “Elected leaders have bemoaned the budget crisis that they faced this legislative session due in part to the new initiatives. But voters - who cast their ballots amid a sustained economic boom that continues to generate record amounts of tax revenue - aren't to blame. The culprits have been legislators who ignored for years the question of how to pay for Medicaid expansion and who have refused to confront escalating pension and health benefits costs for public employees.” (Editorial: [Legislators disregard voters' will with insufficient education measure funding](#), 7/8/2017)

TRANSPORTATION

The Oregonian: “...House Republicans, with Bentz as their chief negotiator, were able to secure the low-carbon fuels deal. The agreement resulted in changes Republicans had sought when transportation negotiations sputtered in 2015.” (The Oregonian: [Oregon lawmakers hail session of progressive wins, but big budget problems lurk ahead](#), 7/9/2017)

Ontario Argus Observer: “Lawmakers — chiefly Eastern Oregon lawmaker and Ontario Republican Cliff Bentz — put a lot of work into the plan and, instead of wasting time bickering about the proposal, decided to get something done.” (Ontario Argus Observer: [Lawmakers deserve praise for transit bill](#), 7/7/2017)

The Mail Tribune: “Overall, the transportation package is the largest of its kind to pass in years, and it's an example of how lawmaking is supposed to work: competing interests trade support for things they don't like in exchange for things they do, some of the most controversial elements are removed along the way and everyone stays focused on the overall goal.” (Editorial: [Transportation bill a major accomplishment](#), 7/13/2017)

OTHER

Bend Bulletin on Attempts to Manipulate the Ballot: It doesn't matter if the culprits are Russians, Republicans or Democrats — meddling in Oregon elections is wrong. And there is meddling afoot. The culprits are Democrats in the Oregon Legislature. (Editorial: [A new low for Oregon election manipulation](#), 7/4/2017)

The Register-Guard on Grand Bargain Rollback: Republicans felt betrayed, and for good reason: The bill to limit the tax break passed by a 31-28 vote, with all Republicans and three Democrats voting no. Democrats thereby reneged on the deal agreed to four years ago, making roadkill of the grand bargain. The vote also made roadkill of the three-fifths supermajority required for approval of tax increases...Even if Democrats are on solid legal ground, they appear to be committing the logical fallacy of ambiguity: A

curbside sign that says 'Fine for parking' doesn't mean it's just fine and dandy to park there." ([Editorial: A sausage made of roadkill](#), 6/28/2017)

Bend Bulletin on Tax Bills Passing Without Supermajorities: Oregon lawmakers, at least some of them, came up with a nifty new trick this legislative session, one that may or may not pass constitutional muster. They've approved at least one bill, Senate Bill 28, which raises taxes without having to earn the three-fifths majority in both houses the state constitution requires, and they've been working on another...While the Legislature must balance the budget, tippy-toeing across the constitution is not the way to go about it." (Editorial: [Stop trying to fool Oregonians with tax increases](#), 6/25/2017)

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