



## **SENATE MAJORITY OFFICE**

Oregon State Legislature

### Press Release

December 13, 2021

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### **Senate Passes Drought Relief Package to Support Rural Communities**

SALEM – Today, the Oregon Senate passed a \$100 million funding package to provide relief and support to rural Oregon communities reeling from ongoing drought and recent wildfires. Senate Bill 892 and Senate Bill 5561 will make investments across Oregon to help communities that were hit hard by these crises and mitigate future drought impacts.

“Earlier this year, we passed a massive water package to help communities develop adequate groundwater infrastructure. Today we are following up on that investment with a relief package to address this year’s severe drought and its impact on agricultural businesses and workers,” said Senator Kathleen Taylor (D-Portland), chair of the Joint Ways and Means Subcommittee on Natural Resources. “We are seeing the impacts of climate change across Oregon, and it is very important that we do all we can to prepare for the challenges ahead.”

The drought relief package included in SB 892 and SB 5561 includes:

- \$40 million for an agricultural forgivable disaster loan program;
- \$12 million for the Klamath Basin for domestic well assistance;
- \$9.7 million to address drought relief on Klamath Tribal lands;
- \$10 million for agricultural workers who miss work due to unsafe working conditions resulting from extreme heat or smoke
- Other targeted investments in drought relief and resiliency

“Senate Democrats continue to fight for critical investments in rural Oregon. Today we voted to ensure rural communities have the resources they need to respond to terrible drought and wildfire impacts,” said Senate Majority Leader Rob Wagner (D-Lake Oswego). “We strongly support Oregon’s agricultural community, farmworkers and Tribes and we will continue to work toward solutions as we prepare for the 2022 Legislative Session.”

Senate Bill 892 and Senate Bill 5561 will now go to the Oregon House of Representatives for consideration.

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