



SENATE MAJORITY OFFICE

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Senate Democrats increase funding for education, public safety

SB 5701 balances Oregon's budget, sets priorities for 2016

SALEM – The Oregon Senate Democrats passed an omnibus budget adjustment bill today that will increase support for housing, education, health and public safety projects, including security upgrades and repairs in the aftermath of last year's tragedy at Umpqua Community College and reimbursing local governments for costs of the armed Malheur National Wildlife Refuge occupation.

Senate Bill 5701 passed on an 18-11 vote. Based on the latest revenue forecasts and adjustments since the 2015-17 biennial budget was adopted in 2015, the bill adjusts the budget by about 3.5 percent to account for increased revenues and some reductions in certain programs. The largest increase was in federal funds, where the state expects to receive an additional \$1.3 billion.

“Oregon Senate Democrats have been working hard on the priorities that matter to all Oregonians and these budget adjustments reflect that,” Senate Majority Leader Ginny Burdick (D-Portland) said. “By making investments in public health, education and public safety we can improve the quality of life for all Oregonians throughout the state. A significant portion of our funding is going toward addressing wildfires, drought, a campus shooting, a wildlife refuge occupation and other crises. It is important to invest our resources wisely in the communities where they are needed most.”

Following is a list of some of the additional investments being made:

- **Public Safety:** One-time funding of \$6 million for grants to Umpqua Community College to add security staff, upgrade security features on campus and cover other costs related to the Oct. 1, 2015, tragedy. That funding also is to be used for construction or renovation of a replacement for Snyder Hall, where the shooting incident took place;
- **Public Safety:** Allocated \$2 million to the Emergency Board to distribute to state and local governments for the costs related to the armed occupation at the Malheur National Wildlife Refuge that weren't reimbursed by the federal government;
- **Education:** Increases of \$7.25 million in support for community colleges and \$2.9 million for public universities;
- **Environment:** Allocated \$705,288 to respond to the drought situation in Harney County by funding staff, observation wells and cost-sharing to study groundwater levels in that area;
- **Public Safety:** Partial reimbursement of \$200,000 to Douglas County for public safety costs associated with the Oct. 1, 2015, incident at Umpqua Community College;
- **Housing:** Increased general fund allocation of \$2.7 million for the Housing and Community Services Department for counseling services associated with the Oregon Foreclosure Avoidance Program;
- **Housing:** One-time appropriation of \$10 million to the Housing and Community services Department for homelessness assistance and prevention services through the Emergency Housing Assistance program and the State Housing Assistance Program for operational support of emergency shelters and services to shelter residents;
- **Health:** Increased funding by \$1.1 million for three separate child nutrition grants from the United States Department of Agriculture;
- **Education:** Increase of \$7.1 million for a three-year federal grant to increase the number of highly-qualified charter schools by providing assistance to potential charter schools for planning, program design and initial operations;
- **Education:** Increases to early childhood education programs statewide that include \$5.3 million for Oregon Pre-Kindergarten program and a \$5.4 million funding increase for the Early Intervention and Early Childhood Special Education programs; and
- **Health:** Approved an expenditure limitation of \$4 million for a youth marijuana-use prevention pilot project, with that funding to be repaid out of marijuana tax revenues.

SB 5701 now goes to the House of Representatives for consideration.

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