



SENATE MAJORITY OFFICE

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Measures to Ease the Affordability Crisis Move Fast in Week One of the 2026 Legislative Session

Progress is swift on bills increasing tax credits, lowering costs for health care and housing

SALEM, OR – State lawmakers are back in session for 2026 and legislation to help take financial pressure off Oregonian families is moving forward fast. Senate Democrats are championing bills that help workers make ends meet, lower financial barriers to health care, and protect renters from unfair online fees.

“This is our first regular session after the Trump administration and Republicans in Congress opened huge tax loopholes for the ultra-rich and built barriers to health care, housing, and food assistance,” said **Senate Majority Leader Kayse Jama (D – E Portland, Boring & Damascus)**. “We’re responding with state-level solutions for workers and families.”

More than 200,000 Oregon taxpayers with low and moderate incomes will qualify for a larger Earned Income Tax Credit under Senate Bill 1507, and the measure establishes a new tax credit for businesses that create or retain jobs in Oregon. The bill had a public hearing in the Senate on Wednesday and is scheduled for a committee vote on Monday, February 9.

“At the end of the day, this proposal will put more money in Oregonians’ pockets,” said **Senator Anthony Broadman (D – Bend)**, chair of the Senate Finance and Revenue Committee.

A bill to ban out-of-pocket costs on cervical cancer exams was voted out of the Senate Health Care Committee Feb. 4 with a unanimous, bipartisan recommendation to pass the measure when it goes to the Senate floor. Existing insurance law makes initial screenings for cervical cancer cost-free for patients already, but without a change in law, additional tests can require copayments—or full payment if the patient deals with a deductible on their insurance plan.

“Early detection and treatment of cervical cancer can save lives, and I don’t want any Oregonian to have to skip follow-up exams because they don’t have the money,” said **Senator Deb Patterson (D – Salem)**, chair of the Senate Health Care Committee. “When Senate Bill 1527 becomes law, more women will be able to afford the care we all deserve.”

Senate Bill 1523 has the power to prevent surcharges and late fees for renters. The legislation in the Senate Committee Housing and Development says landlords cannot require tenants to

pay rent using an online portal and they must accept reasonable payment methods other than credit cards and electronic forms.

“Housing costs are high enough for people. They ought to have the chance to pay rent in whatever reasonable form works best for them,” said **Committee Chair Khanh Pham (D - SE & NE Portland)**. “We can’t let the convenience of a digital portal turn into expensive tripwires that ensnare people already doing their best to pay the rent they owe.”

A Tuesday public hearing on the bill uncovered the problems that can snowball from online-only rent portals. Community advocates explained that cumbersome account-verification steps or glitchy web connections can lock out tenants trying to pay their rent, especially people with low incomes, disabilities, or other digital barriers. That triggers late fees and penalties, and sometimes the online payment portals carry extra fees even for paying on time. Senate Bill 1523 will be in the Senate Housing and Development Committee for a work session Tuesday, Feb. 10.

Oregon’s 2026 legislative session is constitutionally limited to 35 days and must conclude no later than Sunday, March 8.

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