

Oregon News

'OPB Politics Now': How Oregon businesses are reacting to Trump's tariffs

OPB | By Andrew Theen, Kyra Buckley

Tariffs have been one of the dominant themes of the first few months of the Trump administration. And Oregon businesses are feeling the pinch, and the uncertainty. On the latest episode of "OPB Politics Now," we discuss how Oregon businesses are responding to the tariffs and what it could mean for consumers. Find the show wherever you get your podcasts.

Oregon Senate votes overwhelmingly for \$800 million 'jock tax' to fund major league ballpark

Oregon Live | By Mike Rogoway

State senators from both parties rallied Thursday to back an \$800 million "jock tax" to help finance a prospective stadium for Major League Baseball on Portland's South Waterfront.

"This is a moment for us to come together and unite around an idea," said **Sen. Daniel Bonham, R-The Dalles**. Bonham, the Senate Republican leader, said baseball could help Portland rebound from a series of problems that has slowed its recovery from the pandemic.

"It will be a showcase of what is beautiful, central, core to our constituents of Portland," Bonham said.

Senate Bill 110 passed the Senate 24-5 and now moves to the Oregon House. Gov. Tina Kotek has already signaled her support.

"There's absolutely no risk," said **Sen. Fred Girod, R-Stayton**. "It doesn't cost the state a dime."

Republican Sen. Cedric Hayden, who represents a rural district south of Salem, was one of the five senators who voted against the bill Thursday. He said it sets a bad precedent to allocate tax dollars to benefit one small group of people and not others.

People working at the Pendleton Roundup and Sisters Rodeo, Hayden said, don't get to dictate how their taxes are spent.

"They don't get equity here," he said. "They don't get to choose where their tax dollars go."

Oregon bill would make doxxing a crime, not just grounds to sue

Oregon Live | By Mike Rogoway

A bill that would make doxxing a crime and not just grounds to file a lawsuit sailed over a key hurdle Thursday at the Oregon Legislature.

Senate Bill 1121 passed by a unanimous vote of 29-0 on the Senate floor. It would make it a crime for people to encourage the harassment, injury or stalking of victims by publicly sharing their home addresses, personal email addresses, personal phone numbers, Social Security numbers, contact information for family members, photographs of the victims' children or name of the children's schools, among other information.

Sen. Mike McLane, an Eastern Oregon Republican, said he didn't like a provision in the bill that would outlaw the sharing of a victim's personal emails because a victim could simply ignore, delete or block such emails. But he said he was voting for the bill to address "this divided, volatile culture that we're living in now" where people behave "in such repugnant ways."

Sen. Kim Thatcher, a Republican from Keizer, said she doesn't want to suppress free speech, but the bill defines "harass" as causing "severe emotional distress" that might even result in a "mental health diagnosis" and "is protracted rather than merely trivial or transitory."

"I find that to narrow it sufficiently for my yes vote," Thatcher said.

Bills to help Oregon schools fund years of summer learning await governor's signature

Oregon Capital Chronicle | By Alex Baumhardt

Oregon schools will soon have something they've never had before: more than a year to plan for summer school with the promise of consistent funding from the state Legislature. But it comes with one condition: The money should be spent on programs that get students reading and writing at grade level.

On Thursday the Senate passed two bills nearly unanimously — [House Bill 5047](#), which appropriates \$35 million for summer learning grants for 2025, \$35 million for 2026, and \$12 million for June of 2027 — and [House Bill 2007](#), establishing which programs qualify for the summer grants. Both bills passed the Oregon House unanimously on April 9 and now await Gov. Tina Kotek's signature.

[OR cannabis: Oregon bill would clear old fines for marijuana possession](#)

KOIN | By Michaela Bourgeois

The Oregon House passed a bipartisan bill on Thursday that would clear fines for possessing small amounts of marijuana.

[House Bill 3825](#) comes after Oregon legalized possession of less than one ounce of marijuana for adults 21 years of age and older in 2015.

[Bill to Crack Down on Illicit Massage Businesses Passes the Oregon House](#)

Willamette Week | By Sophie Peel, Aaron Mesh

The Oregon House today passed a bill by a 51–2 vote aimed at cracking down on illicit massage businesses.

[House Bill 3189-A](#), sponsored by state Rep. Thuy Tran (D-Portland) and Sen. Kathleen Taylor (D-Portland), would increase the fine for operating such a business from \$1,000 to \$5,000 per violation; allow the Oregon Board of Massage Therapists to post signs in illegal businesses warning customers away; and increase the maximum charge for repeat offenders from a misdemeanor to a Class C felony, punishable by up to five years in prison and a \$125,000 fine.

[From 47% to 14%: Why the City's Placement Rate From Pods to Permanent Housing Plummeted This Year](#)

Willamette Week | By Sophie Peel

In the current fiscal year, only 14% of residents who entered one of the city's eight pod shelters—and then moved out—exited into permanent housing.

That's a far lower share than the 47% of participants who moved into permanent housing when leaving the city's alternative shelters during the previous fiscal year.

The steep drop is a warning sign for a model of shelter that city officials have in recent years insisted is working to move people efficiently from the streets into stable, long-term housing.

The data Singleton highlighted shows that close to 15,000 people across the county are considered homeless, with nearly 7,000 living on the streets, in RVs or in cars. That's a significantly higher number than the county has previously reported in its "point-in-time" counts, and it's also higher than the county's 11,400 tally in January 2024. The increase is thanks in part to [a long-promised by-name directory](#) showing who is homeless in the county and what they need.

[Gov. Kotek replaces director of Oregon Public Defense Commission](#)

Fox 12 News

On Thursday, Governor Tina Kotek announced a new leader of the Oregon Public Defense Commission and outlined her expectations for that agency, amid a critical public defender shortage.

Oregon Criminal Justice Commission Executive Director Ken Sanchagrin was appointed by the governor as the interim director at the OPDC, replacing Jessica Kampfe, effective immediately.

"It is unacceptable that more than 4,000 defendants in Oregon do not have attorneys assigned,"

Governor Kotek said. "The public defense crisis poses an urgent threat to public safety and delays justice for victims. The Oregon Public Defense Commission has a duty to provide attorneys to defendants who cannot afford them, and it will take all branches of state government to work together to resolve this crisis with urgency and transparency. I appreciate Director Sanchagrin for stepping up to take on this challenge."

[Oregon wolf population surpasses 200 for first time in 8 decades](#)

OPB | By April Ehrlich

Oregon wildlife officials counted more gray wolves than ever last winter, a promising sign for the federally endangered species.

Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife staff counted 204 wolves in December, a 15% increase from the year before, according to the agency's annual wolf report published last week.

[PETA Writes to National Institutes of Health Seeking Investigation Into October Monkey Death, Small Cages](#)

Willamette Week | By Anthony Effinger

People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals wrote to the National Institutes of Health on Thursday, urging them to investigate violations of rules that govern the welfare of laboratory animals at the Oregon National Primate Research Center.

The primate center, run by Oregon Health & Science University, has been under intense pressure this year as animal rights groups bet that regulators could lean on OHSU to stop primate testing as it seeks approval to purchase rival Legacy Health.

The deal must be approved by a unit of the Oregon Health Authority, whose director reports to Gov. Tina Kotek. In a statement to *WW* last month, Kotek called for researchers to "complete their current research obligations and move towards shutting the center down in a humane and responsible manner."

['Troubling and disappointing': Washington County sewer agency continues to shield key info about Hawaii trips](#)

Willamette Week | By Jamie Goldberg

Washington County's sewer board [promised increased transparency and accountability](#) last week as it voted to adopt new oversight measures in response to an investigation by The Oregonian/OregonLive that uncovered [lavish spending](#) at the public agency.

But officials still refuse to disclose how much money sewer executives spent in the past decade on [annual business trips to Hawaii](#).

[Oregon Health Authority issues warnings on toxic cyanobacteria blooms in waterways](#)

KATU | By Bobby Corser

As summer approaches, the Oregon Health Authority (OHA) is urging residents and visitors to be vigilant about potentially toxic cyanobacteria blooms in the state's lakes, rivers, and reservoirs. The OHA has introduced a new tool to report the possible presence of cyanobacteria in freshwater bodies across Oregon. Effective immediately, the agency will issue pre-emptive public warnings following reports of dog illnesses or deaths potentially linked to cyanotoxin exposure.

[Washington takes 'historic' step toward full funding for special education](#)

Oregon Capital Chronicle | By Jerry Cornfield

Washington lawmakers are on the cusp of eliminating a special education funding cap, which critics said was straining school finances, hurting students, and putting the state at risk of a major lawsuit.

On a 97-0 vote, the House amended, then passed [Senate Bill 5263](#) this week to put Washington, for the first time, on a course to fully fund special education in its public schools.

It also adjusted two other funding levers in the bill to drive more dollars for special education to the state's 295 school districts. All told, roughly \$870 million more will be sent out over the next two budgets. That sum is a compromise with the Senate, which wanted to spend closer to \$2 billion.

[Transit advocates rally at Oregon's Capitol to support climate-friendly transportation initiatives](#)

Oregon Live | By Carlos Fuentes

Around 100 public transit and environmental advocates descended on the Oregon State Capitol on Thursday to [urge lawmakers](#) to allocate more funding for public transit and other climate-friendly transportation initiatives around the state.

By giving more money to local transit providers and paying for more [bike and pedestrian infrastructure](#), public transit advocates say, lawmakers can help more Oregonians save money on transportation costs while reducing congestion and car emissions.

[Oregon man convicted in 35-year-old cold case](#)

OPB | By Michelle Wiley, Conrad Wilson

A Washington County jury has convicted Robert Atrops for the murder of his wife more than three decades ago.

Jurors deliberated for less than a day, following more than two weeks of testimony where witnesses were forced to recollect events from more than 35 years ago.

[Oregon State student sues Trump administration for revoking visa](#)

OPB | By Troy Brynson

An international student at Oregon State University has filed a lawsuit against the Trump administration after it revoked his legal status earlier this month.

Aaron Ortega Gonzalez is a Mexican citizen and a PhD student at Oregon State, where he's been researching the impact of wildfires on ranchlands. Ortega Gonzalez has reportedly been given no reason why the federal government ended his legal status.