

## **Oregon News**

### **POLITICS**

#### **Dundee lawmaker says he plans to prioritize transportation during Oregon's legislative session**

*OPB | By Elizabeth Castillo*

**State Sen. Bruce Starr (R-Dundee)** returns to the Oregon Legislature this [session](#) after about a decade away.

Funding a transportation package is a key issue for lawmakers this year. Starr worked on a bipartisan transportation effort in 2009 and serves as a co-vice chair of the [joint committee on transportation](#) during the current session. He joins us to share more on his priorities.

#### **Sen. Golden proposes changing state wildfire map to curb anger and rumors**

*Oregon Capital Chronicle | By Alex Baumhardt*

The Ashland lawmaker wants the map to designate the risk level of broad areas rather than naming the risk of individual properties.

#### **Oregon bill would cap rent for manufactured home park owners: What to know**

*Statesman Journal | By Dianne Lugo*

[House Bill 3054](#) would cap allowable rent increases for tenants in manufactured home parks and marinas to annual inflation rates.

"It addresses an alarming trend that we are seeing in manufactured housing communities across our state which is the skyrocketing costs for tenants" who predominantly are on fixed incomes and relying on Social Security, said House Majority Leader Rep. Ben Bowman, D-Tigard.

[Multifamily NW](#), an association of members managing nearly 300,000 units, also wrote testimony opposing the bill, saying rent control policies have created uncertainty in the state.

#### **Advocates for paid-parent care rally at Oregon State Capitol**

*KATU | By Wright Gazaway*

The federal government allows states to pay parents for approved care to disabled children who meet a certain assessment level. This legislation – Senate Bill 538 (also referred to as Tensy's Law) – expands a pilot program that covers the state's highest-needs behavioral and medically disabled children.

#### **Oregon legislator seeks stricter lobbying limits for former lawmakers representing state agencies**

*Oregon Capital Chronicle | By Julia Shumway*

Rep. Anna Scharf's bill is aimed at closing a loophole in Oregon's law that prevents former lawmakers from taking paid lobbying gigs for private industry for a year.

#### **Oregon legislators want to understand harms of 'forever chemicals' from treated sewage on farms**

*OPB | By Alejandro Figueroa*

Fertilizers made from municipal wastewater are popular with some farmers in Oregon. They are nutrient-rich and cost-effective alternatives to synthetic fertilizers. But growing evidence shows toxic "forever chemicals" known as PFAS may be contaminating fields and animals. And Oregon environmental advocates have questions about how these chemicals are spreading on farms and the soil.

It's why researchers and industry groups are again asking Oregon legislators for money to study how PFAS chemicals from wastewater biosolids spread through Oregon's agricultural soils.

#### **Oregon lawmakers introduce new Greater Idaho bill**

*Central Oregonian | By Jason Chaney*

The Greater Idaho movement is potentially poised for more activity in 2025.

A second Greater Idaho bill was recently introduced in the Oregon Legislature. The bill, HB 3844, would create a state taskforce to "document the state and federal legal and legislative processes that must take place to relocate the Oregon and Idaho state boundaries ..." The Legislature is already considering a bill in the Senate, SJM7, which is a memorial inviting the state of Idaho to begin border talks. The Idaho Legislature passed a similar memorial in 2023.

#### **Oregon elections officials refer cases of possible noncitizen voting to state DOJ**

OPB / By Dirk VanderHart

Several people who were added to Oregon's voter rolls because of errors by state employees could face prosecution for voting despite not being U.S. citizens.

Oregon Secretary of State Tobias Read's office last week forwarded three cases of suspected voting by noncitizens to the state's Department of Justice for further investigation. Elections officials are still looking into seven additional people who might have voted illegally after they were registered to vote in error, the office said Monday.

### [Oregon board rejects Gov. Tina Kotek's request to direct all opioid settlement funds to harm reduction](#)

*The Oregonian* | By Carlos Fuentes

A state board overrode a [request from Gov. Tina Kotek](#) to spend the entirety of Oregon's national opioid settlement money over the next two years on harm reduction services and supplies, preserving funding for drug treatment and prevention programs.

That means [Save Lives Oregon](#), a state-funded program that provides harm reduction resources, training and items such as clean syringes, Narcan and fentanyl test strips to local organizations, will get \$5.1 million instead of \$21.6 million in opioid settlement funding through 2027.

### [Christine Drazan Wants Investigation of FTX Contribution That Helped Defeat Her in 2022](#)

*Willamette Week* | By Nigel Jaquiss

An attorney representing House Minority Leader Christine Drazan (R-Canby) has asked state officials to revisit a large, controversial 2022 campaign contribution to the Democratic Party of Oregon.

## EDUCATION

### [Oregon PTA Pushes Back on Graphs That Show Woeful Education Spending Results](#)

*Willamette Week* | By Joanna Hou

In a memo sent to the Oregon Legislature last week, the Oregon Parent Teacher Association offered a competing narrative to data from Georgetown University that showed increased education spending had not resulted in better outcomes for Oregon students.

In [a 10-page memo](#) shared with WW, the association says the Edunomics presentation "included some statements, graphs and data that we believe require context and in some cases corrections."

### [Build high schools smaller to cut costs, Portland school board members say](#)

*The Oregonian* | By Julia Silverman

Turns out, size does matter, at least when it comes to [building new high schools](#) in Portland.

Charged with providing direction on how to pare back the [ballooning costs](#) of modernizing three high schools, members of the Portland Public Schools board will recommend the footprint of all three projects be significantly reduced.

## CRIME & PUBLIC SAFETY

### [Is there a public defender shortage in Oregon, or is there a 'work stoppage' as the Multnomah County DA claims?](#)

KGW | By Jamie Parfitt

As he took the reins of the Multnomah County District Attorney's office in early January, Nathan Vasquez pushed back on the idea that Oregon is in the midst of a public defender crisis, telling [Oregon Public Broadcasting](#) that he instead refers to it as a "work stoppage."

The DA's comments run counter to what the Oregon Legislature has been treating as a deep-seated problem of too few public defenders being saddled with too many cases and being paid too little to do it, leading to burnout and high turnover. And his comments [went over like a lead balloon](#) for many public defenders who say that a crisis is precisely what they're dealing with.

## TRUMP

### [New Donald Trump polling stuns CNN again: 'Holy smokes!'](#)

*The Oregonian* | By Brian Linder

The folks at CNN continue to be surprised by the results that their data guru Harry Enten continues to bring into studio on Donald Trump's first term.

The latest stunner came Monday, and it featured a lot of big adjectives, as Enten laid out the current polling on the president.

"Holy smokes," Enten said as he explained the numbers. "Look at what the difference is between now versus eight years ago during the first Trump term."

Enten pulled up a graphic showing the Trump's net approval rating on Feb. 10 back in 2017 was -5 points while it is +4 points in 2025.

#### **'Scaring our community': Oregon immigration nonprofits face funding freeze under Trump administration**

*KOIN 6 | By Joelle Jones*

Monday afternoon, a federal judge said the Trump administration ignored his order to halt a federal funding freeze ordering the government to "immediately restore frozen funding."

#### **EV charger money on hold by Trump administration includes \$52M in Oregon and \$71M in Washington**

*The Oregonian / Washington State Standard*

The Trump administration told states late last week it was blocking money for electric vehicle chargers, including \$52 million [for Oregon](#) and \$71 million for Washington, one of the latest steps by the White House to halt Biden-era funding.

#### **'Back to plastic': Trump pushes for plastic straws as he declares paper ones 'don't work'**

*Associated Press*

President Donald Trump is moving to reverse a federal push away from plastic straws, declaring that paper straws "don't work."

Trump signed an executive order Monday, saying: "It's a ridiculous situation. We're going back to plastic straws".