

OREGON SENATE REPUBLICAN CAUCUS

DAILY CLIPS



Oregon News

POLITICS

[Oregon AG Rayfield on why he's sued the Trump administration 33 times](#)

Portland Business Journal | BY Elizabeth Hayes

Before he even took office on Jan. 1, Oregon Attorney General Dan Rayfield was already strategizing with other Democrat AGs around the country about how they would respond to threats President-elect Donald Trump had made on the campaign trail.

Seven months into the second Trump term, Rayfield and his counterparts have filed 33 lawsuits challenging the Trump administration's actions on everything from birthright citizenship to federal funding freezes to restrictions on gender-affirming care to tariffs.

[Oregon's state parks are in trouble. This is the director's plan to fix them](#)

Statesman Journal

Lisa Sumption wants to reimagine Oregon's state parks.

The director of the Oregon Parks and Recreation Department has overseen a [historic boom in the popularity](#) of the state's 250 parks and 50 campgrounds. But she's also seen the economic model that supports them become increasingly shaky.

With multiple state agencies struggling for funding, Sumption isn't waiting for a bailout from the Oregon Legislature. Instead, she wants to use the state park system to come up with novel ways to bring in new revenue so the system can come closer to paying for itself.

[Veteran prosecutor sworn in as Oregon's interim U.S. Attorney](#)

The Oregonian | By Maxine Bernstein

Veteran federal prosecutor Scott E. Bradford, who has specialized in white-collar crime and cybersecurity cases, is President Donald Trump's pick to lead Oregon's U.S. Attorney's Office and was sworn in Monday as the district's interim U.S. attorney.

[Trump admin cracks down on Oregon and Virginia for defying Title IX and women's sports executive order](#)

Fox News | By Jackson Thompson

The U.S. Department of Education ramped up its campaign against schools [defying Title IX](#) and President Donald Trump's executive order on Friday.

Secretary [Linda McMahon](#) announced actions against the states of Oregon and Virginia for their policies on gender ideology.

TRANSPORTATION

[Opinion: Use emergency funding account to prevent ODOT layoffs](#)

The Oregonian | Opinion by Christine Drazan

Oregonians have made one thing clear: They cannot afford higher costs. Yet, the governor has [called for a special session](#) to [raise taxes to fund](#) the Oregon Department of Transportation – despite the fact that taxes are not the only option.

There were alternatives to raising taxes during the regular session and there are alternatives today. Instead of accepting a solution that doesn't cost Oregonians more, the governor is willing to fire nearly 500 ODOT employees by the end of this summer.

House Republicans care about family budgets, jobs and safe roads. During the legislative session, we proposed legislation that would have saved jobs by trimming spending and redirecting funding – not by raising taxes.

The governor and her Democratic colleagues in Salem rejected our proposal and instead pushed for the highest tax increase in Oregon's history. [Not surprisingly, it failed](#) in the final weeks of session.

Our leadership priorities haven't shifted: keep our roads safe, save jobs, don't raise taxes. To continue to fight for Oregonians, we have offered another alternative to the governor and her Democratic colleagues: use some of the hundreds of millions of dollars allocated to the Legislative Emergency Board to protect maintenance and preserve jobs that impact road safety. The money to do this is already sitting in an account under the authority of the Emergency Board.

The legislators on this committee could meet and take action tomorrow—without the expense or uncertainty of a special session—and they should. According to the Legislature's nonpartisan fiscal office, ODOT needs \$5 million a month to avoid layoffs. House Republicans' plan to allocate \$35 million, plus additional maintenance costs as identified by the agency, would sustain ODOT's critical operations until the short legislative session next year. It would also protect the agency from paying additional expenses associated with layoffs, including paying out unused vacation time, severance pay and unemployment fees.

Instead, when we proposed this approach, the governor again rejected any plan to protect essential workers and keep roads safe that didn't raise taxes.

At the same time, the governor is actively making ODOT's budget crisis worse. She recently [issued an executive order](#) that will likely increase costs of major road projects by [as much as 20%](#) and is offering raises for public employees when the agency can't cover existing costs.

The governor isn't using reserves or managing cash flow to limit cuts. She isn't looking to refocus work back to essential services. Instead, she is risking family stability and safe roads by cutting boots on the ground instead of the administration.

Her stubborn rejection of compromise will either make Oregonians less safe in wildfire season and winter storms or make Oregon even less affordable as a state. Her willingness to cut maintenance workers is dangerous and wrong. Her push to raise costs at the pump

is extreme and out of touch – Oregon already has [one of the highest gas taxes in the country](#).

In fact, the governor’s proposed tax package appears to be bigger than the bipartisan transportation package that passed in 2017—without any new roads or replaced bridges. We haven’t seen any legislative language, but the overview shared with us included:

- Increase gas taxes by \$0.06;
- Increase registration fees by \$42;
- Increase title fees by \$139;
- Double the state’s payroll tax;
- Create a new \$30 supplemental fee for electric vehicle and fuel-efficient vehicles;
- Develop a new mandatory per/mile “Road Usage Charge” for EVs and hybrids.

The proposal also appears to give ODOT the power to adjust fuel tax rates – without legislative action – to balance the cost burden between trucks and passenger cars. Fairly sharing costs between these groups is not just important, it’s a constitutional requirement. As such, the power to change tax rates must be left to the Legislature, not unelected bureaucrats.

These are big changes and the tax package itself goes beyond stopgap funding for an agency shortfall. It is a progressive wish list of new taxes with no new roads. Her tax package takes from family savings accounts to create one for ODOT in a shockingly tone-deaf cash grab. She doesn’t just hold onto maintenance jobs, she doubles bus and transit funding and continues to dump money into the status quo, no matter how badly ODOT performs.

The governor should reverse course and not call a special session which simply makes Oregon less affordable. Instead, she should use Emergency Board reserves to address the shortfall and then take the time to work across the aisle, listen to Oregonians and pursue a measured approach to the transportation needs of the state without implementing tax increases of this magnitude.

[Opinion: Systemic transportation underfunding requires new investment model](#)

The Oregonian | Opinion by Susan McLain

Transportation is our most fundamental public service, fueling everything from economic prosperity to social equity. All communities across the state depend on a safe, resilient and multi-modal system. However, Oregon has underfunded its transportation system for decades, and, as a consequence, the Oregon Department of Transportation now lacks the resources to fulfill its core mission of maintaining our roads, bridges and other infrastructure.

The crisis is systemic. Oregon lacks ways of raising sufficient revenue for maintenance, with Oregonians paying [some of the lowest transportation-related fees](#) in the nation. We lack a diverse set of funding streams and rely predominantly on the gas tax for revenue, which is expected to decline this biennium as fuel efficiency and electrification increase. Rising inflation has also increased ODOT’s maintenance and construction costs, heightening the crisis. For the future, we must have sufficient, diversified and stable funding.

Coming up with a way to meaningfully reinvest in our roads and bridges was the problem legislators aimed to solve in the recent legislative session. Unfortunately, we fell short with our proposal, House Bill 2025, which [died in the final days](#) of the session. However, the urgent need to fund basic maintenance, safety and improvements to our system continues. As co-chair of the Joint Committee on Transportation, I stand with Gov. Tina Kotek on the need for a special legislative session in August to complete our budget work for this biennium.

While HB 2025 didn't advance, we should not throw out the work that informed the package, nor the goals that it outlined. We spent over a year developing the best way to ensure a safe, resilient and multi-modal transportation system that serves all Oregonians. Our extensive conversations with stakeholders and communities included: a 13-stop tour that covered every region of the state; over 50 hours of workgroup meetings that included diverse viewpoints; and six months of public informational meetings, hearings, and work sessions in the Joint Transportation and Joint Transportation Reinvestment Committees. I personally held over 800 meetings during the last 18 months with jurisdictional partners, stakeholders, and advocates on how to prioritize and sustain our transportation system. We heard consistently that we need to fund safe and resilient infrastructure in all parts of the state. Therefore, the goal must be a comprehensive solution that allows state and local partners to meet the infrastructure needs of all Oregonians.

That extensive outreach helped us shape HB 2025, which contained the following elements that are essential for any solution:

- Stable and right-sized funding for maintenance and operations, preservation, safety and completion of critical projects;
- Modernization of transportation funding with short, medium and long-term funding streams, with fee increases spread over a 10-12-year period;
- Requirement for all road users, including electric vehicles and delivery fleets, to pay their fair share;
- Key accountability elements to ensure ODOT is a good steward of the public's investments;
- Historic safety investments in Great Streets and Safe Routes to School programs, and in wildlife crossings
- Increased transit funding sources to avoid dramatic cuts and stabilize transit services statewide.

But as we realized with the bill's failure, the proposal was complicated with many intricate layers, as I noted in an [interview with KATU's Steve Dunn](#). We also faced delays in receiving analysis of the revenue measures, which limited opportunities for crucial discussions. We must avoid these same pitfalls with the next proposal.

The Legislature's failure to pass HB 2025 means that ODOT cannot maintain even some of its most basic services for Oregonians and has announced layoffs for hundreds of current employees in needed positions. These are workers all over the state who serve on the front lines, dealing with emergencies during wildfires and winter weather, among other key responsibilities. Statewide, nearly 5,000 county road miles and 2,355 county bridges are in poor or fair condition, and ODOT lacks the necessary resources to repair or maintain either state roads or assist with local infrastructure needs. Twelve ODOT Service Stations across

the state are closing, and core responsibilities, including snow plowing, debris cleanup and wildfire prevention, will be pared back.

Legislators have an obligation to find a path forward from HB 2025 that ensures the safety and functionality of our multi-modal system. I urge my peers to ensure the essential elements of HB 2025 are part of the solution. We must stabilize our system and ensure ODOT provides essential services. We cannot afford to ignore the crisis. If we delay, backlogs will grow more expensive, and the risks to public safety and economic stability will only increase. We were elected to ensure Oregonians have the services they need. Let's get back to work and finish the job.

[Transportation cuts could harm Oregon's wildfire response](#)

OPB | By Bryce Dole

Lawmakers will reconvene in August to try to avoid mass layoffs at transportation agencies. As wildfires sweep the state, the stakes are particularly high.

Both Democrats and Republicans appear keen on preventing the mass layoffs at ODOT and stabilizing the transportation system, but disagree on how to do that. Kotek has floated a plan that includes higher gas taxes, among other measures.

HOUSING

[Here is how much you need to make to buy a home in Portland](#)

KOIN 6 | By Amanda Rhoades

Homeownership remains out of reach for most Portland residents, a recent analysis found.

The income needed to buy a home in Portland is \$189,964, according to a [ConsumerAffairs report](#).

Not surprisingly, the cost of homeownership in Portland is higher than the national average. According to the report, Americans need a gross annual income of \$124,817 to purchase a home.

The income needed to buy a home in Portland is twice the median household income of \$94,573.

[Amid construction slump, Kotek cheers passage of state, city housing bills](#)

The Oregonian | By Jonathan Bach

Gov. Tina Kotek lauded the passage of city ordinances and state laws aimed at getting housing developers off the sidelines amid a protracted construction slump.

Oregon has consistently [fallen short of Kotek's statewide goal](#) to build 36,000 new homes per year, established when she took office in 2023 to help contain the cost of living.

Forecasts show the state will not likely meet those goals during her term.

"We have a supply problem," Kotek said in an interview. "This is going to take 10 years to solve. We're at the front end of that decade, and having a North Star is really, really important."

HOMELESSNESS

[Mayor Wilson to County Leaders on Homelessness: "We Do an Awful Lot of Talking"](#)

Willamette Week | By Sophie Peel

In a recent meeting with Multnomah County officials, Portland Mayor Keith Wilson expressed growing frustration at the county's response to the homelessness crisis.

ECONOMY

[Oregonians are out of work for longer, unemployment filings show](#)

The Oregonian | By Tristin Hoffman

More Oregonians are filing for longer periods of unemployment benefits this year compared to the last.

The state has seen a 17% increase in continued unemployment claims, data from the Oregon Employment Department shows, meaning more jobless Oregonians who have already filed for unemployment claims are still out of work a week later or beyond.

[On the agenda: Salem leaders to report on financial impact of Avelo leaving](#)

Statesman Journal | By Whitney Woodworth

The departure of Avelo Airlines, Salem's source of commercial flights, means the city's Airport Fund will receive \$238,000 less revenue this fiscal year.

Two long-term, high-ranking airport staff members also are resigning.

EDUCATION

[Community college president running 1,500 miles for Oregon students](#)

KOIN 6 | By Aimee Plante

The head of Clackamas Community College is using his athletic abilities off-campus to help support a cause he's truly passionate about.

Dr. Tim Cook, an avid marathoner, is lacing up his running shoes to set out on a **[1,500-mile journey across Oregon](#)**.

The goal is to connect all 17 of the state's community colleges through his route.

NATURAL RESOURCES & WILDFIRE

[Salem considers declaring drinking water emergency ahead of Detroit Lake deep drawdown](#)

OPB | By Jeff Thompson

City officials say the reservoir drawdown could pose a threat to local drinking water and firefighting resources.

ENERGY & ENVIRONMENT

[The U.S. government sold off aging ships — leaving states in the Pacific Northwest to pay the price](#)

Oregon Capital Chronicle | By Aspen Ford

Washington, Oregon officials say they've spent millions removing or destroying abandoned vessels.