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Republican Priorities Included in Special Session
Appropriations Bill

SALEM, Ore. – The Senate passed an appropriations package Monday that includes, at the request of Senate Republicans, investments into affordable housing. Included in the package is \$14 million for affordable housing in 14 Oregon cities. This money is earmarked for addressing housing insecurity, lack of affordable housing, or homelessness.

“The homelessness crisis has only worsened,” Senate Republican Leader Tim Knopp (R-Bend). “This money will help our homeless populations transition into lives of purpose by providing them with transitional housing. Housing alone will not solve this problem, however. Drug treatment, mental health treatment, and real enforcement are required to make meaningful progress on this issue.”

Spearheaded by Senator Bill Hansell (R-Athena), the omnibus funding bill also creates a grant program to help outdoor recreation outfitter guides recover from lost business due to drought, wildfire, or COVID-19.

“These outdoor guides are critical to our rural tourism economy, but because of the drought and wildfires these businesses were heavily impacted,” said Senator Hansell. “This money will help them recover from these natural disasters so they can continue to support our economy for years to come.”

At the request of Senate Republicans, the funding bill will also release \$19 million in funding for better reimbursement rates to dentists who provide services to low-income Oregonians. At the beginning of the year, OHA cut reimbursement rates by 11% to these providers, which threaten the access to care for those on the Oregon Health Plan. The \$19 million will help recoup nearly half of the loss of funding to the system because of the cut.

The Senate passed SB 5561 on a vote of 26-2 and will now be considered by the House.

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