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OREGON SENATE REPUBLICANS

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Senate Democrats Block Tax Relief for Working Families and Ending the Governor's COVID Emergency

SALEM, Ore. – Today Senate Republicans moved to debate a measure that would have repealed taxes on basic necessities. Under current law, prescription drugs, diapers, feminine hygiene products, and baby formula are taxed under the corporate activities tax. [Senate Bill 521](#), a Republican proposal, would exempt these items from taxation.

Senator Tim Knopp (R-Bend) made a motion to withdraw SB 521 from committee to give the Senate a chance to debate and vote on the measure.

“As the vice-chair of the Senate Health Care Committee, we have spent a lot of time this session talking about how to decrease the cost of prescription drugs,” Senator Knopp said. “This whole time, this basic policy to help bring down the cost of prescriptions in Oregon has been stuck in committee.”

Senate Democrats voted down the motion, continuing taxation on these basic necessities.

The most recent revenue forecast has shown that the state is swimming in cash, with billions of tax dollars above projections. This shows tax relief for working Oregonians will not harm the financial health of the state.

“It’s unconscionable that Oregon is unnecessarily raising the cost of basic necessities for working families,” said Senate Republican Leader Fred Girod (R-Lyons). “Diapers, baby formula, prescription drugs, and feminine hygiene products are things Oregonians need for their families and their health. The state has brought in record amounts of money, there is no reason to be nickel and diming Oregonians by taxing these items.”

Senate Bill 521 will remain in the Finance and Revenue Committee where the Democrat chair will have an opportunity to hear and pass the bill.

Senate Republicans also voted to consider a measure that would end the Governor’s never-ending emergency declaration. Senator Brian Boquist (I-Dallas) made the motion

to withdraw [Senate Resolution 2](#) from committee and debate the proposal on the Senate floor.

“The COVID emergency is over,” said Senator Kim Thatcher, a chief sponsor of the legislation. “The Legislature needs to start acting like a co-equal branch of government and use its constitutional power to end the Governor’s unchecked emergency powers. I will continue to stand up against the Governor and her abuses of power, but until we have a majority party that is willing to do the same, nothing will change.”

SR 2 was voted down by the Democrat majority. It will remain in the Rules Committee where the Democrat chair has the opportunity to hold a hearing and bring it to a vote.

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