



Legislative Update

May 2015

IN THIS ISSUE

[Legislative Updates](#)

[At the Capitol](#)

[Town Halls](#)

[Thoughts for Thatcher](#)

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Sen Thatcher's webpage is at:

www.oregonlegislature.gov/thatcher

It was another crazy month here at the Capitol with the House passing the extended gun background check bill, SB 941, and the Senate [banning](#) the sale of ivory in Oregon without doing anything to really stop the poaching of elephants and other animals.

I met with a number of groups this month. I very much enjoyed meeting with the Oregon State Grange and discussing with them the impact of legislation this session. They were also interested in the proposal to raise speed limits on highways in Oregon. [See below](#) for a link to give your thoughts on raising speed limits in Oregon.

April was a successful month for some of [my legislation](#). I think that this work will have many long-term benefits for Oregonians.

2015 Legislative Updates

[SB 825](#) - This bill grants individuals charged with a crime the right to testify in grand jury hearings. This bill is a simple piece of criminal justice reform that can help protect innocent people who are wrongly accused of a crime and help prosecutors develop stronger cases against suspected criminals by providing more sworn statements from defendants for use in trial. *SB 825 passed the Senate and is in the [House Judiciary Committee](#).*

[SB 515](#) - This legislation is a collection of improvements to HB 2500, the landmark transparency bill that I spearheaded along with other legislators in 2009. The bill will extend transparency requirements over more economic development programs. It will also allow local governments to post notices of public meetings and give users the opportunity to provide input on the form and content of the website. *SB 515 passed the Senate and is now in the House Consumer Protection and Government Effectiveness Committee.*



[SB 397](#) - This bill creates some common sense improvements to the ignition interlock device law. IIDs are installed in the vehicle of individuals who are caught driving under the influence and requires them to blow into the device in order to start the car. SB 397 standardizes the law concerning 'negative reports' and adds meaningful accountability as well as strengthening requirements for individuals in order to have their IIDs removed. *SB 397 passed the Senate and is anticipated to be assigned to the House Judiciary Committee.*

[SCR 10](#) - This Senate Concurrent Resolution honoring the late Joan Austin received a unanimous vote in the Senate. Joan was a Newberg business woman and philanthropist. She was the first woman to chair the board of directors for Associated Oregon Industries and the Oregon State University Foundation. Joan leaves behind a legacy of hard work and charity that has touched the lives of thousands of Oregonians. *SCR 10 passed the Senate and is assigned to the House Rules Committee.*

[HB 2184](#) - This bill is simple and straightforward. It places a link on the DMV website to the State Parks Department website where they have information about their day use park passes. The bill also calls for the Parks Department to put brochures and other materials about day-use passes in DMV field offices around the state. This will promote Oregon State parks and make it easier for citizens to obtain park permits. The bottom line is this bill will help raise revenue for the Parks Department. *HB 2184 has been approved by the House and Senate and is now awaiting Governor Brown's signature.*

At the Capitol

Alzheimer's Association Advocacy Day- Advocates from the [Alzheimer's Association](#) visited my office on April 6th. They shared powerful stories and statistics about the prevalence and impact of Alzheimer's disease in Oregon.

Oregon State University Day- April 14th was OSU Day at the Capitol. I had the pleasure of meeting with students and representatives of the university. It was great to meet them and learn about all the amazing programs and activities going on at OSU.



Boy Scouts from Troop 224 visiting Senator Thatcher

Grange Day- I had the pleasure to speak with the [Oregon State Grange](#) on April 22nd about Senate Bill 941. They had a lot of really good input on the problems with the law and its negative impacts on rural Oregonians.

Crosshill Christian School- I was visited by a great group of students from [Crosshill Christian School](#) on May 6th. The students were learning about the legislative process and meeting their legislators. It was great to speak with them, it is always awesome to see young people getting to know how government works!

[Boy Scouts of America](#)- On May 7th, scouts from Sherwood-based Troop 224 visited the Oregon State Capitol as part of their path to earning Citizenship merit badges. It was wonderful to speak with these fine young men about their scouting experiences and their visit to the Capitol.

Town Halls

Recent Town Halls

On April 2nd, Representative Bill Post (R-Keizer), Representative Jim Weidner (R- McMinnville) and Senator Kim Thatcher held a town hall in Dundee covering the implementation of Measure 91, which legalized recreational marijuana in Oregon.

Sen. Thatcher also participated in two other town halls in April with Representative John Davis (R-Wilsonville) which focused on Measure 91 implementation. One was held on April 15th at the Wilsonville City Hall and the other was held at the Sherwood Police Department on April 29th.



Upcoming Town Hall

Sen. Thatcher has an upcoming town hall in Tigard at the Tigard Public Library on May 20th at 6:30pm. Anyone interested in learning more about the implementation of Measure 91 is welcome to attend.

Thoughts for Thatcher

This Month's Question:

Should Oregon raise speed limits on freeways and certain highways? If so, what limits are appropriate?

[Click here](#) to respond or email sen.kimthatcher@state.or.us

Last time the question was "How would mandatory paid sick leave affect your small business?". There was a lot of great feedback.

Here are a few of the responses:

- "All solutions are trickled to the consumer and when that happens the cost of goods and services outpaces the wages paid to the employee. So when you add or regulate an added cost of doing business it does not come free. There is always going to be a margin, an added cost to the effects of giving something free to somebody, be it sick leave or whatever entitlement to pass on to somebody."
- "We are a family owned business and care greatly for each person that works here. We are flexible and fair to each staff member because we have the choice to do that. We pay all our taxes on time (about 40% now) and take pride in running things both ethically and legally. Having the state force policies that hurt our and other businesses is extremely discouraging."
- "As the state government becomes more and more obsessed with 'income and benefits equality,' they become less and less concerned about the financial effects on small business. My state employer tax burden is now about 30% of my federal tax burden (which includes social security). Customers continue to be burdened by state and federal taxes and regulations, which in turn forces them to seek alternatives for product and service providers. Consumers flock to Walmart because their dollar doesn't stretch as far either, which takes even more customers away from small, local business."
- "While my small company is currently not even supporting me, my expansion plans were to support veterans with part-time jobs to begin within the next 2 years. Making anything like this a requirement and removing the option to work with employees is somewhere between stupid, and much worse."
- "I make all the decisions for my company regarding employee benefits, work hours etc. and I do not need to have the government in my space! If all of my employees took the maximum paid sick leave, based on \$15.00 per hour, my annual cost would be \$3600.00 with no offsetting revenue to justify it. I work with my employees when they are sick or have sick children. We work together to be sure their needs are tended to as well as the needs of my company. There is give and take but it works because we are a team!"
- "Living in Portland we are mandated to pay sick leave. I own apartments in the city and I had seven part time employees, all of whom have other jobs. I had to let two people go and will have to make do with less people because I can't pay for people to stay at home. My margins are not that large and I have to think of my family first."
- "I think it's a very bad idea for government to tell any business they have to pay wages to someone that's not actually doing any work."

- "We currently offer this to our employees. This is my choice, not the government's. Let ME run my business. What's next?"
- "When faced with a mandate like paid sick leave, many employers will make the difficult choice of raising prices, reducing employee hours or removing other benefits. These are not options for farmers. I am unable to set the price of the crops that I grow, and at best, these bills would force me to reduce the investment I can make in my farm and put my business at risk."

If you want to contact Sen. Thatcher's office you can send an email to: sen.kimthatcher@state.or.us or call 503.986.1713

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