

Oregonians can register to vote in six languages

By Andrew Selsky
Associated Press

SALEM (AP) — Reflecting increasing diversity in Oregon, voter registration forms have been expanded to six languages, including Somali, a language from one of the nations targeted by the Trump administration's travel ban.

The Elections Division made the announcement on Twitter, using letters and characters from the six languages: English, Spanish, Chinese, Vietnamese, Somali and Russian.

Musse Olol, president of the Somali American Council Of Oregon, took the announcement as a rebuttal of President Trump's travel ban, which targets refugees from 11 mostly Muslim countries, including Somalia.

"It's how you want to respond, including the language of people he had bad names for and that he put on the banned list," Olol, who has lived in Oregon for 36 years, said in a telephone interview.

The development shows how much Oregon's population is changing. Schools in Salem that used to have almost all-white student bodies three decades ago are now filled with Latino students, Pacific islanders and even some refugees from East Africa.

Today, some 10 percent of all Oregon residents are foreign-born, and more than 12 percent are U.S.-born with at least one immigrant parent, according to the American Immigration Council.

Oregon has long been primarily white. Its constitution even prohibited black people from residing in the state, a clause that remained until 1927.

Oregon's population of people of color has grown by 15 percent since 2010, though the state ranks 32nd in the nation in diversity, according to the Oregon Employment Department.

The voter registration forms are offered in the six languages both online and on paper, the Oregon elections division said in its tweet.

Users of the secretary of state's web site can now click on one of those languages, which opens a page in that language listing eligibility requirements — being a U.S. citizen at least 17 years of age and a resident of

Oregon. A link is provided to register in the six languages if the requirements are met.

There was no indication of plans to offer ballots or election materials in additional languages. Officials at the elections division and its parent agency, the secretary of state's office, did not respond to requests for comment. The registration forms had previously been in English and Spanish, and the other four languages were added for the first time.

The move "represents inclusiveness of America today," Olol said over the phone from Portland, which has become a magnet for Somali immigrants. He said older immigrants who have a tougher time learning English will especially benefit.

The elections division of Multnomah County, which encompasses Portland, said most of the requests for language assistance before the November 2016 election came from Spanish speakers, followed by the deaf and then by Somali speakers.

Starfish making comeback after syndrome killed millions

NEWPORT BEACH, CA (AP) — Starfish make a comeback on the West Coast, four years after a mysterious syndrome killed millions of them.

From 2013 to 2014, Sea Star Wasting Syndrome hit sea stars from British Columbia to Mexico. The starfish would develop lesions and then disintegrate, their arms turning into blobs of goo. The cause is unclear but researchers say it may be a virus.

But now, the species is rebounding. Sea stars are being spotted in Southern California tide pools and elsewhere, the *Orange County Register* reported Tuesday.

"They are coming back, big time," Darryl Deleske, aquarist for the Cabrillo Marine Aquarium in Los Angeles, told the newspaper.

"It's a huge difference," Deleske said. "A couple of years ago, you wouldn't find any. I dove all the way as far as Canada, specifically looking for sea stars, and found not a single one."

Similar die-offs of starfish on the West Coast were reported in the 1970s, '80s and '90s, but the latest outbreak was far larger and more widespread, according to a report by researchers at the

University of Santa Cruz.

Beginning with ochre stars off Washington state, the disease spread, killing off mottled stars, leather stars, sunflower stars, rainbows and six-armed stars. It hit Southern California by December 2013.

"When it did (arrive), you just started to see them melt everywhere," said Deleske. "You'd see an arm here, an arm there."

The recovery has been promising. Four adult sea stars, each about 7 to 8 inches long, were spotted this month at Crystal Cove State Park in Newport Beach.

"It's a treasure we always hope to find," said Kaitlin Magliano, education coordinator at the Crystal Cove Conservancy.

"We lost all of them," she said. "It's good to see we have some surviving and thriving. Maybe the next generation will be more resilient."

The stars aren't out of danger yet. The wasting syndrome never completely disappeared in Northern and Central California and it has reappeared in the Salish Sea region of Washington state, according to a November report by the University of Santa Cruz.

Oregon teacher pleads guilty

MERRILL (AP) — A former teacher in Klamath County has been sentenced to probation after admitting he threatened a student not to disclose details of their sexual relationship.

The Herald and News reports Jeffrey Vincent pleaded guilty December 19 to witness tampering. Charges of coercion and official misconduct were dropped in the plea deal.

The 35-year-old Vincent was arrested in July after police learned of his relationship with a young woman that began when the woman attended Lost River High School in Merrill.

Though the student was above the age of consent, the relationship violated school policy. Authorities say Vincent threatened to end the victim's scholarships if she reported their relationship.

Vincent has agreed to not contest any disciplinary action taken by the Oregon Teacher Standards and Practices Commission.

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PUBLIC NOTICE

Sisters Urban Renewal Agency Annual Report

The Annual Financial Report for fiscal year ending June 30, 2017 for the Sisters Urban Renewal Agency has been prepared and is on file at Sisters City Hall, 520 E. Cascade Avenue and is summarized here. In FY 2016-17 Sisters URA received \$199,356 in revenue, spent \$3,794 on projects and administration, and paid \$202,466 in principal and interest. Estimated tax revenues and interest for FY 2017-18: \$196,000. Budgeted expenditures for FY 2017-18: \$50,150 (Capital Projects Fund) and \$189,467 (Debt Service Fund). Interested persons may obtain a copy by contacting Finance Officer, Joseph O'Neill at 541-323-5222 or joneill@ci.sisters.or.us. A copy is also available on the City's website, www.ci.sisters.or.us.

An analysis of the tax collection impact on the permanent rate of other tax districts is shown in the table below.

Taxing District	FY 16/17 Forgone Revenue	FY 16/17 Permanent Rate Levy	% of Permanent Rate Levy
Deschutes County	17,666	27,861,742	0.06%
Fairgrounds Bond	1,640	2,572,469	0.06%
County Library	7,603	11,923,320	0.06%
Countywide Law Enforcement	14,126	22,112,118	0.06%
County Extension/4H	298	487,026	0.06%
9-1-1	2,236	3,508,124	0.06%
City of Sisters	36,563	948,503	3.85%
Sisters/Camp Sherman Fire District	37,033	2,242,210	1.65%
Sisters Park & Recreation District	3,019	279,955	1.08%
School District #6	56,764	7,903,944	0.72%
School #6 Bond 2001	14,983	2,090,293	0.72%
High Desert ESD	1,305	2,070,767	0.06%
C.O.C.C.	8,572	13,320,437	0.06%
Total	201,808	97,320,908	0.21%