

Oregon freeway speed limits may increase

Recommendations including a 70-mph speed limit for cars will be issued this month

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ASSOCIATED PRESS WRITER

SALEM — Any summertime driver is likely to notice that many motorists are cruising beyond the legal speed limit.

This fall, Oregonians might get the green light to legally drive faster on the state's freeways. The 2003 Legislature authorized the State Transportation Commission to raise freeway speed limits from 65 mph to 70 mph for cars and from 55 mph to 65 mph for trucks.

The Transportation Department is to issue recommendations on

Friday for any speed limit changes on the more than 500 miles of Oregon freeways.

The commission plans to make a final decision Sept. 30, following five public hearings around the state.

Some drivers are annoyed that the process seems slow.

"We get calls from people saying since the limit was increased, why haven't the signs been changed?" Pat Cooney, the department's communications director, said Monday.

The Legislature didn't require a boost in the speed limit. It said the commission can raise the threshold if it decides it's reasonable and safe based on engineering and traffic studies.

The panel could reduce freeway speed limits as well.

The agency has divided the freeway

system into 35 segments for study, and will probably make a speed-limit recommendation for each one.

Factors being looked at include: accident frequency, the mix of traffic, the availability of trauma care and police, and accident rates in other states that have raised speed limits.

The sponsor of the bill to increase the speed limit, Rep. Randy Miller, R-West Linn, says the agency needs pick up the pace. He said several factors that have been included in the studies, such as the distance from a trauma center, are unnecessary.

"Remote means just that, a long way from anything," he said Monday. "Those areas probably are where the speed limit should be higher."

The Oregon Trucking Associations supported the legislation as long as the truck speed limit would be just 5 mph less than that for cars, said Bob

Russell, president of the organization.

Studies have shown the greater the difference between car and truck speed limits, the more car-truck accidents are likely, he said. The difference between limits now is 10 mph.

Truckers can reap advantages by delivering goods faster, but some are concerned about a decrease in safety.

"As a trucking company owner, we want to get loads delivered on time and get many loads under our belt," said Mike Card, owner of Combined Transport of Central Point.

"There's nothing worse out there than having an accident," he said. "Speed helps us to get where we go," but, he added, safety record is more important.

Charles E. Beggs is a writer for the Associated Press.

NEWS BRIEF

Senate grants NABJ request, adopts new fund system

The Student Senate approved in a special short-notice meeting Friday a \$900 request from the National Association of Black Journalists. The group requested the money for hotel accommodations for an upcoming NABJ-affiliated UNITY conference in Washington, D.C.

Senate Summer Committee Vice President Kevin Day said rules prohibited the Senate from approving a direct transfer from the Senate's surplus fund to NABJ.

Last year's Summer Committee directly funded a \$2,355 request by the NABJ for expenses for the same conference, violating ASUO rules, Day said. This year, Day proposed instead that the Senate approve a \$900 transfer to an ASUO Executive account, and that the Executive transfer the amount to NABJ.

The Senate passed the motion to transfer the sum to the Executive account by a vote of 6-0.

In other business, ASUO Accounting Coordinator Jennifer

Creighton-Neiwert presented to the Senate a new accounting model for student groups.

Citing "some pretty substantial changes," Creighton-Neiwert summarized the new system, which uses a five-fund system. Each group can have any or all five types of funds.

The Senate will deal only with each group's incidental fee fund. Other funds include non-event revenue, restricted event revenue, general funds and unrestricted gifts.

Officials designed this year's accounting system to smooth the transition between last year's three-fund system and a new system that will better integrate with government rules, Creighton-Neiwert said.

"We're definitely in a kind of limbo land, and it'll feel like that all year long," she said.

The Student Senate did not convene for its regular Thursday meeting July 22 because the only outstanding business was a special request whose size exceeded that of the Senate surplus fund, Summer Committee President Rodrigo Moreno-Villamar said.

— Travis Willse

LLC

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said, but added that they do not have the storage space some students would like. Rooms in the LLC would be roughly 225 square feet, much larger than the average 150 square foot rooms in the existing residence halls.

The LLC project has been several years in the making and has faced many obstacles. First, a site had to be found to house the new residence hall. Sites in the East Campus project area and the Bean Hall parking lot were considered but discarded because of their distance from the University's academic core.

"There was a thought that the chance of this project's success was higher closer to the center of campus," Tepfer said.

CPC members were also concerned that a new residence hall would not be the best use for a prime piece of campus real estate and that placing a building in that area would increase the overall density of campus, destroying its pastoral character.

These density concerns were solved in two ways, Tepfer explained. First, the building was designed using glass walls for a staircase and performance areas to give the building a more open, walk-through feel. Second, portions of the Long Range Campus

Development Plan referring to density had to be amended. The original LLC plan, which called for a 200,000 square foot building, was larger and more dense than the original development plan allowed for.

In a letter sent to University President David Frohnmayer on Feb. 25, members of the Campus Planning Committee asked Frohnmayer to consider the amendments a one-time exception and not a precedent for future decisions.

Larry Gilbert, the project's landscape architect, said that 15 trees will have to be removed before the project is completed. Gilbert said that 30 to 40 large canopy trees and three to four conifers will be planted to replace those trees removed by construction.

Construction is slated to begin this month and continue until the LLC opens in fall 2006. Eyster said there would be some noise and dust but that the University is going to complete the noisiest parts of construction this summer while no one is living in the residence halls. Housing is also working to keep students informed about the project.

Further information about the LLC as well as updates on the construction project can be found at <http://housing.uoregon.edu/construction/>.

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EMU

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and I want us to make a plan and help them make that happen," Kau said.

As business manager, Sun manages accounting functions for the EMU, the student photo ID Card Office, Information Technology and staff and student programs. She also works with staff and students to prepare upcoming budgets.

Sun said she brings technical skills, people skills and professional experience in accounting and financial system management to the job.

Kau has lived in Eugene for most of his life and previously worked as a program manager at the Hult Center. In that position, he collaborated on several joint projects with the University.

"These projects were my favorite events, which made me think it would be very cool to work at the U of O," Kau said.

Kau also taught a spring course at the University in arts and administration and loved working with the students.

"When you get out and work in a professional setting, your energy gets limited," he said. "Working in that setting totally energized me, so I want to take that and bring that here and develop it for students."

Mandy Chong, office coordinator for the Cultural Forum, says she thinks the University will benefit from Kau's academic connections.

"Whenever the University can make a cross-departmental connection, we all win," she said.

Gregg Lobisser, director of student activities, is excited to have Kau join the staff.

"He will provide wonderful leadership for the Cultural Forum," he said.

Although Kau has only been on the job a few

days, he is looking at student surveys and at the campus holistically to establish and develop goals, Lobisser said. Kau would like to establish an internship program and build a strong presence on campus and in the community through marketing and programming strategies.

Kau said he has always been involved with the arts at some level. Growing up, he played the piano and still performs musical theater. He said his hands-on creative outlet is in the kitchen.

"I am a secret gourmet chef," he said.

Kau said he also enjoys the great outdoors of the Northwest, including rafting and hiking.

EMU employee Susan Racette, who has trained Sun for the past week, said she is confident in Sun's abilities. She is a quick learner and brings a solid accounting background to the table, Racette said.

"(Sun has) the desire to make the EMU a happier place for students and staff," she said.

Sun, who worked for United Way for seven years as chief financial officer, said working on campus is a great experience.

"It's a beautiful campus surrounded by history and old growth," she said. "I love the interactions with all different people."

Helen Dean, development assistant for United Way, worked with Sun for four years.

"She truly has everyone's welfare in mind," Dean said. "Her heart is in the right place."

Sun loves working and had to learn to make time for other things.

"I used to just work, work, work," she said. "My husband taught me to keep good balance between family and work."

When Sun isn't working, she loves hiking, bicycling, skiing, riding motorcycles with her husband,

and shopping with her daughter, who is a college student at the University of Washington.

Sun was born and raised in China where she received her first degree in textile engineering. She worked for the central government in Beijing at the textile industry ministry. Sun left China during the 1980s when there was a revolution in China among young college graduates.

"College graduates disliked the system and didn't think the system could help young graduates to learn to grow," Sun said.

Students wanted to go out to explore the world and see what other countries had to offer, she said.

Sun moved to Canada and lived there for over a year, studying, learning the culture and eventually meeting her husband.

She later moved to Eugene and worked as a Certified Public Accountant in Portland and Eugene. She eventually went into private accounting at United Way after deciding she needed more time for her family.

"I realized I wanted to spend more time with my daughter, because she's growing up," she said.

Now that Sun is working for the University, she is excited about the opportunities before her.

"Because I am from a different cultural background, I hope I can bring diversity and values that enhance what we have here to make it a better, healthy, vibrant place for students and staff," she said.

Kau is also excited.

"(At the University) I am looking forward to learning and growing myself, that's what's great about an educational institution, it's an ongoing process and I want to continue that kind of energy forward, and that's exciting."

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