

# Oregon Gov announces her re-election

## Kate Brown casts herself as counterweight to Trump

ANDREW SELSKY  
ASSOCIATED PRESS

Oregon Gov. Kate Brown officially announced her long-anticipated bid for re-election on Sept. 25, casting herself as a liberal counterweight to President Donald Trump.

Brown made the announcement via a statement, social media and a YouTube video.

A montage of images — a placard saying “make America hate again,” a street protest in Washington, Trump, smokestacks spewing pollution — kicked off the video with an ominous soundtrack. It then showed picturesque images of Oregon’s countryside and of Portland, accompanied by gentle chords on a piano.

“As your governor, it’s my job to make things better, to stand up to anyone

who would take our rights away,” the Democratic governor said.

Since taking office in 2015, Brown has shored up protections for immigrants in Oregon who are in the U.S. illegally, successfully pushed for the phasing out of coal-generated power and last month signed into law a bill expanding coverage on abortions and other reproductive services.

Her campaign has raised at least \$1.25 million in cash from more than 10,000 contributions since Jan. 1.

Knute Buehler, a Republican state lawmaker and orthopedic surgeon from Bend, is running for the GOP nomination for governor. He has raised at least \$1.13 million since April 3, the day he announced his candidacy, from at least 2,887 contributors.

Rebecca Tweed, Buehler’s campaign manager, was dismissive of Brown’s announcement.

“Under Kate Brown, Oregonians can expect more of the same — failed leadership, failing schools, and an endless cycle of chaos, corruption and incompetence in and around state government. Knute Buehler will bring the change Oregon needs,” Tweed said in an email.

Oregon’s high school graduation rate is ranked 48th in the nation. Student-teacher ratios are often disproportionately large. A ballot measure that would have helped by increasing business taxes, with revenue earmarked for education, health care, and senior citizens services, was rejected by voters last November.

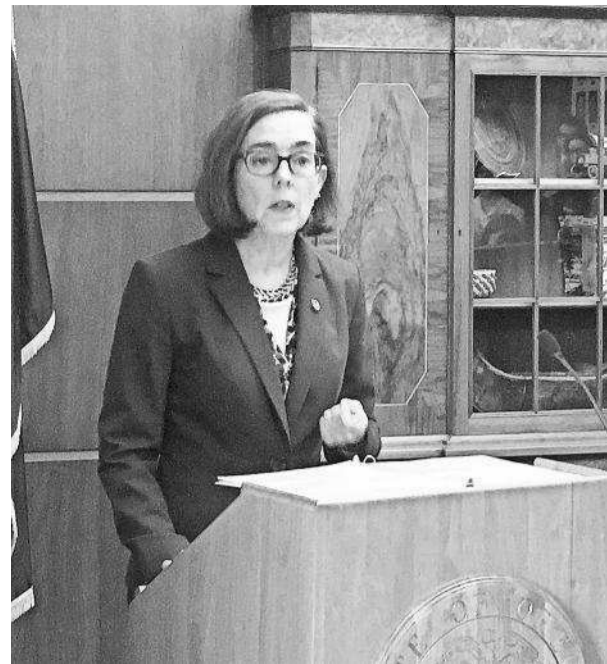
Brown, who held the

state’s second-highest elected office, secretary of state, became governor in 2015 when then Gov. John Kitzhaber, a Democrat, resigned amid an influence-peddling inquiry. She then ran in 2016 to fill the remaining two years of Kitzhaber’s term, beating Bud Pierce, the Republican nominee and Salem oncologist.

She now again finds herself seeking support.

Since Trump was elected, Brown and several other Democratic governors have joined forces to oppose White House positions on immigration, health care, and a threatened federal crackdown on marijuana in states where it’s legal — including Oregon.

The last Republican governor in heavily Democratic Oregon was Victor Atiyeh, who served from 1979 to 1987.



Oregon Gov. Kate Brown speaks in the Capitol ceremonial office in Salem, Ore., in this April photo. Brown formally announced via a press statement and YouTube video Sept. 25 that she will run for re-election. AP

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## Online signatures proposed

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EUGENE - Some Oregon activists are pushing for the state to implement a system that would allow voter signatures to be gathered electronically for initiative petitions.

A grass-roots effort is calling for petitions to be signed online so more initiatives can bypass the Legislature and go directly before voters, The Register-Guard reported on Sept. 27.

Under the current initiative process, backers of proposed public policies are required to collect a set number of physical signatures with pen

and paper in order to get a measure qualified for the ballot. Many successful initiatives typically involve financial backing to pay for people to gather signatures.

Of the 415 initiative petitions filed since November 2006, 27 have qualified to go before voters.

David Carlson, the chief petitioner for the proposal, said a system that allows online signing would enable more initiatives without major financial backing to qualify. It would also make the process more convenient for voters, he said.

“We live in 2017. The in-

ternet is available and accessible to almost all Oregonians,” Carlson said. “People do everything online.”

Under the proposal, voters would sign petitions on a state website administered by the secretary of state. Voters’ identities would be verified through a Social Security number or an Oregon driver’s license number.

Our Oregon, the advocacy group backed by public employee unions, has opposed the proposal and filed challenges to the attorney general and the Oregon Supreme Court.

Our Oregon spokeswoman Katherine Dries-

sen said that the proposal is not the right way to update the system and that it’s problematic to have the partisan secretary of state administer it.

Carlson said that from a meeting he had with officials from the group, they expressed concerns that the proposal would make it easier for conservative backed initiatives to qualify for the ballot.

“If a lot of these (right-wing) causes got on the ballot, they’d lose by 10 or 15 (percentage) points,” Carlson said. “We have a fairly informed, more liberal voter base here.”

## Law

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road before keying in a phone number or address.

This rule will also apply to those cruising through parking lots.

Being stopped at an intersection or light doesn’t give you a free pass to grab your phone.

As a motorcycle patrol officer, Mason said he frequently pulls alongside people glued to their phones at stop lights and stop signs.

“Obviously, if your eyes are down and looking at your tablet or your phone, your eyes aren’t up looking at the traffic and what’s happening out there,” he said. “You never know what’s going to hap-

pen.”

### Can I hold my phone to text and make calls?

This has been illegal for years and will continue to be, Mason said. Using voice text or speakerphones are okay as long as the driver isn’t holding the phone.

### Can I scroll through Instagram or Facebook while driving?

A loophole in the previous law made this technically legal, but the new law took away the gaps and “gray areas,” Mason said.

The new law allows officers to pull over drivers checking their social media accounts and read-

ing posts.

“We shouldn’t be playing Angry Birds or going on Facebook while we’re driving around,” he said.

### Does this law include other distracted driving behaviors like eating or putting on makeup?

No, but you can still be ticketed if you drive carelessly or commit a traffic violation while eating, putting on makeup, shaving or drinking coffee while driving.

### What if I'm an Uber or Lyft driver? Can I tap my phone to accept a ride request?

If it’s only a single tap or swipe, then it’s okay. Anything more would require the driver to pull over and park, Mason said.

### How much are the fines for people ticketed under the new law?

Those convicted of a

first-time distracted driving offense not contributing to a crash face a presumptive fine of \$260, with a maximum fine of \$1,000. Starting on Jan. 1, the court may suspend the fine for first-time offenders if the driver completes an approved distracted driving avoidance course within four months.

Although the fine would be suspended, the violation would still remain on the offender’s driving record.

A second-time offense or one involving a crash carries a presumptive fine of \$435 and a maximum fine of \$2,500.

Committing a third distracted driving offense in a 10-year span is considered a misdemeanor. The minimum fine is \$2,000, but repeat offenders could face a \$6,250 fine and up to one year in jail.

For questions, comments and news tips, email reporter Whitney Woodworth at [wmwoodworth@statesmanjournal.com](mailto:wmwoodworth@statesmanjournal.com), call 503-399-6884 or follow on Twitter @wmwoodworth

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## Deer

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vested meat be given to a local food bank or charitable organization, at the city’s expense. And it stipulates that eradication efforts stop once an urban deer population is at “a level that no longer constitutes a public nuisance.”

It’s too early for Silverton to participate in the pilot program, but several residents have already asked its leaders to do so.

One of them is Josiah Kelley, who testified before the council last month that a deer attacked and injured his dog and charged him and his wife. When deer lose their natural fear of humans, they can occasionally become aggressive, especially during mating seasons and when fawns have just been born, biologists said.

“I don’t feel it’s safe for my kids to go out in my backyard,” Kelley said.

With the exception of Councilors Laurie Carter and Jason Freilinger, who oppose taking deer in the city limits, Silverton’s councilors have said little in public about the state’s new program. Carter urged residents to build fences to protect themselves and their property instead. She is an avid gardener who expects to lose some of her roses to deer each year.

“Having deer in our town is part of what makes small-town life in Silverton precious,” she said. “I think a lot of people think deer are like rats. I think they’re beautiful. I love watching them.”

So far, councilors have worked together to stop residents from feeding deer on purpose. Starting at a Sept. 18 work session, they began considering a new ordinance prohibiting the intentional feeding of deer. Having such a law on the books is also one of the requirements for cities that want to participate in the nuisance deer pilot program.