

DAILY
PLANNER

TODAY

Today is Saturday, March 7, the 67th day of 2020. There are 299 days left in the year.



TODAY'S HIGHLIGHT

On March 7, 1965, a march by civil rights demonstrators was violently broken up at the Edmund Pettus Bridge in Selma, Alabama, by state troopers and a sheriff's posse in what came to be known as "Bloody Sunday."

ON THIS DATE

In 1793, during the French Revolutionary Wars, France declared war on Spain.

In 1876, Alexander Graham Bell received a U.S. patent for his telephone.

In 1911, President William Howard Taft ordered 20,000 troops to patrol the U.S.-Mexico border in response to the Mexican Revolution.

In 1912, Norwegian explorer Roald Amundsen arrived in Hobart, Australia, where he dispatched telegrams announcing his success in leading the first expedition to the South Pole the previous December.

In 1926, the first successful trans-Atlantic radio-telephone conversations took place between New York and London.

In 1936, Adolf Hitler ordered his troops to march into the Rhineland, thereby breaking the Treaty of Versailles and the Locarno Pact.

In 1945, during World War II, U.S. forces crossed the Rhine at Remagen, Germany, using the damaged but still usable Ludendorff Bridge.

In 1975, the U.S. Senate revised its filibuster rule, allowing 60 senators to limit debate in most cases, instead of the previously required two-thirds of senators present.

In 1994, the U.S. Navy issued its first permanent orders assigning women to regular duty on a combat ship — in this case, the USS Eisenhower.

In 2001, Ariel Sharon was sworn in as Israel's prime minister, serving until he suffered a stroke in 2006.

In 2005, President George W. Bush nominated John Bolton to be U.S. ambassador to the United Nations, an appointment that ran into Democratic opposition, prompting Bush to make a recess appointment.

LOTTERY

Megabucks: \$5.6 million
5-7-11-35-36-43

Mega Millions: \$70 million
8-12-33-56-64-2 x2

Powerball: \$100 million
18-43-58-60-68-14 x2

Win for Life: March 4
16-18-46-58

Pick 4: March 5
• 1 p.m.: 2-7-6-1
• 4 p.m.: 1-3-0-4
• 7 p.m.: 2-2-8-0
• 10 p.m.: 7-9-5-2

Pick 4: March 4
• 1 p.m.: 9-0-2-8
• 4 p.m.: 0-1-2-3
• 7 p.m.: 2-7-9-8
• 10 p.m.: 3-4-2-9

DELIVERY ISSUES?

If you have any problems receiving your Observer, please call the office at 541-963-3161.

QUOTE OF THE DAY

"In a democracy dissent is an act of faith. Like medicine, the test of its value is not in its taste, but in its effects."

— J. William Fulbright,
U.S. senator

Oregon Legislature

DO NOTHING
SESSION
ENDS

■ Oregon's 2020 legislative session ends with little to show after GOP walkout

By Lauren Dake

Oregon Public Broadcasting

SALEM — The 2020 Oregon legislative session is effectively over.

Lawmakers set out with a hefty policy agenda for the 35-day session: bills to prepare the state for an earthquake, changes to the way wildfires are fought, efforts to address the state's housing crisis and an ambitious climate change policy.

None of that happened.

Instead, Republicans in both the House and Senate left the Capitol last week to protest a cap-and-trade bill. This week, on Thursday, after the two sides spent days trying to end an impasse, legislative leaders unexpectedly adjourned the session three days before the constitutional deadline.

The unprecedented move meant more than one hundred bills perished — among them, bills to create an independent public records advocate, strengthen the state's gun laws, and declare a statewide homelessness emergency. Several of the bills were budget related, carving out money to address a mental health and foster care crisis.

From the start of this legislative session, it was clear Republicans could stage another walkout to kill the cap-and-trade bill.

Now that they have, what is less clear is how the Oregon State Legislature functions in the future.

"I guarantee you other states are gonna start copying this and that's how dangerous this is," said Senate President Peter Courtney, D-Salem.

Courtney, the state's longest-serving Senate President, a man who has long worked to protect the Legislature as an institution, said the damage done this legislative session is heartbreaking.

At this point, Courtney said, helping the institution recover is now as "important of an issue" as any legislation. The Salem Democrat said the Republicans' move to walk out effectively shifted the power into the hands of the governor now and in the future. Republicans should expect a significant power shift to the governor who will now legislate through executive order, Courtney warned.

Courtney said he would consider calling a special session in the future to



Sam Stites/Oregon Capital Bureau

Oregon House Speaker Tina Kotek, D-Portland, and Senate President Peter Courtney, D-Salem, each announced the session's end Thursday on the floor of their respective chambers. No one recalled a legislative session ending with virtually nothing approved.

change the state's quorum rules. Currently, two-thirds of lawmakers must be present in order to conduct business. This session, even though Democrats held super majorities in both chambers, they needed two Republicans to be present in both chambers in order to vote on bills.

Even Sen. Herman Baertschiger, R-Grants Pass, the Senate Minority Leader who led the walkouts, said denying a quorum sets a dangerous precedent. At a press conference on Thursday, he was asked whether he would support a Democratic effort to change the quorum rules so only a simple majority was required to do business.

"I would have to give that some considerable thought because when you have a supermajority or when you have a party that is that powerful it almost turns into mob rule," he said. "And the only thing the minority has is to deny quorum, but I would have to give it some more thought because I do really, really, really worry people are going to use this every time

they don't get their way This is not a good way to run a state, I can tell you that very much right now."

On the House floor Thursday afternoon, Speaker Tina Kotek, D-Portland — known for being an even-handed and pragmatic politician — gave a passionate speech calling what happened a "corrosion of our democratic process."

"This is a challenge I did not expect to face in my time as speaker," Kotek said. "I did not expect to face a constitutional crisis in which so many of our colleagues simply decide to stop showing up for work until they get their way."

Republicans in the Senate and House launched a walkout last week in order to block Senate Bill 1530, Democrats' signature climate change bill. The proposal would institute a cap-and-trade system in Oregon, creating a declining cap on the state's greenhouse gas emissions and forcing many polluters to pay for a portion of their emissions.

The Democrats' decision to end the session came shortly after Oregon Republicans said Thursday they were willing to return to the Capitol this weekend after more than a week away.

Senate Minority Leader Baertschiger and House Minority Leader Christine Drazan said they were open to attending floor sessions on March 8 — the session's constitutional deadline — to pass a series of budget bills.

But the statement by Republicans seemed to seal the legislative session's fate. Kotek fired back on the House floor:

"Now, after missing eight days of work and creating an insurmountable backlog of good bills and good budgets, the Republican leaders say they want to come back with 12 hours left so they can pick and choose what bills live and die," Kotek said. "This would mean that after days of shirking their duties, they simply get to return and decide they can unilaterally kill all bills of their choosing."

Coronavirus

Private insurers to
waive COVID-19
testing costs

By Rachel Alexander

Oregon Capital Bureau

SALEM — Most private Oregon insurers will waive the patients' share in the cost of testing for COVID-19, Gov. Kate Brown's office announced Thursday afternoon as the state braces for a growing number of cases of the novel coronavirus.

Brown's office reached an agreement with eight major private insurers to spare insured Oregonians from co-pays and other such costs for testing and a vaccine if one becomes available.

"I'd like to thank Oregon's insurers for partnering with the state, so that medical providers can issue COVID-19 tests to anyone who needs one," Brown said in a news release. "No one should have to ask if getting a COVID-19 test is something they can afford. I hope this agreement sets a framework that other states can follow nationwide."

The deal comes with some caveats. It applies to testing only at in-network providers or urgent care facilities, as well as all emergency rooms.

Not yet participating are four of the state's 10 largest insurers, who collectively cover about 92,000 people, according to data from the Department of Consumer and Business Services. They are United Healthcare, Cigna, Aetna and Health Care Insurance Corporation. Oregon Health Plan, which is run by the Oregon Health Authority, does not charge co-pays or deductibles to patients seeking testing.

Who's
participating?

Participating insurers are:

- BridgeSpan Health Company
 - Health Net Health Plan of Oregon, Inc.
 - Kaiser Permanente
 - Moda Health Plan, Inc.
 - PacificSource Health Plans
 - Providence Health Plans
 - Regence Blue Cross Blue Shield
 - Samaritan Health Plans, Inc.
- Collectively, they insure about 1 million Oregonians and include most health plans sold on the state's individual and group insurance markets.

TEN DEPOT STREET

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Joe Horst

Suicides

CDC: State ranks 11th in U.S.

Observer staff

SALEM — Suicide was the No. 1 cause of death in 2018 for Oregonians age 10-24, according to a new report from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, claiming 129 Oregonians in the age group.

Five young people in Union County in 2018 were hospitalized due to self-harm, according to the CDC data, but there were no deaths from suicides. Wallowa County had no hospitalizations or deaths. Baker County had one hospitalization and two deaths. Umatilla County had five hospitalizations and two deaths.

"Suicide continues to be a concerning problem in Oregon across all age groups, including youth, as this new data confirms," Dana Hargunani, Oregon Health Authority's chief medical officer, said in a statement. "We continue to prioritize our work across Oregon to support young people in schools,

at home and in our communities."

The CDC now ranks Oregon the 11th highest in the nation for youth death rates, up from 17th in 2017. The former leading causes of death for young Oregonians were unintentional injury, which includes drug overdoses and vehicle crashes. According to the Oregon Health Authority, the unintentional injury rate decreased from 2017 to 2018 while the suicide rate rose.

Oregon Gov. Kate Brown included more than \$6 million for suicide prevention in her 2019-21 biennium budget. According to the Oregon Health Authority, this is the first time the state has funded the work, which includes money for Oregon's 24/7 Suicide Prevention Lifeline, creating statewide access to suicide prevention programming and addressing LGBTQ youth, veterans and other higher risk groups.

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