

Oscar winner 'Nomadland' based on book by former Oregon journalist

By **AMY WANG**

The Oregonian/OregonLive

Sunday's big winner at the Academy Awards has an Oregon connection: The book that inspired "Nomadland" was written by a former reporter for The Oregonian/OregonLive.

"Nomadland," which follows a woman in her 60s as she takes up a nomadic lifestyle after losing everything in the Great Recession, won Best Picture. Its director, Chloé Zhao, won Best Director, becoming the first woman of color and the second woman ever to win that award. Frances McDormand won Best Actress, her third such Oscar.

To write the 288-page book "Nomadland: Surviving America in the Twenty-First Century," published in 2017, Jessica Bruder traveled for several years throughout the West and worked alongside her



Jessica Bruder atop Halen, her van. She spent three years reporting on campsites, job sites and other domains of those who prefer to live a life without the burden of rent and mortgages.

subjects at low-wage jobs.

Bruder worked in The Oregonian's now-closed Clackamas County bureau for nearly two years between 2006 and 2008, primarily covering breaking news, crime and the courts.

In a recent virtual appearance hosted by Clark College's journalism program, Bruder, who now teaches narrative writing at Columbia University's Graduate School of Journalism, said of her book, "I would love to see it become less relevant. I would love for people to look at it and say, that's crazy that things were that way."

She added, "Hopefully we will actually do something about it. I'm worried that even if we do get to a better place, that it will come too late for some people."

Noting that many of the people she met while reporting "Nomad-

land" were at or near retirement age, she added, "I did feel sadness for America. It was only leavened by the creativity and amazing spirit of people I met on the road, which is real and tangible."

The people she met, she said, were at once homogenous and "incredibly diverse" — one person had been a McDonald's executive in the 1970s, while others had been on the "low wage-earning treadmill" for decades.

"Every story was a new story and I tried to treat it that way in the writing," she said.

Bruder called the book a "dream project." She was credited as a consulting producer on the movie and said she occasionally spoke with McDormand on the set.

On her Twitter account Sunday night, she posted a photo of herself clutching an Oscar in each hand and wrote, "What a night."

Oregon House passes bills aimed at changing policing

By **PETER WONG**

Oregon Capital Bureau

SALEM — Five bills aimed at changing policing practices, plus four related measures, have cleared the Oregon House by near-unanimous votes.

All the bills go to the Senate. Five other policing bills, which are likely to affect state agencies, are pending in the Legislature's joint budget committee.

All emerged from the Judiciary Committee and a subcommittee focused on policing. It follows up the work of a 2020 special session called by Gov. Kate Brown after the murder of George Floyd in Minneapolis last year. A former officer was convicted last week on charges of murder and manslaughter; three other officers are awaiting trial. Floyd's death touched off nationwide protests for racial justice, among them more than 100 nights in Portland.

Rep. Janelle Bynum, a Democrat from Clack-

amas who leads the full committee and the subcommittee, said lawmakers heard from local governments and associations of police executives and rank-and-file officers, not just groups advocating sweeping change.

"I want to make it clear this was not an opportunity to dig in and bash," said Bynum. "It was an opportunity to create a community table, where people around the state had a chance to have some input on who protects them and their communities."

Rep. Ron Noble, a Republican from McMinnville, a former police chief of that city and a former officer in Corvallis, said all the bills should be considered in context — not individually. He made his comments while speaking about House Bill 2929, which requires police to report misconduct by officers or violations of standards.

"This bill by itself won't do anything," Noble said.

"This bill, combined with the others that are coming before you, will create the ability and the safety for police officers to speak out when others act inappropriately, use excessive force, or just generally are unfit for the job."

Bynum spoke about the experience of Elijah Warren, who emerged from his home in East Portland to talk to police about the effects on his family of tear gas they used to disperse a demonstration on Sept. 5. While he did so, an officer struck him on the ear with a baton. The officer was found later to have been identified in other incidents of excessive force.

Bynum said the city of Portland, as far as she knows, has not responded as to whether the officer was disciplined.

"What we do know from reporting is that when officers do not intervene to stop their colleagues' misconduct, it allows law enforcement to act with impunity,"

she said. "Whether it is before, during or after an incident, that is wrong."

House Bill 2929 passed, 58-0. It specifies who should receive reports of misconduct or violations (supervisors), when they should start investigations (72 hours), and when they should be completed (three months). If there is evidence to support them, reports must be filed with the state Department of Public Safety Standards and Training.

Other bills

Listed below are summaries of the other bills and their votes:

• **House Bill 2513, 58-0:** Police must have training in child and adult cardiopulmonary resuscitation, plus training at the public safety academy about airway and circulatory anatomy and physiology. Police also are required to summon emergency medical services if "tactically feasible" and have access to communications.

• House Bill 2936, 54-4:

The state must investigate the backgrounds of potential officers — including financial and psychological information, and ties with racism or racist organizations — who attend the public safety academy in Salem. Police agencies must set standards for speech and expression by officers on and off the job.

• House Bill 3059, 58-0:

Police authority to disperse "unlawful assemblies" is modified, so that if there are arrests, police must make them based on actual crimes, not simply for failure to disperse. Bynum said, "This simple clarification allows a declaration of unlawful assembly to be used as more of a tool to prevent a disaster or mitigate harm to people or damage to property."

• House Bill 3355, 58-0:

Police assigned to work crowd management in cities over 150,000 (Portland, Eugene, Salem) must wear identification — either

a name or number — and outerwear that signifies the officer's jurisdiction, such as "police" or "sheriff."

Four more

Four other bills passed by the House also affect aspects of policing:

• **House Bill 2986, 58-0,** requires police training at the state academy for investigation of crimes based on the gender of the victim.

• **House Bill 3047, 58-0,** allows civil lawsuits and recovery of damages for intentional disclosure of personal information that is aimed at harassing or harming a person, a practice known as "doxing."

• **House Bill 3164, 48-10,** modifies the crime of interfering with police to make it clear it applies to active resistance.

• **House Bill 3273, 54-4,** bars disclosure of police mug shots except under specified circumstances, including "law enforcement purposes" and convictions in court.

Bill aims to help forewarn police of deaf driver during traffic stops

By **ANDREW SELSKY**

Associated Press

SALEM — A deaf driver is pulled over by the police. The officer approaches the car.

The driver doesn't respond to commands. The situation escalates, sometimes with fatal results. It's something deaf people worry about.

"They are scared to communicate with law enforcement officers because they

are worried they would be shot in case they 'act' as if they are not listening to the police officers' instructions," said Steven Brown, vice president of Oregon Association of the Deaf.

The Oregon Senate unanimously passed a bill on Monday, April 26, to keep such situations from developing. It was earlier passed by the House, also unanimously. It allows a person who is deaf or hard

of hearing to have that noted on their vehicle's registration and on their driver's license.

"The intent behind the measure is to provide law enforcement with this information before they come in contact with an individual who is deaf or hard of hearing," Lindsay Baker, assistant director of the Oregon Department of Transportation, testified in support of the bill.

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