

# THE OBSERVER

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## Proposed law would limit some traffic stops

Senate Bill 1510 would remove police ability to initiate traffic stops for lighting issues

By ALEX WITTWER  
EO Media Group

EASTERN OREGON — Police officers might not be able to pull over Oregon drivers for faulty lights starting next year if a bill in the Legislature becomes law.

Senate Bill 1510 would limit police officers from initiating traffic stops for taillight, headlight or other light issues, as well as require officers to secure verbal consent in order to search a vehicle. Drivers will also not have to worry about getting fix-it tickets — those would be unen-



Bell

forceable unless the lighting or equipment violation was accompanied by another violation such as speeding. If passed, the legislative would take effect on Jan. 1, 2023.

The Senate bill is part of a broader reform initiative started in the 2021 legislative session with House Bill 2002 — a 47-page document that would have made sweeping changes to Oregon's criminal justice system. That bill died in the 2021 legislative session. The change to the laws regarding police officers initiating traffic stops from lighting violations comes from text within HB2002.

Testimony for the bill was largely in support of the new restrictions on police stops, citing racial disparities in the Oregon criminal justice system and the use of pretextual police stops as a way to target minorities.

But for rural law enforcement officials, the inability to stop vehicles with faulty lighting is a concern for safety.

"I'm not in favor of that legislative change," said La Grande Police Chief Gary Bell. "The way I see it, essentially, we're talking about a public safety issue. I understand that this is packaged in some of the criminal justice reform legislation efforts, and I appreciate those efforts."

Bell said that often in inclement weather or low light —

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Alex Wittwer/EO Media Group, File

Michael Day, a student in the woodshop class at Union High School works on a project on Monday, Jan. 31, 2022. Students in the district's revamped woodshop and welding classes often build small items that can be sold to the community so the school can replace materials. The district plans to construct a covered outdoor work area where larger items, such as garden sheds and greenhouses, can be built.

## Getting bigger?

Union district exploring expansion of high school's career and technical education center

By DICK MASON  
The Observer

UNION — Union High School's career and technical education center is set to soon expand.

Preliminary plans are in place to add a classroom, a robotics lab and a covered outdoor work area to Union High School's CTE center. The additions will add 5,000 square feet of building space to the high school's campus. The addition of the outdoor work area, which will have one or two walls open, will allow high school students to build larger items, including garden sheds, greenhouses and play structures.

"We want to expand the program so students can build things on a larger scale that can be sold in the community," said Union School District Superintendent Carter Wells.

The classroom will be used for the Union High School's new geometry construction program. Students in the program attend a geometry class and then immediately move to a woodshop to tackle projects applying geometric concepts they are learning. Currently, stu-



Alex Wittwer/EO Media Group, File

John Townsend, center right, assists student Wyatt McCants with a project during woodshop class at Union High School on Monday, Jan. 31, 2022.

*"We will see what we can afford. I'm hopeful that we will receive an offer we cannot refuse."*

Carter Wells, Union School District superintendent

dents in the high school geometry class have to walk across campus to reach the shop. Once the new classroom is built, geometry students would be adjacent to the woodshop, allowing them to

make a quick transition, providing them with extra time to work on construction projects.

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## Survey finds optimism is in short supply in Oregon

By SUZANNE ROIG  
The Bulletin

BEND — Optimism is in short supply these days, according to a survey of Oregonians by the Values and Beliefs Center.

And more than half those surveyed feel Oregon is headed down the wrong path, according to the survey of 1,400 residents from Jan. 13-20.

"It is sad that people are unhappy," said Amaury Vogel, Oregon Values and Beliefs Center associate executive director. "I think it's more sad that they are not hopeful that things are going

to get better and that they feel their elected officials are not going to make progress in making things better."

Rising prices, two years of pandemic-related restrictions and a distrust for politicians are contributing to the amount of optimism people feel.

The emotional climate of Oregonians is a complex issue, said Peter Sparks, Oregon State University-Cascades senior instructor and program coordinator for the psychology program.

"There is likely to be many complex issues that have led people to be pessimistic, and

helping people become more optimistic will be difficult," Sparks said of the survey results.

According to the survey, 53% of those surveyed say they're optimistic about 2022, compared to roughly the same period in 2021 when 59% surveyed said they were very or somewhat optimistic.

More than half those surveyed also felt that the state was headed in the wrong direction, a feeling that is about the same as it was in February 2021, according to the results.

"They (lawmakers) will be able to make significant progress in benefitting the opinions of

Portlanders, but certainly not the whole Oregon, which is largely at odds with Portland and its politics," wrote Savannah Singleton, a Deschutes County resident, in a response to a survey question.

A deeper dive into the results shows that 62% of those surveyed are not optimistic that the Legislature and the governor will be able to make any progress on key issues during the current legislative session.

"Despite a nearly two-thirds majority in the Legislature, somehow I suspect that the nut job

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### WEATHER Full forecast on the back of B section

<b>COLD</b>	Tonight	<b>COLD</b>	Wednesday
	4 LOW		23/9
	Bitterly cold		Quite cold

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THURSDAY

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