

Salem Report

By Representative Brad Witt



I have always encouraged my constituents to contact my office when they feel strongly about an issue that is making its way through the legislative process. Getting feedback from the district helps inform my decisions when it comes time to vote. Email makes contact really easy, and this session, we have had a record number of letters in the inbox. Some are personal, and I like those; others are form letters sent via organizational websites. These are less helpful, nevertheless I take note of them all knowing that, regardless of the vehicle, you have felt deeply enough to send it along. I thought I would take this opportunity to share why some people are writing to their state representative.

As you may know, Southern Oregon was the site of considerable in-stream mining for precious metals until January 2016, when a moratorium was placed on the use of motorized suction dredging in some streams essential to indigenous salmon and bull trout habitat. This became particularly important when California closed their streams to suction dredge mining, and recreational miners came across the border to continue that activity. SB 3A lifts the current moratorium but puts in place specific permit conditions regarding motorized in-stream placer mining. In a nutshell, it stipulates that in the streams where there is sensitive, protected fish habitat, you cannot mine. In all other streams, you CAN mine, though of course you must obtain a permit and mine responsibly. This bill is the product of several years of work by groups including the Tribes, state and federal agencies, the environmental community and the miners. It is a tribute to the late Senator, Dr. Alan Bates, who worked tirelessly to reach consensus on this issue so important in his district.

Another bill of interest is SB 964, which allows hospitals in Oregon to grant, refuse or revoke hospital privileges to Physicians Assistants. Many of us use a PA these days, but current state law limits admitting privileges to only physicians and nurse practitioners. This strict interpretation creates a greater burden on those responsible for patient care and it does nothing to benefit the patient. As health care continues to evolve, this bill permits hospitals and clinics to be responsive to the needs of their patients in a timely and cost effective manner by allowing a PA admitting privileges.

Many of you have also written me with strong feelings about the fate of the Elliott State Forest. You've made it clear that you want this beautiful resource to remain in public hands. The State Land Board, consisting of the Governor, the Treasurer and the Secretary of State, manages these and other state forests, and their mandate is to do so in a manner that will provide funds for the Common School Fund. In recent years, logging has been severely restricted, and managing the Elliott has been a net money-loser. It appears that the State Land Board has now come to an agreement to retain the Elliott in public hands, but still to be decided is how to decouple this asset from its school funding obligations. Stay tuned as we are only half way there.

Finally, we have received a ton of letters on SCR 18, the Resolution that would change the state bird from the Western Meadowlark to the Osprey. As background, the Meadowlark was chosen as the state bird in 1927, by school children across the state in a poll sponsored by the Oregon Audubon Society. All of our letters have been adamantly opposed to a change; or if a change is to be considered, you have indicated that it should be accomplished once again by the children of Oregon. I couldn't agree more. The bill passed the Senate, with our esteemed Senator

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Vernonia Police Blotter • May 17-31, 2017

Reports Taken/Arrests

- May 18, 2017 Report of property damage near North Mist Drive
- May 20, 2017 Arrest for Violation of Probation, Reckless Driving, and Driving While Suspended near Rose Avenue
- May 20, 2017 Report of Criminal Mischief near Rose Avenue
- May 22, 2017 Arrest on a Warrant near Jefferson Avenue

- May 26, 2017 Arrest on a Warrant near Jefferson Avenue

Citations/Other

- May 16, 2017 Cited for No Operator's License and No Insurance near Nehalem Hwy. S.
- May 28, 2017 Cited for Expired Registration near East Avenue
- May 29, 2017 Cited for Driving While Suspended near Grant Avenue

Vernonia Police Department responds to calls that do not always end in Arrest, Report, or Citation. 05/01/2017 through 05/31/2017 VPD had 342 calls for service.

The Vernonia Transfer Station is open on the 2nd and 4th Saturday from 8am-2pm

**June 10 & 24
July 8 & 22**

Dates and times are subject to change due to weather

Vernonia City Council Meetings and Closures

City Council Meetings are scheduled for 7:00 pm:
Monday, June 5, 2017
Monday, June 19, 2017

City Closures are scheduled for:
Tuesday, July 4, 2017
Independence Day Holiday

Dates and times subject to change

Reserve Police Officer Job Announcement

The Vernonia Police Department has openings for Reserve Police Officers. Interested citizens can obtain an application and complete job description in person at the Vernonia Police Department. Minimum qualifications include, but not limited to: must have a high school diploma or GED; must be at least 21 years of age and be a U.S. Citizen; have a valid Oregon driver's license; be able to pass a criminal background investigation; and pass medical and psychological evaluations. Questions regarding the position should be directed to Chief Michael Conner (503) 429-7335 ext. 110.

Vernonia Dental



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