



U.S. Rep. Cliff Bentz speaks during a Vietnam War Veterans Day event at Central Oregon Veterans Ranch on Monday.

Dean Guernsey/Bulletin photos

Bentz: 'We'll do our best to fight for you just like you fought for us'

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"When people are expressing dissatisfaction then that means something's not working quite right, and we need to get in there and get to work," Bentz said in response to a question about what he learned from the day.

Other issues Bentz said he has heard about from constituents include the impacts from wildfire, COVID-19 and consistent droughts. The struggle business owners have to find enough workers to run their operations has also consistently come up, he said.

When asked why he didn't vote in favor of the federal government's most recent stimulus package, which allocated \$1,400 checks to individuals making \$75,000 a year or less, Bentz said the bill wasn't targeted enough to those who really needed it and he was concerned about the debt future generations would have to pay back. He said some businesses actually did better financially in the pandemic, and don't need the assistance.

"Many of the businesses that are now getting money don't need it," Bentz said in a separate interview Monday. "People are saying our schools are awash and yet they are going to be getting more."

When asked for specific examples of businesses that were getting money but didn't need it, Bentz referred The Bulletin to a press release. No specific businesses or industries were listed, but "bailouts for mismanaged public union pensions" and "policies that give federal bureaucrats better paid leave than those which are available to essential workers" were mentioned.

Bentz acknowledged that he has not reopened the Bend office formerly maintained by Walden, but said he will open a Central Oregon office in the future.

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U.S. Rep. Cliff Bentz, center, talks with veterans during the Vietnam War Veterans Day event.



Veteran Tom Marple and his dog Nick attend the event.

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Additional vaccines available for patients 45 and older, others

BY SUZANNE ROIG
The Bulletin

A federal program is enabling Mosaic Medical to offer COVID-19 vaccines to any patients 45 and older, and those who have been disproportionately affected by the virus, sooner than the state's schedule.

The same program will become a steady pipeline of vaccines for the La Pine Community Health Center to be given to its elderly population still in need of a COVID-19 vaccine.

The pilot program has been selected for nearly a dozen federally qualified health centers in Oregon and allows for vaccines to be given to patients outside of the Oregon Health Authority's schedule. As a federally qualified health center serving vulnerable populations, Mosaic Medical will allow for nearly three-fourths of its 27,000 patients to qualify for a vaccine, said Elaine Knobbs-Seasholtz, Mosaic Medical director of Strategy and Development.

"There are only two in the region in this federal program to give us direct dispersal in the next two weeks," Knobbs-Seasholtz said. "Our mission is to serve all those who need health care in the community with special outreach to vulnerable populations."

The pilot program is enabling the community to have yet another avenue for vaccines and doesn't take away from other vaccine channels into the community, said Morgan Emerson, Deschutes County Health Services spokeswoman.

"This will help expedite our capacity to vaccinate residents," Emerson said. "It doesn't take away from other vaccine channels coming into Deschutes County."

The county is among a group of counties with approval from Gov. Kate Brown to move beyond the state scheduling for vaccines to front-line workers and people 45 to 64 with qualifying health conditions.

As of last Wednesday, Deschutes County had vaccinated 80% of eligible residents age 65 and older, Emerson said. Anyone interested in receiving a vaccine should pre-register by going online at www.centraloregncovid-vaccine.com or calling 541-699-5109 Monday to Friday.

Mosaic and La Pine are part of a federal pilot program designed to expand vaccination efforts to communities most disproportionately affected by COVID-19.

The current guidelines to access the vaccine at Mosaic are:

- Mosaic patients age 45 or older;
- Mosaic patients eligible under Oregon Health Authority guidance (Phases 1a and 1b);
- Mosaic patients age 16 and older who meet at least one of the following conditions, homeless, a resident of public housing, a migrant/seasonal agricultural worker, having limited English proficiency or low-income as defined by federal guidelines;
- A Mosaic patient 45 years or older scheduling an appointment for a spouse/caregiver.

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