

Governor releases priorities for upcoming short session

Guns, PERS among issues

By **CLAIRE WITHYCOMBE**
Capital Bureau

SALEM — Gov. Kate Brown's priorities for the 2018 legislative session include efforts to pay down the state's public pension liability and tighten restrictions on gun ownership.

Brown, a Democrat who is running for re-election in November, released five proposals Wednesday ahead of the short session that begins Feb. 5 and will last up to 35 days.

Here are the governor's proposals:

• **Gun control:** This proposal lays out a previously voiced desire of the governor to close the "Boyfriend Loophole" by modifying state law to bar people convicted of misdemeanor stalking or domestic violence from purchasing a firearm.

The bill would also make sure that the authorities are notified when someone who is prohibited by law from buying a firearm tries to buy one, and have the state track information about those cases to learn where the reporting system can be improved.

• **Affordable housing:** The proposal would allow the state to temporarily waive fees and education requirements



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Gov. Kate Brown has released five proposals ahead of next month's short session of the Legislature.

(in favor of training experience "on the job") for construction professionals to obtain supervisory licenses from the state.

It would also create low-cost loans, administered by Business Oregon, to encourage subcontractors to work on affordable housing projects in rural areas.

Finally, it would also hand out grants for new equipment and tools for construction workers through Workforce Investment Boards to bring down business' costs of hiring more people.

• **PERS payday:** The state is facing an unfunded pension liability of about \$25 billion, and this proposal would create a fund to encourage public employ-

ers to save money to put toward their employees' retirement costs.

The state would contribute 25 cents for every dollar saved by public agencies, but it's not yet clear how much the proposal could shave from the unfunded liability, which is the amount of money that the state owes to retirees but can't currently pay.

• **Opioid epidemic:** The governor wants to take the first steps toward requiring drug manufacturers to register for the Prescription Drug Monitoring Program, create a four-county pilot program to test the efficacy of peer mentors for people having a drug overdose, and require the state's insurance commissioner to study how to improve access to addiction treatment.

• **State procurement practices:** This proposal would take several steps to bring down state government costs by changing how the state buys goods and services.

The bill would have the state test a "reverse auction" concept that would have sellers of goods or services valued at more than \$150,000 compete to win the state's business, and test an idea that would have the state study whether requiring 30 percent of evaluation criteria to be price.

The Capital Bureau is a collaboration between EO Media Group and Pamplin Media Group.

Initiative petition rules suspended in wake of lawsuit

By **PARIS ACHEN**
Capital Bureau

SALEM — Oregon Secretary of State Dennis Richardson announced Wednesday he will hold off on implementing changes to the state initiative petition rules that allow petitions to be circulated before a legal ballot description has been finalized.

He called on the Legislature — which convenes Feb. 5 — to codify the rule changes to streamline Oregon voters' ability to land proposals on the ballot.

The announcement came after Our Oregon, a union-backed political advocacy group, filed a lawsuit last week challenging the legality of the rule changes.

"Rather than ask a judge to discern what the Legislature intended years ago, it makes sense and will save court time and taxpayer money to simply ask the Legislature to provide definitive clarification during their upcoming session," Richardson said. "Avoiding litigation by seeking statutory clarification not only saves taxpayer money, it enables the Legislature to specifically protect Oregon voters from special interest groups that historically have sought to undermine the initiative process through costly and time-consuming litigation."

Contained in the State Initiative and Referendum Manual, the rule changes were intended to take effect Jan. 1 and would have applied to the 2018 election cycle. The manual instructs petitioners on how signatures may be collected during the ballot qualification process.

One of the changes allows petitioners to circulate a petition before a ballot title has been finalized, even when it has been appealed to the Oregon Supreme Court.

The ballot title is a short, unbiased description meant to give voters a clear under-

standing of what a ballot measure does.

The rule change was meant to prevent "special interests from using frivolous lawsuits to delay signature gathering by allowing grassroots petitioners to circulate petitions using the attorney general's certified ballot title during the appeal process," Richardson said.

Another rule change would give volunteers more ways to distribute single-signature petition sheets known as "e-sheets," which are easier to use and have higher validity rates than multiline petition sheets, Richardson said.

Our Oregon argued that the single-signature sheets create an additional loophole for fraudulent signatures.

Ben Unger, executive director of Our Oregon, said the rule changes "threatened the integrity of our initiative petition system."

"This is an important victory for Oregon voters, thousands of whom submitted comments to Richardson's office calling on him to stop his anti-democracy agenda," Unger added. "Not only does Richardson lack the legal authority to implement such changes — as confirmed by a recent legislative counsel opinion — but it is clear that his proposed changes were narrowly targeted to help only those hate groups that otherwise lack the popular support to qualify for the ballot."

Richardson's prospects for legislative changes in his favor appeared dim Wednesday. State Senate Majority Leader Ginny Burdick, D-Portland, said the Senate Rules Committee, of which she is chairwoman, plans to propose a bill to specifically outlaw circulating a petition before a ballot title has been through all legal channels and finalized.

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Meth arrests net six in Seaside

The Daily Astorian

SEASIDE — Six people were arrested in a bust on two apartments in the same complex in Seaside on Dec. 26.

Officers from the Clatsop County Sheriff's Office and Seaside Police Department, aided by the Cannon Beach Police Department, executed a search warrant at an apartment complex where they found two people in possession of methamphetamine.

Richard Paul Vogelsang, 42, was found in possession of 22 grams of methamphetamine valued at about \$1,000, along with digital scales, pack-



John Peppard



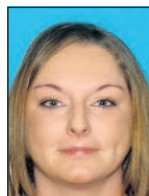
Richard Paul Vogelsang



James Mitchell Scarborough



Ashley Griffiths



Kasandra Dehart



Ashley Clarke

aging material and a firearm. Vogelsang was detained on a probation violation and taken to the Clatsop County Jail.

Kasandra Dehart, 36, was found in possession of a small amount of methamphetamine. Dehart was cited and released on the charge of frequenting a place where drugs are sold. The case was forwarded to the

Clatsop County District Attorney's Office for determination of additional charges.

The same night, a search in a different apartment brought four additional drug-related arrests.

James Mitchell Scarborough, 57, was arrested after being found in possession of a small amount of heroin.

John Peppard, 53, was charged with delivery of a controlled substance after being found in possession of approximately 16 grams of methamphetamine, digital scales, packaging material and about \$450.

Ashley Clarke, 29, and Ashley Griffiths, 29, were arrested for frequenting a place where drugs are sold.

Vancouver officials deal blow to proposed oil terminal

Associated Press

VANCOUVER, Wash. — The Port of Vancouver's Board of Commissioners has voted unanimously to terminate a rolling lease on property that would hold the nation's largest rail-to-marine oil terminal if the project's backers don't provide all the necessary permits by March.

The 3-0 vote Tuesday is another blow to the Vancouver Energy terminal. A key state energy council recommended in November that Washington state Gov. Jay Inslee deny the project, meaning that it will be almost impossible for the backers to meet the deadline on the lease.

Inslee has until the end of February to decide whether to accept the recommendation of the Energy Facility Site Evaluation Council.

"It's gratifying to have our commission be united in its vision for the future of the port and community," Commission President Eric LaBrant said in an emailed statement. "We still await the governor's decision on the project and we continue to be focused on supporting businesses, growing jobs and providing benefit to our community."

The joint venture of Tesoro Corp. and Savage

Companies would receive about 360,000 barrels of North American crude oil a day by trains at the port. The oil would then be loaded onto tankers and ships for transport to oil refineries up and down the West Coast.

The lease had automatically renewed every three months until Tuesday's action. Developers have said the terminal is needed to bring crude oil from North Dakota and other areas to a western U.S. port to meet growing fuel demands and future energy needs. They've argued that it could be built safely and would secure a reliable supply of energy for the state.

Tribes, environmental

groups and municipalities such as the city of Vancouver lined up against the project.

Opponents argued that the terminal would mostly benefit the energy needs of California — and potentially overseas markets in the future — while exposing Washington communities to all the public safety and environmental risks.

An environmental study

released last year found the proposed project included risks to health and safety that could not be entirely mitigated.

Those four risks were identified as train accidents, emergency response delays, negative impacts on low-income communities and the possibility that an earthquake would damage the facility's dock and cause an oil spill.

Clatsop Post 12
Spaghetti Dinner
with Salad and Garlic Bread
Friday Jan. 12th
4 pm until gone
\$8.00
6PM "Karaoke Dave"
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Calling all boys and girls ages **4-14**
Do you like to DANCE?
Then come dance with Astoria High School's Pizazz Dancers!
We will be teaching a dance warm-up, dance skills stations, and a half-time routine to your favorite pop music with focused groups providing different levels for various ages. Then on Friday, Jan. 26th you will have the option to join us as we perform at half-time, during the AHS Varsity basketball game! This is a fund-raiser to help with costs for our competition season. If you love to dance and perform, this is the clinic for you!
Hope to see you there!

DATE: Sat. Jan. 20th
TIME: 10am-Noon registration beginning at 9:45am with an optional half-time performance Friday the 26th at 7:20pm.
Where: AHS Gym
Cost: \$20. w/T-shirt \$12. without
Payment due the day of clinic. Contact Coach Kelly at kcraychee@gmail.com to preregister.

AHS DANCE TEAM

THE DAILY ASTORIAN'S CUTEST BABY CONTEST is Back!

If your baby was born between **January 1st & December 31st, 2017**, you can submit your newborn's picture either via email at: CLASSIFIEDS@DAILYASTORIAN.COM or drop by one of our offices in Astoria or Seaside and we can scan in the photo for you.

Deadline to enter is Thursday, January 25th at 5pm
Entries will be printed in The Daily Astorian on January 31st.

Human babies only please!

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FOUR FREE LESSONS

MONDAYS 10AM-12NOON
Starting Monday, January 22nd
OR
SUNDAYS 2-4PM
Starting Sunday, January 28th
(To be followed by ongoing Mini-Lessons and Supervised Play sessions)

◆ **EASY**
◆ **FUN**
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♣ **FREE!**

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email: skroning@centurylink.net to register (or just come along)

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we are family

Introducing Dung (Dee) Nguyen DO, Family Medicine

Dee Nguyen earned her medical degree from Nova-Southeastern University College of Osteopathic Medicine in Fort Lauderdale, Florida. She completed her residency at Christus Santa Rosa Family Medicine in San Antonio, Texas. She is board-certified in family medicine. She volunteered with AmeriCorps, and has worked with HIV/AIDS patients and in women's health. In her free time, she enjoys backpacking, hiking, traveling, thrifting, remodeling, and snorkeling.

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