

2 men die after SUV crash near Wheeler

Associated Press

WHEELER — Oregon State Police say two people died this week from injuries sustained in a March 27 crash on U.S. Highway 101 in Tilla-

mook County.

Sgt. Kaipo Raiser says a Ford Explorer driven by 83-year-old D. Gordon Rognlien was traveling just south of Wheeler when it crossed the centerline on a sharp curve.

The vehicle collided head-on with an SUV driven by an 85-year-old William Burr of Garibaldi. Those vehicles then struck a Buick.

Raiser says Burr died Tuesday at Oregon Health & Sci-

ence University Hospital in Portland, and Rognlien died two days later at the same hospital.

A 78-year-old woman from Rockaway Beach was also injured in the crash.

County: Withdraws from committee that advises state

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ing and basically doesn't promote the values of Clatsop County?" Lee said. "I think this sends a good message that Clatsop County is going in a different direction from the Linn County lawsuit and the folks that signed up for it."

The council has diverted from county policy by promoting timber revenue rather than recreational use and habitat preservation, Commissioner Kathleen Sullivan argued.

"We'd be fools to say that's not important," Sullivan said of timber revenue. "We all have to work together, but sometimes you have to make a point."

Commissioner Lianne Thompson, who voted against leaving the lawsuit, was the sole "no" vote last week.

"If we listen to each other, if we have those welcoming conversations, we'll be able to find a common ground," Thompson said before the vote. "There's an abyss between the points of view. We can be leaders for that."

Tillamook County Commissioner David Yamamoto



AP Photo/Jeff Barnard

County commissioners voted last week to exit a forest advisory committee.

and Warrenton Mayor Henry Balensifer urged commissioners to at least delay any decision. "I know there are differences among the members and I certainly understand that," said Yamamoto, a member of the council. "You have to be at the table to express your views

and to make sure that everyone understands your views."

At the end of the 90-day notice the county has handed to the council, commissioners will no longer have a say in official recommendations to the Board of Forestry. They can, however, still attend

meetings and provide public comment to the remaining commissioners from other counties.

Will that have a major impact on policy recommendations sometime in the future?

"I don't know that we actually know yet," Moore said.

Deschutes County, state clash over list of pot grow sites

By ANDREW SELSKY
Associated Press

SALEM — A state agency has refused to provide a county sheriff and prosecutor in Oregon with a list of medical marijuana grow sites, marking the latest friction over marijuana between local and state officials.

On March 13, Oregon Health Authority official Carole Yann told Deschutes County District Attorney John Hummel and Sheriff Shane Nelson that the law doesn't permit the agency to provide the list.

Instead, local law enforcement — on a case-by-case basis — can verify the registration status of a site through a data base or call the medical marijuana program managed by Yann, she said.

On Thursday, Hummel and Nelson challenged that justification and said they need the list to help identify illegal grow sites.

"I respectfully suggest that providing Sheriff Nelson and I with the addresses of medical marijuana grow sites does not run afoul of Oregon statutory law," Hummel wrote to Yann in a letter that was also signed by Nelson.

On Tuesday, officials in another county sued the state

in federal court, asserting that Oregon laws that made pot legal are pre-empted by a federal law that criminalizes it.

The Josephine County Board of Commissioners in December tried to ban or restrict commercial pot farming on rural residential lots, but the state Land Use Board of Appeals put the restrictions on hold.

The county has petitioned the Oregon Court of Appeals and sued in federal court.

The cases illustrate a continuing struggle by local, state and federal officials over legalization of marijuana in Oregon other states.

In ballot measures, Ore-

gon voters legalized medical marijuana in 1998 and recreational cannabis in 2014. Some jurisdictions in Oregon were allowed to opt out of allowing recreational marijuana businesses.

Deschutes County, in the high desert and mountains of central Oregon, decided in 2016 to allow them after previously banning them in unincorporated areas.

But county commissioners said this week they may try to prohibit new marijuana businesses until the rules are better enforced.

Hummel and Nelson com-

plained in their Feb. 7 letter to the health authority, which regulates medical marijuana, that local law enforcement often can't tell whether medical marijuana grow sites are legal or illegal because the agency hasn't provided a list of authorized sites. They asked for a list of licensed medical growers.

Hummel said Thursday that state law doesn't prohibit the health authority from providing the list. He asked Yann to specify if the Legislature prohibits it, or if the health authority chose to require law enforcement to make case-by-case requests for information.

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Our Oregon, union withdraw tax-related initiative petitions

By **CLAIRE WITHYCOMBE**
Capital Bureau

SALEM — Sponsors are withdrawing two citizen initiative petitions that could have made it easier for the Legislature to pass tax-related measures.

The Oregon Constitution says that bills for raising revenue require a three-fifths majority vote in each chamber to pass.

Our Oregon, a progressive political coalition, and Oregon AFSCME filed two petitions last November.

One of them would have limited the three-fifths requirement to income tax increases, and the other would have repealed the three-fifths vote requirement.

The groups say they're withdrawing the petitions because a rival measure to make it harder to pass tax-related measures didn't poll well.

But the same poll, from FM3 research, shows that 54 percent of Oregonians want to keep current law, with three-fifths voting requirements for some taxes and fees.

The groups touted the poll showing that the rival measure, IP 31, which would require a three-fifths majority for any tax changes, received support from 30 percent of respondents.

Altogether, 50 percent indicated they'd definitely vote "no" on IP 31, probably would vote "no," or were undecided but leaning no. Twenty percent said they were undecided.

Joe Baessler, a chief petitioner on the withdrawn measures, said that the polls showed that Oregonians don't support what he called the "corporate obstructionism" of IP 31.

IP 31 would mandate a three-fifths vote on measures concerning tax credits, deductions and exemptions, not just tax increases.

"We filed our initiative petitions to counteract IP 31, but it's clear that Oregonians are already with us on this," Baessler said in a prepared statement. "We respect the ballot and Oregonians' time, and we can better serve the public by dedicating our resources to fighting more serious threats facing Oregon families and advancing those measures that move our state forward."

Jason Williams, the founder and director of the Taxpayer Association of Oregon and one of the petitioners behind IP 31, told the EO Media Group/Pamplin Media Group Capital Bureau last month that the petition was gaining fresh support in the wake of a recent bill passed by the Legislature.

The bill would disallow certain business owners from taking a new deduction in the federal Tax Cuts and Jobs Act on their state taxes. They could still take it on their federal tax returns.

The bill was passed in the waning days of the most recent legislative session to blunt the effects of the federal tax overhaul on Oregon's revenues.

Williams said the petition is getting support from business owners who oppose that deduction legislation, which opponents say amounts to a tax increase.

Gov. Kate Brown is expected to announce today whether she'll veto or sign that bill, Senate Bill 1528, into law.

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