

Gov. Brown backs bill to limit rent increases

By DIRK VANDERHART
Oregon Public Broadcasting

Gov. Kate Brown supports a bill that would limit how much Oregon landlords could increase rents and eliminate no-cause evictions of long-term tenants.

Brown believes those ideas “are innovative and will give renters some peace of mind,” spokeswoman Kate Kondayen said Friday.

The endorsement increases the likelihood Oregon will enact notable tenant protections amid a housing shortage after failing to pass similar laws in 2017.

Under the bill being pushed by state House Speaker Tina Kotek, D-Portland, and state Sens. Ginny Burdick, D-Portland, and Laurie Monnes Anderson, D-Gresham, landlords of properties across the state could only raise rent by up to 7 percent per year, plus the annual change in the consumer price index. That would amount to a statewide rent stabilization policy that officials say would be unique in the United States.

Rental properties that are less than 15 years old would be exempt from the 7 percent cap, and landlords could reset the rent at whatever they want if a tenant voluntarily leaves the property.

The bill also would prevent landlords from evicting tenants without cause after they’d lived in a property for more than one year — essentially banning what is commonly known as “no-cause evictions.”

It would also create a new “for-cause” eviction framework that would increase the number of valid reasons a landlord can evict, including the need for renovations or wanting to move a family member into the prop-

erty. Many landlords using those new justifications would be required to give 90 days notice and provide the tenant a month’s rent for relocation expenses.

The bill is a major focus of Kotek, the most powerful lawmaker in the House, and Burdick, the Senate majority leader, in the legislative session that begins Jan. 22. The governor’s support adds to that momentum.

Brown has not committed to the fine-grain details of the proposal, her office says, but after reading the bill language she plans to signal her support in an inaugural address.

“She also understands that Oregon will be the first state to adopt such a policy, and we need to make sure we keep an eye toward the policy’s applicability in the varying housing markets across the state ...,” Kondayen said Friday. “The governor is ready to work with the Legislature to make sure that Oregonians today and tomorrow benefit from this legislation.”

The tenant protection bill is the Legislature’s second high-profile crack at rent control since 2017. That year, the House passed a bill that would have allowed cities to limit rent hikes, among other provisions, but the effort died in the Senate without coming up for a vote.

In an interview Thursday, Burdick said she believes this time will be different.

“This was a hard negotiation,” Burdick said. “Kudos to the speaker for all her work on this. I’m optimistic we can get it through quickly.”

That doesn’t mean the bill would pass without controversy. Since Willamette Week first reported details of the proposal, some tenant advocates have lambasted the bill, saying a 7 percent limit on rent increases is far too high.



Center for Whale Research

Meet the newest southern resident orca whale, born to L77.

New orca calf seen among Puget Sound’s critically endangered killer whales

By LYNDIA V. MAPES
Seattle Times

A new calf has been born to the critically endangered southern resident killer whales, researchers confirmed.

The calf was born to L77, said Ken Balcomb, founding director of the Center for Whale Research. He confirmed the birth in a text to The Seattle Times on Friday. He estimated the calf is several weeks old.

The calf, which Balcomb named “Lucky,” is designated L124. The whale’s sex is not yet confirmed.

Center staff first saw the calf Friday morning at the eastern end of the Strait of Juan de Fuca.

“It’s great news,” Balcomb said, adding the calf looks healthy.

It is the first known birth to the southern residents since Tahlequah, or J35, gave birth to a calf in July that lived only a half-hour.

Tahlequah drew worldwide attention when she carried the dead infant for 17 days and more than 1,000 miles, refusing to let it go.

Any birth in the southern resident population is big news because the orcas that frequent Puget Sound in the J, K and L pods are critically endangered. There are only 74 left, with three whales lost last year.

The center on Friday also was observing K25, a southern resident whale known to

be in poor body condition. If conditions allow, the center is attempting to get an update on that whale’s status.

K25 is doing poorly after the death of his mother K13 in 2017. Mother orcas preferentially feed their sons and K25 has been getting thinner and thinner — so thin that Balcomb has said he is concerned he may not last the summer.

J17, Tahlequah’s mother, is also so thin as to cause similar concern.

Bill before Legislature would require permits to buy guns, limit ammunition

Associated Press

SALEM — A bill set to appear in the Legislature this year would require Oregonians to obtain a permit before buying a gun, limit the amount of ammunition a person could buy, outlaw magazines with a capacity of more than five rounds and create gun locking and storage requirements.

The Statesman Journal reported that the measure is the broadest of more than a dozen bills dealing with guns submitted by lawmakers ahead of the 2019 Legislature, which convenes Jan. 22.

The bill came from Stu-

dents for Change, a group of Lake Oswego teens formed last year after the shooting at Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School in Parkland, Florida.

State Rep. Andrea Salinas, D-Lake Oswego, and Sen. Rob Wagner, D-Tual-

atin, submitted Senate Bill 501 on their behalf.

Wagner said that it’s “probably a long shot that something like this passes in whole cloth,” but this is the bill the students wanted to put in front of the Legislature.

2019 NORTHWEST AGRICULTURAL SHOW

JAN 16-18 | **SALEM, OREGON**
OREGON STATE FAIRGROUNDS
2330 17th Street NE Salem, OR 97301

- ⇒ OVER 120 EXHIBITORS & PARTNERS
- ⇒ MORE THAN 25 seminars & workshops
- ⇒ 3 BIG DAYS IN 3 BUILDINGS

Courtesy of:

- DISCOUNTED & FREE ADMISSION
- RON'S NUT FARM
- SIMPLICITY
- Oregon Agriculture in the Classroom Foundation

Northwest Ag Show Sponsors

Title Sponsor: Harvest Capital Company
Major Sponsors: Kubota, Oregon State Fair, Coastal
Presenting Sponsors: Oregon AgLink, Chamber of Commerce, Capital Press, Pallet, Better Than Mama's

Finnware
Est. 1987

Now thru Jan 12-21
25% off

Jan 31st
35% off
1 DAY ONLY

Jan 22-30
30% off

Up To **75%**
Clearance Items

Annual January Sale!
Almost the Entire Store!

1116 Commercial Astoria, Or
(503)325-5720

Follow us on Facebook & Instagram

EXCLUDES FOOD, CONSIGNMENTS, LAYAWAY.
LIMITED TO STOCK ON HAND