

Road work scheduled in Seaside

By R.J. MARX
The Astorian

A contractor working for the state Department of Transportation will remove and replace the traffic separator island on U.S. Highway 101 between 10th Avenue and 12th Avenue in Seaside beginning Wednesday.

The project also includes the installation of temporary traffic control.

Concrete pours will take place at night, with single-lane closures from 7 p.m. to 4 a.m. Sunday night through the following Friday. During the daytime, when demolition takes place, the travel lanes will be shifted to accommodate traffic from 8 a.m. to 4 p.m. Monday through the following Thursday.

Message signs will be posted to warn travelers of the construction and poten-

tial delays. Access for pedestrians, including those with disabilities, will be available through or around the work zones.

A new center turn lane from Avenue A to K is also under design, said Dale McDowell, Seaside's public works director.

A project from Dooley Bridge to U.S. Highway 26 at the Junction is underway, to alleviate some of the uneven roadway surfaces.

Work will be down during night hours.

Other road projects in Seaside include pouring and repaving the Second Avenue sidewalk near the convention center and "putting the First Avenue sidewalk back together," McDowell said.

"We're scheduling around different events so we're not having too much commotion," McDowell said.



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Delays are expected along Highway 101 in Seaside.

Cap and trade takes significant step toward reality

Bill clears a committee vote

By AUBREY WIEBER
Oregon Capital Bureau

SALEM — Oregon's carbon cap-and-trade proposal passed out of its legislative committee on a party-line vote Friday, setting it up as the next landmark piece of legislation to pass in the 2019 session.

It's now one step closer to the desk of Gov. Kate Brown, who last week signed the Student Success Act into law. If cap and trade were to pass as well, it would give her two significant wins within months of her reelection.

The bill now goes to the Ways and Means Committee, where it can continue to be tweaked, though the committee will look at the financial aspects of the bill, not the policy.

House Bill 2020 would set a 52 million metric ton cap on greenhouse gas emissions. Companies that produce at least 25,000 metric tons of emissions per year would have to pay for every ton they emit by buying allowances through an auction. The proceeds from those sales would go to



Aubrey Wieber/Oregon Capital Bureau

State Rep. Karin Power, D-Milwaukie, left, and Sen. Michael Dembrow, D-Portland, leaders of the cap-and-trade proposal, speak at a rally outside the Capitol.

highway projects, climate mitigation projects, rural and minority communities, and other programs.

Oregon would join California as the only U.S. states to implement cap-and-trade systems. It's a journey Oregon lawmakers have been on for about a decade.

The bill's passage out of the Joint Committee on Carbon Reduction was expected. While similar proposals failed in past years, Democratic leadership has been adamant that it's time to move forward with an answer to climate change.

The proposal has received strong criticism from Republicans and the

business community, but with Democratic supermajorities in both the House and Senate, it was always expected to have the votes to pass. It was also something Brown campaigned on.

However, there was a hiccup when a deal over an education package was reached. In order to pass a \$1 billion-per-year business tax to fund education reforms, Democrats agreed to kill a couple of bills and do a "reset" on cap-and-trade.

For several days, it wasn't clear what that meant. That's because the specifics were never hammered out.

Democrats agreed to give

state Sen. Cliff Bentz, R-Ontario, a staunch opponent of the bill, more involvement. That wasn't much in evidence Friday. Sen. Michael Dembrow, D-Portland, and Rep. Karin Power, D-Milwaukie, who co-chaired the committee, allowed Bentz and other Republicans to offer their amendments for a vote — but all were voted down along party lines.

Dembrow and Power's own amendments passed, again on a party-line vote. They were essentially technical fixes.

Bentz's amendments were largely to lighten the burden on his district, which covers much of sparsely

populated Eastern Oregon. One proposed amendment would have excluded Malheur County from the program altogether.

Dembrow said while he respects Bentz's interest in protecting constituents, the bill already does that.

"At the end of the day, we are going to look back at this program in 10 years and say, 'This is a program that works for Eastern Oregon,'" Dembrow said.

Bentz said despite the hard work the committee put in, the bill is nowhere close to ready.

The tension on the six-Republican, eight-Democrat committee was often palpable. Republicans often used their committee time to talk about how the bill will hurt industry and rural Oregonians while failing to make a dent in the global climate change problem. Democrats talked about how Oregon needs to be a leader in this fight and argued that the state is already dangerously behind schedule in taking action.

Rep. John Lively, D-Springfield, said he has recently been reflecting on the dire circumstances while watching student concerns at his grandchildren's elementary school.

"Unfortunately, I feel we've waited too long," he said. "But we have to do something."

In the 18 meetings held on the proposal since February, the two sides have failed to find much common ground.

However, a rare moment of bipartisan work came when the committee passed an accompanying bill from Rep. David Brock Smith, R-Port Orford. It would require public universities to study sequestration of carbon through forests and agriculture. Lively was the lone "no" vote, though other Democrats shared concerns with the bill.

After two hours of voting on amendments, many committee members took turns giving their thoughts and thanking each other for the hard work put in. It felt like the last day of school, as lawmakers took ideological shots at each other while also thanking their colleagues across the aisle for putting in the time and effort.

Then, with a bang of the gavel from Power, months of work had a conclusion. It was on to the next step.

"I'm filled with a combination of pride and exhaustion," Dembrow said.

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