

Legislature adjourns after marathon weekend

Paid leave among the highlights

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SALEM — The state Legislature, delayed by a walkout by Senate Republicans, sprinted to finish its work, voting on the last bill just before 5 p.m. Sunday.

The day consisted of more recesses in the Senate than time spent voting on bills, as lawmakers gave one last push to cut deals.

Two bills — one that would provide for more affordable housing and another that would refer a tobacco tax hike to voters — failed before coming back to life and passing.

The day was not without drama as concerns over state Sen. Brian Boquist, R-Dallas, persisted. Boquist more than a week ago made statements alluding to violence against police, and an outside investigator hired by the Legislature found his presence in the workplace could be seen as threatening.

Sen. Sara Gelsler, D-Corvallis, on Sunday said she wouldn't be on the floor with Boquist, who refused to leave. Gelsler was absent for some key votes, but in the end the bills were brought back.

Throughout the morning, several senators and the staff of Senate President Peter Courtney, D-Salem, talked behind closed doors about disciplining Boquist. In the end, it was determined the Senate Special Committee on Conduct would hold a hearing July 8 to review reports of safety concerns regarding Boquist.

The turmoil was fitting considering an unprecedented final two weeks of the legislative session, which included a nine-day walkout where Senate Republicans fled the state to Idaho and other states.

Here are key bills headed to Gov. Kate Brown for signature and to the law books:

BUY YOUR LEAVE: Workers will lose a fraction of their paychecks under House Bill 2005. But in exchange, they'll have access to one of the Western Hemisphere's most robust paid leave programs. A worker could take as much as 12 weeks off per year — plus two more for a pregnancy, childbirth or medical conditions — with up to full pay. It's not an unrestricted benefit. Workers will have to apply for leave and demonstrate they are taking time off work to deal with a family medical emergency, a health issue, the birth or adoption of a child, or abuse or harassment.

Employers have to chip in as well, but at a lower rate than employees. Combined, they will pay up to 1% of wages into a state-run insurance program modeled off workers' compensation. Multiple business lobbies and labor unions supported HB 2005, which was developed through a bipartisan process led by House Majority Leader Jennifer Williamson, D-Portland. It will make Oregon the eighth state with paid family leave.

GREEN LIGHT FOR CARDS: House Bill 2015 will allow Oregonians who can't prove legal residence in the U.S. to get driver's licenses, nearly five years after Oregonians rejected a similar law. Advocates argued that the bill could make the state's roads safer. Licensed drivers are required to get insurance. At least one state with a similar law — Connecticut — has seen dips in the number of hit-and-run crashes since implementation.

The bill applies to anyone who may not have vital records proving their legal residence.

POWER TO THE PEOPLE: It'll be up to state voters whether the Oregon Constitution clearly allows limits on campaign contributions. Senate Joint Res-



State Sen. Brian Boquist, R-Dallas, on the Senate floor.

Claire Withycombe/Oregon Capital Bureau

olution 18 refers a constitutional amendment to the ballot that would allow the Legislature, local governments and voter initiatives to cap the amount that someone can give to a candidate for office, as well as require political campaigns to disclose their donors.

The voter referral was a priority for campaign finance reform advocates. It had the strong support of the governor, who pledged last year to push for limits in Oregon's famously lax campaign finance system. The state is one of 11 that doesn't limit how much an individual can give to a political candidate.

MISSING MIDDLE: More than 50 Oregon cities, including virtually the entire Portland area, will no longer be able to limit neighborhoods to single-family homes. House Bill 2001 does away with what some housing advocates call "exclusionary zoning," requiring cities with a population over 10,000 to allow a duplex wherever they would allow a single-family house. Cities with more than 25,000 residents and suburbs of Portland would also have to allow townhomes, triplexes, quadplexes and cottage clusters.

Highly controversial when it was introduced in January, HB 2001 was amended several times and picked up support from Republicans in the House. It makes Oregon the first state to do away with single-family-exclusive zoning, except in its smallest cities. The bill was a top priority of House Speaker Tina Kotek, D-Portland.

SMOKED OUT: Voters will also decide whether Oregon will increase its tax on cigarettes and cigars and expand the tobacco tax to cover vaping products. House Bill 2270 was stuck in neutral for months this spring before a compromise referred the concept to voters next November instead of being put into effect directly by the Legislature. Public health advocates say more tax money is needed to fund the Oregon Health Plan and raising the tax will deter young people from taking up the nicotine habit, while critics say it's wringing more money out of poor Oregonians, who make up a disproportionate share of the state's smokers.

DIRTY DIESEL: #TimberUnity protesters who thronged the Capitol on Thursday called for the Legislature to reject the cap-and-trade bill and also another piece of legislation some truckers oppose: House Bill 2007, which sets an emissions standard for diesel trucks based in Multnomah, Washington and Clackamas counties. Trucks using dirty old diesel engines instead of newer models won't be able to get a title in those three counties after 2024.

MOBILE HOME

SECURITY: Mobile homes comprise nearly one-tenth of all housing units in Oregon. But many of the state's mobile homes are aging, a number of mobile home parks have closed or are in danger of closing, and many mobile home residents simply don't have the money to dispose of a home that is breaking down or to buy a new one. That's where House Bill 2896 comes in. Mobile home residents will be eligible for grants to get out of an old home and into a new one. Money is also set aside to preserve mobile home parks, including by helping tenants band together to buy them cooperatively.

SIGN OF THE TIMES: Under Senate Bill 998, the so-called "Idaho stop" law, bicyclists will be able to roll through stop signs at intersections without having to come to a complete stop. They'll be able to treat stop signs as yield signs. It will still be illegal for them to go through without stopping if traffic or pedestrians are in their way. Cycling advocates have been calling on Oregon to adopt Idaho's traffic law for years to make biking through residential neighborhoods less of a hassle, but this is the first time such a plan has actually passed both chambers of the Legislature.

LET'S BE FRANKED: Did you know members of Congress don't have to pay postage on their official mail? Soon, Oregonians will enjoy this privilege of "franking," as it's called. Senate Bill 861, which affects elections starting next year, makes it so ballot return envelopes don't require a postage stamp. It removes a cost, however small, that election reform advocates say is a barrier to poor and homebound Oregonians voting. SB 861 was a top priority for the late Dennis Richardson, Oregon's secretary of state.

COLLECT, CALL: It's unusual to see a Republican pushing for a tax increase, but that's what Rep. Lynn Findley, R-Vale, did this legislative session. The freshman persuaded colleagues to support a 50-cent monthly increase in the emergency communications tax on Oregonians with phone service. Supporters say it's a necessary hike to upgrade 911 centers so they can have the capacity needed in an emergency. The increase will be phased in 25 cents at a time in 2020 and 2021.

HIGHER BAR FOR DEATH: Oregon hasn't executed an inmate since 1997, but the death penalty remains on the books in the state. Senate Bill 1013 splits the two legal classifications of murder in Oregon into three: aggravated murder, first-degree murder and second-degree murder. The death penalty could only be applied someone convicted of aggravated murder, and the burden would

be on prosecutors to prove "beyond a reasonable doubt" that death is the appropriate punishment.

EGGS-CELLENT: Oregon has already created some rules and a schedule by which Oregon hens are supposed to have a certain amount of room to lay eggs. Senate Bill 1019 takes that a step further by requiring the state's Agriculture Department to make rules to require that hens be "cage free" by 2024. The bill exempts from state inspection operations with fewer than 3,000 egg-laying hens.

FLOAT ON: The Portland metro area has among the most houseboats and floating homes on the continent. Floating homes provide affordable housing in communities like Scappoose and Jantzen Beach,

moored at marinas where owners rent slips. It's a similar setup to mobile home parks, but Oregon law treats them differently. Senate Bill 586 adds tenant protections for floating home residents and amends the law so that mobile home park regulations apply to residential marinas.

IN CASE OF EMERGENCY: After a train of oil tank cars derailed and exploded in a 2013 disaster in Quebec, killing 47 people, environmentalists and community activists got very worried about the unit trains carrying crude oil

through Oregon. That agitation increased dramatically when a train derailment near Mosier in 2016 spilled oil into the Columbia River and caused a fire that threatened the town.

House Bill 2209 requires railroads that operate "high-hazard routes," including any traversed by a unit train with 20 or more tankers of oil, to develop contingency plans in case of a derailment and spill.

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FOURTH OF JULY FUN FOR THE WHOLE FAMILY IN ASTORIA AND WARRENTON!



The Astoria-Warrenton Area Chamber of Commerce presents the 4th of July fireworks!

Show begins at dusk with fireworks shot from a barge near downtown Astoria. Grab a chair or blanket and a flashlight, then join us along the riverwalk to enjoy the show.

Special thanks to WCT Marine, Hyak Tongue Point, CFMS, Mo's Astoria and your Chamber Ambassadors for making this celebration possible.

Photo provided by Frank Allen.

WEDNESDAY, JULY 3RD

6:30p.m.: Free Concert "Spirit of Adventure" North Coast Symphonic Band at Liberty Theatre with service flags from American Legion Clatsop Post #12

THURSDAY, JULY 4TH

11a.m. to 3p.m.: Warrenton's Old-Fashioned Fourth Barbecue, Car & Motorcycle Show, Kids Activities

3p.m.: Warrenton 4th of July Parade
Route follows South Main Avenue from the Post Office to SW 9th Street

Dusk: Fireworks above the Columbia River
The fireworks will be shot from a barge in the river near Columbia River Maritime Museum



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