

Cap and trade: New version of bill cleared committee on Thursday by a party line vote

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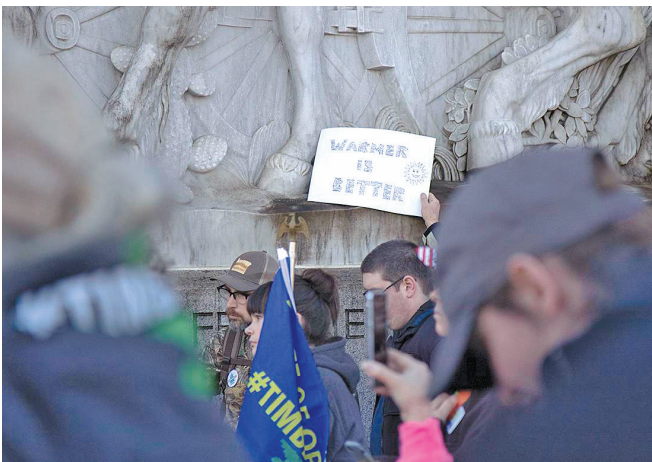
The amendments change when fuel would be regulated under the program. It delays the impact on Curry and Coos counties, as well as Bend and Klamath Falls, until 2028, six years later than for the Portland metro area.

And rather than 20 counties triggering a state-wide adoption of limits on fuel importers, the amendment sets the trigger at 23 counties.

The delay in the fuel regulation for Curry and Coos counties could prompt similar requests from other counties and cities on the coast. Under the working draft of the bill, most counties west of the Cascades — including Clatsop County — would be regulated in 2025.

Warrenton city commissioners, for example, want local relief from projected increases in fuel prices.

Mayor Henry Balensifer argued during a City Commission meeting on Tuesday that locals shouldn't be penalized for the out-sized impact of tourists buying fuel locally. He gained agreement from fellow com-



Sierra Dawn McClain/Capital Press
Protesters against cap and trade held a rally at the Capitol.

missioners to write a letter to the region's legislators hoping for a method to exempt locals from the expected increases in fuel prices.

Neither Astoria nor Clatsop County have publicly discussed any potential amendments to the cap-and-trade bill.

Under the amendments, a greater share of the revenue from transportation — 90% — would go to counties or metro areas that engaged in the program to use on emissions reduction and climate adaptation projects. The rest would go to the state Department of Transportation for

projects around the state.

The amendments incorporate policy ideas from state Sen. Alan Olsen, R-Canby, and Sen. Lynn Findley, R-Vale, who sit on the Senate Committee on Environment and Natural Resources.

Olsen's idea would make it easier for state agencies receiving money raised by the program to buy electric vehicles, and Findley's would streamline a state energy efficiency audit process for manufacturers that use a lot of energy but face competition from areas that aren't subject to emissions

limits.

The changes also include policy ideas borrowed from #TimberUnity. For example, the bill would direct the state's parks department to conduct an annual tree planting day for local governments to sponsor planting trees in public spaces. It would also direct the state's main operations agency to study ways to account for the greenhouse gas emissions associated with transporting goods and services that state government buys.

The amendments aim to narrow the information about the program that is exempt from public disclosure to trade secrets, which is already defined in the state's public records law.

The new version of the bill cleared the Senate Committee on Environment and Natural Resources on Thursday by a 3-2, party line vote. Olsen and Findley, the two Republicans, voted against the bill.

Edward Stratton of The Astorian contributed to this report. The Oregon Capital Bureau is a collaboration between EO Media Group, Pamplin Media Group and Salem Reporter.

Mistake: 'Multiuse path is going to be a much better solution than the sidewalk'

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the roadway. Bridgens, the lone vote against the application, had pushed for a sidewalk, arguing a multiuse path would be unsafe.

Stephen Fulton, who works on land development and wetland mitigation issues for Warrenton Fiber, had also urged the commission in December to require a sidewalk in front of the jail and near the company's housing development.

"We were not given accurate or complete information, and so staff made a mistake," Bridgens said Thursday, periodically holding up city code documents showing the sidewalk requirement. "And I think you need to acknowledge that, so that we can get this done right."

Kevin Cronin, the city's community development director, admitted the city erred on the sidewalk requirement. But he put the onus on the county as the applicant to follow the relevant code.

"The only mistake that I made was not having the county do what they were supposed to do back in 2018," Cronin said. "That's the context of this conversation. They were responsible for doing the road improvement back in 2018."

Terry Hendryx, the county's assistant public works director, said in January that Cronin — who was absent from last month's meeting — had approved the county's construction of bike lanes on both sides of the road in lieu of sidewalks because of wetland mitigation issues. Hendryx said Cronin suggested in August calling the bike lanes a multiuse pathway so the develop-

ment of the jail would not require sidewalks.

Cronin said Thursday he was OK with the concept of the multiuse path, but that the city should have asked for a full design.

The Planning Commission approved the 16-unit Eagle's Landing apartment complex along state Highway 104 on the eastern bank of the Skipanon River on Thursday, but required sidewalks, over the objections of the developers.

Spencer Parsons, the city's attorney, said that while the city can learn from the mistake with the county jail, it can't go back unless the approval was appealed by the applicant or by someone who gave testimony. Bridgens had attempted to appeal the decision, but was not allowed because she voted on the issue.

Paul Mitchell, the chairman of the Planning Commission, eventually stepped in to stop Bridgens' questioning, saying he felt bad about the mistake but that the city couldn't just go back on its decision.

"It may be substandard, which is your opinion, but it's nothing at this point," he said. "And again, we're only talking 948 feet."

The city will have a second shot to require sidewalks along the entirety of 19th Street as the county develops the area, Mitchell said.

After the meeting, Cronin extolled the virtues of the multiuse path, including the bright green paint used extensively for bike lanes in Portland.

"The multiuse path is going to be a much better solution than the sidewalk, because it's going to provide space for both pedestrians and bikes," he said.

Judge: 'Public service has been a big part of how I was raised'

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and have to separate a little bit from some people that I really had come to care about, and were good friends. But personally, it's a good challenge," Peterson said.

He had thought about being a judge earlier in his career, but said he didn't begin to really consider the possibility until former Judge Philip Nelson told him he thought it would be a good fit.

"When I heard Judge



Hailey Hoffman/The Astorian
Beau Peterson replaced Judge Paula Brownhill, who retired in November.

Brownhill was retiring, I said, 'You know, maybe it is time for a change,'" Peterson said. "I really did enjoy being a prosecutor. The trial

work is something I'm going to miss ... I'll still get trials, but it will be very different."

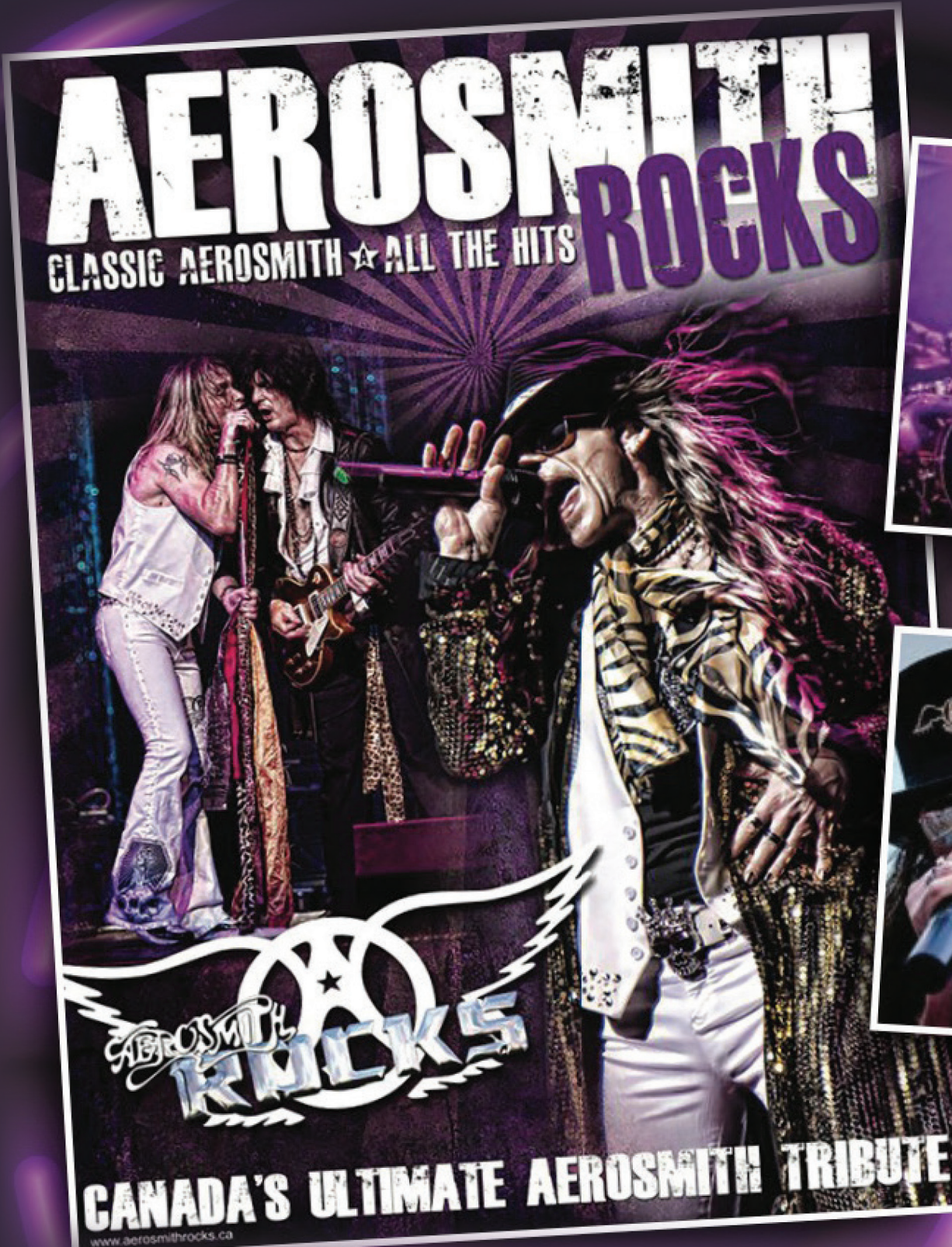
Peterson handled over 70 jury trials as a deputy district attorney. However, he said he also liked the idea of getting to learn new areas of law.

"I went to law school because it seemed interesting to begin with, and when you focus in one area you get really good at it. But there's a lot out there I don't know, and getting to learn those things is kind of exciting," he said.

"I'm really thankful to be able to keep serving Clatsop County. Public service has been a big part of how I was raised," Peterson said.

He said his grandfather instilled in him the idea of public service. His grandfather served in World War II and spent the majority of his career working for the government as a bank auditor.

"The two things he really instilled were, do the right thing, and if you can help, help. And this is a way I think I can help," Peterson said.



SATURDAY, MARCH 21 at the Liberty Theatre in Astoria

Doors open 6 p.m. Show starts at 7 p.m.

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