

# Governor Brown Q & A

*'We're going to need to take proactive measures,' Kate Brown says of drought and other effects of global warming*

Oregon Governor Kate Brown sat down with the Hood River News editorial board Friday morning to discuss the prescient issues Oregon faces, part of her day-long visit to Hood River.

First, Brown signed the affordable college bill, SB 81, at CGCC Indian Creek. Then, she fit in a talk with the News between her speech at Leaders for Tomorrow and her business tours at Pfriem Family Brewers and Dakine.

Brown fielded questions about numerous topics concerning the recent legislative session, from education and infrastructure spending to marijuana and the proposed Nestlé water bottling plant in Cascade Locks.

## Education

*Brown signed the Oregon Promise affordable education bill, SB 81, at CGCC Friday morning, then met with local education officials in a round*

*table, discussing CTE and STEM education.*

The complete total number of \$7.4 billion (is) a significant increase from the last biennium.

Obviously the growing economy has something to do with that, but we were able to direct the dollars critically important to reducing class sizes, which I know is really an issue in this area.

We invested in Career Technical Ed and STEM education. I followed up the billing signing, Senate Bill 81, with a round table around that particular issue: how can we create an educational system — cradle through career — that will meet the needs of our diverse student body, giving the opportunity to expand their learning horizons but also meet the needs of our workforce, of the future.

We invested heavily in early childhood education, something I'm very passionate about, expanding access to Head Start, early funding, all-day kindergarten — something for the first time ever in Oregon's history — insuring access to more quality day care programs for working families, but also significantly investing in our K-12 schools.

We added \$12.5 million to our ELL program and have revamped that. I hope it will be a more successful approach than our current system, as well as providing dedicated funding for GED programming in student absenteeism, and so I think there's some dedicated funding that will help different schools districts based on their makeup.

Also there was a significant investment in the Student Opportunity Grant. More than 16,000 students will be able to access these grants. These are additional students, after the current number.

So speaking as a whole I think we've made great strides in expanding opportunities for Oregon families across the state.

## Sales Tax

I think we have to look at all the options, and I think the challenge for Oregon has been with our active initiative process, that it's really been a challenge to rewrite our entire revenue code. I know that we are an unbound stool. I think that question is, can we do it in a way that makes tweaks to the system that can survive the initiative process and I don't know what those answers are. At this point I wouldn't take anything off the table.

Nestlé water bottling plant  
My job as governor in terms of this particular project is to facilitate the

process and make sure that the laws are being enforced — state laws are being enforced. I guess what I would do is encourage Oregonians to get in touch with my office, which they seem to feel free in doing both through social media and paper and phone calls, but I would strongly encourage folks (who) are concerned or supportive of the project to be contacting directly the City of Cascade Locks.

## Drought declaration

*Hood River submitted an emergency drought declaration June 24 to the Governor.*

We're moving very quickly on these drought declarations. I (have) declared 20 at this time.

So we move very quickly on them because we want to make sure that the communities can access all the available resources, including federal resources. You



Photo by Ben Mitchell

GOV. KATE BROWN meets with Hood River News editorial board.

conservation plans, to submit those plans to the Water Resources Department and make sure they have metrics about their water usage and how we can measure if they're working to conserve energy.

And I'll just tell you personally, I'm reducing my shower time and I'd encourage my fellow Oregonians to do the same.

## Oil and coal trains through the Gorge

In terms of our agency processes and my commitment on new projects ... are to facilitate the process and make sure Oregon laws are being followed ... that if there is a public process that it be a transparent one and that Oregonians are able to participate in that process



Photo by Ben Mitchell

GOV. BROWN SPEAKS at Best Western Plus Hood River Inn at the Leadership for Tomorrow's 20th anniversary celebration. She told the group, "We are all standing on the shoulders of people who came before us and we need to think of that as we start to grow and train the next generation of leaders. I wanted them to think about the future and who they need to start bringing up with them. We're standing on the shoulders of others and our shoulders are going to be stood on as well." Other Leaders for Tomorrow speakers were Tofurkey founder Seth Tibbotts and 2010 HRVHS graduate Jackson Dougan, who has served as a United Nations Youth Observer. Below, Brown shares a laugh with Rep. Mark Johnson following signing of the community college bill at Indian Creek. (On page A1, Brown accepts a bountiful gift basket from the Leaders for Tomorrow organization.)



Photo by Kirby Neumann-Rea



Photo by Kirby Neumann-Rea

TOURING THE BREWERY, Brown samples Belgian Strong Blonde ale courtesy of pFriem general manager Ian Hutchings, right and co-owner Josh Pfriem. She also met with local elected and appointed officials from the city, county and port. "It's a true Hood River success story," she said of the brewery, pointing to its growth from three to 55 employees since the founding three years ago. "It's an incredible product that's breaking barriers all across the Northwest." Brown also visited the neighboring Dakine facility and met with vice president Roger Roediger. "The products they make are really creative. It's got Hood River DNA all through its products," Brown said.

## GRANT

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establish a protected public park: Punchbowl Falls Nature Park.

The property will pass into the county's hands by the end of the year and most park improvements, including a gravel parking lot, informational signage, portable toilets and an enhanced trail system, will be completed by next summer.

"The people of Hood River County will be able to enjoy

this iconic resource for many years to come," said Dave Meriwether, Hood River County Administrator.

The OPRD advisory committee recommended the Punchbowl application last month, but it was uncertain until last week if the funding would come through. At a June 30 Hood River County Board of Commissioners

meeting, Meriwether said the Punchbowl project was "fifth in line" at the state committee.

OPRD's Local Government Grant Program gives \$4 million annually to Oregon communities for outdoor recreation projects — the Punchbowl grant accounts for about 12 percent of that total funding pool. Last year, the

county failed to secure the grant, but the tides have turned in their favor.

Meriwether attributed to success to a combined effort from Western Rivers, the state and local resident groups.

"We wish to acknowledge the outstanding efforts of the Western Rivers Conser-

and have their voices be heard.

I will be upfront, I did have a meeting with the governor of Wyoming and they're certainly encouraging us to move forward on coal projects, but I committed to making sure Oregon laws are begin followed.

## Marijuana

This has been an interesting issue for Democrat and Republican legislators to come together. They've passed multiple major bills on this issue.

For me, I wanted to make

sure that we kept marijuana out of the hands of young people — that means under legal age — and secondly, that we increased adults' awareness of marijuana, and third that we work to reduce or minimize the amount of marijuana going into the black market.

So toward that end, the bills I have signed I think move us in that direction.

When the legislature adjourned, I get 30 days to sign whatever I have not signed, which is including the bill you just mentioned, and dur-

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**Joined the River City Team!**

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**Recycle Tips**

**COMPOST**

- Food as garbage creates methane, which is a greenhouse gas 21 times stronger than carbon dioxide.
- Food as compost creates soil.
- Composting sustains 4 times more jobs than landfilling.
- Home Composters are sold at local transfer stations for \$50 each.
- Commercial Curbside compost service available through Hood River Garbage and The Dalles Disposal Service.

**Tri-County**  
Hazardous Waste & Recycling Program

www.tricountyrecycle.com  
541-506-2636



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