

The Portland Observer

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Reparations Taken Up in Congress

(AP) -- The debate over reparations catapulted from the campaign trail to Congress last week as lawmakers heard impassioned testimony for and against the idea of providing compensation for America's history of slavery and racial discrimination.

Rep. Sheila Jackson Lee, D-Texas, the sponsor of a resolution to study reparations, put a fine point on the discussion: "I just simply ask: Why not and why not now?"

It was Congress' first hearing on reparations in more than a decade, and came amid a growing conversation both in the Democratic Party and the country at large about



Actor Danny Glover (right) and author Ta-Nehisi Coates testify about reparation for the descendants of slaves during a hearing last week before the House Judiciary Subcommittee on the Constitution, Civil Rights and Civil Liberties, at the Capitol in Washington, D.C. (AP photo)

lingering racial disparities in the United States. Once considered a fringe topic, mostly pushed aside in Congress, the possibility of reparations was treated with seriousness by the witnesses and lawmakers alike, though Republicans made clear their opposition.

The hearing coincided with Juneteenth, a cultural holiday commemorating the emancipation of enslaved black people in the United States, and it attracted a crowd. More than a hundred people were lined up to try and get a seat in the hearing room. Those inside frequently reacted to testimony and comments from members of Congress with cheers and boos.

At one point, an audience member shouted "You lie!" at Texas Republican Rep. Louie Gohmert.

22nd Woman Accuses Trump

President Trump issued another denial after the 22nd woman to come forward accusing him of sexual misconduct. Tuesday, in response to Elle columnist E. Jean Carroll saying that Trump assaulted her in a dressing room in the mid-90's, Trump said Carroll is "not my type." "I'll say it with great respect: Number one, she's not my type. Number two, it never happened. It never happened, OK?"



The Week in Review

Tenant Protections Victory

New rules to ease the rental application process in Portland, aimed at helping people with criminal histories and poor credit, was passed by the City Council last week. Championed by Commissioner Chloe Eudaly, the ordinance seeks to increase housing for people who have been locked out of the conventional market.

Portland HIV Cases Spike

A spike in local HIV cases appears to be tied to infected needles.

Multnomah County health authorities last week reported that they have found 42 new cases of HIV in the last year and a half among people who report using methamphetamines or other drugs via syringe. In contrast, only 25 people who were diagnosed with the disease were tied to infected needles for the previous two years.

PSU Delays Guns Decision

The Portland State University Board of Trustees has postponed until the fall a decision of the issue

of whether campus police officers should carry guns. PSU is re-evaluating the use of an armed police force after campus police shot and killed a black Veteran and postal worker trying to break up a bar fight near the campus last year.



Blazers Draft and Trade

The Portland Trail Blazers have made two significant moves of the offseason. The team on Monday traded Evan Turner to the Atlanta Hawks in exchange for Kent Bazemore. A few days earlier the team selected North Carolina freshman Nassir Little with the 25th pick in the 2019 NBA draft, swooping up what ESPN analyst Jay Bilas called "an absolute steal" late in the first round.

Republicans Flee Capitol

Republican members of the Oregon Senate have been in hiding for the past week, fleeing the state rather than be forced to vote on a climate bill that would put a hard cap on greenhouse gas emissions. Speculation has them running out the clock until the legislative session ends Saturday, robbing majority Democrats a major priority.



5-Star Hotel Coming

Marriott International announced Thursday it would build a 5-star Ritz-Carlton hotel in the downtown space that has long been home to Portland's most iconic pod of food carts. The new hotel will have 251 rooms and 138 residential units in the 35-story tower.



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