

Committee talks origin of legal weed, 'immaculate conception'

By HILLARY BORRUD
Capital Bureau

SALEM — In less than five months, Oregonians age 21 and over can legally grow and consume recreational marijuana under Measure 91 passed last fall. Retail pot stores will not open until sometime in 2016.

The fast-approaching July 1 legalization date prompted the Oregon Liquor Control Commission to ask state lawmakers for direction on where people should legally obtain these cannabis seeds and plant starts.

Until a legal recreational crop is grown there will be no legal source of seeds or starts for recreational marijuana growers.

Rob Patridge, Klamath County District Attorney and chairman of the OLCC Board of Commissioners, asked lawmakers at a hearing Wednesday night whether they want to assume "immaculate conception" — essentially not address the question of where legal recreational mar-

ijuana comes from — or "whether this Legislature wants to allow us to bring for a limited amount of time some of the clones and seeds and etc. over from the medical side, so that's half immaculate conception."

Patridge said if lawmakers do not address this question, it could put the entire marijuana industry at risk. Colorado required people to obtain marijuana seeds and starts from medical growers, while Washington assumed immaculate conception.

Lawmakers did not give a definitive answer on the question Wednesday night, but Burdick said they should address it in legislation. Committee co-chair Rep. Ann Lininger, D-Lake Oswego, said lawmakers should consider the growing seasons for people who cultivate marijuana outdoors, because legislation on the issue could determine whether they have an opportunity to contribute to the original legal stock.

The OLCC's request for guidance on the origin of legal marijuana was one of 52 issues the agency asked lawmakers to clarify. OLCC

needs to begin writing rules to implement Measure 91, and committee co-chair Sen. Ginny Burdick, D-Portland, said the committee will include many of these time-sensitive recommendations in the first of two major bills. Many OLCC recommendations are technical and will be included in the first bill that lawmakers will fast-track, Burdick said.

"After tonight, co-chair Lininger and I will get together and compile a bill that will probably err in the direction of being more inclusive of issue areas in the hopes of getting as much into this bill to provide OLCC with the direction they need as they go through their rulemaking process," Burdick said.

OLCC recommendations that provoke "a big firestorm" and other policy issues will be included in a "main omnibus" bill the committee will produce later in the session, Burdick said.

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BRIEFLY

Oregon job numbers strong, except when it comes to raises

SALEM (AP) — Oregon's unemployment rate has fallen significantly again, amid signs that businesses are becoming quick to hire but remain slow to grant raises.

The state Employment Department said Tuesday the jobless rate dropped half a percentage point in February, to 5.8 percent.

The agency says the number of long-term unemployed people continues to fall.

The number of workers in part-time jobs who would rather work full time has also fallen.

Nonfarm payroll employment was up again in February, by 2,400. That's the smallest increase in the past half year, though.

And wage gains are slim, according to the agency's figures: Over the past twelve months the average private sector wage gains amount to about 18 cents an hour, or .8 percent.

House approves bill banning gay conversion therapy

SALEM (AP) — The Oregon House voted Tuesday to outlaw a therapy that purports to change the sexual orientation or gender identity of young people, with several lawmakers arguing the practice has been discredited and can cause irreparable mental and emotional damage.

The bill would make it illegal for social workers or licensed mental health professionals such as psychologists or psychiatrists to practice what's called conversion therapy on children younger than 18. The bill is backed by Basic Rights Oregon, a gay and transgender advocacy group.

Proponents of the measure said the therapy can lead to anxiety, depression and destructive behaviors in children. Groups such as the American Medical Association and the American Psychological Association have also come out against the therapy.

Biomass electricity plant looks for energy buyer

By DYLAN J. DARLING
Bend Bulletin

LA PINE — A wood-burning power plant remains a possibility for La Pine, with the city now taking the lead on the project from Deschutes County and the company behind it waiting for a change in the energy market.

"It's just been on hold due to market conditions," said Rob Broberg, president of Biogreen Sustainable Energy Co., based in Vancouver, Washington. "And we plan on holding out until we are able to market and sell power."

The company must find an energy buyer to make the planned plant economically viable, said Rick Allen, La Pine city manager.

"They need to find a power company that wants to buy their power," he said. "That's really the issue."

The \$75 million, 25-megawatt biomass plant would produce enough electricity to power about 19,000 homes, Broberg said. The plant would burn wood — limbs and other scrap left over after logging, debris from thinning projects and urban waste —

to heat water, create steam and turn a turbine.

Interested power companies would likely be in California, where the state requires an increasing percentage of its power to come from "greener" sources such as biomass, wind and solar.

Biogreen has been considering a biomass plant in La Pine, which is surrounded by forest, for more than five years. The company has held land and building permits for the plant with Deschutes County, but those have expired.

Tom Anderson, Deschutes County administrator, said future dealings will be with the city of La Pine. The plant would be in the La Pine Industrial Park, which was county-run and predated the incorporation of the city in 2007.

"Now that the city is incorporated, the county felt it was important to give the city a little more self-determination as to what kind of projects go into the (industrial) park there," Anderson said. Last fall the county and city reached an agreement for the city to manage the remaining land in the 320-acre park while the county still owns

the property. About half of the acres are still available.

The power plant would sit on 19½ acres, Broberg said. About 20 people would work at the plant and another 65 or so would work in the forest, gathering wood to burn. Given the number of thinning projects in the forests around La Pine aimed at reducing the chance of large wildfires, he figures there should be a steady supply of wood.

While not helping any group opposed to the planned plant in La Pine, Mike Ewall, executive director of the Pennsylvania-based Energy Justice Network, said his nonprofit has helped stop other biomass projects in Oregon and around the country. He argues that biomass plants are "very polluting and very inefficient."

"Anything that burns anything is not clean energy," he said.

The Energy Justice Network has been fielding questions from people about a

potential biofuels plant in Lakeview. The plant, proposed by Red Rock Biofuels in Fort Collins, Colorado, would turn biomass into jet fuel and diesel, which would be shipped by train. The questions include how much air pollution the plant would create and how safe the railway shipping would be.

Calling the plan for biomass in La Pine a "very valuable project," Biogreen's Broberg said the power plant would put off less smoke than wood burned in open air.

Along with securing a power buyer for the planned La Pine plant, hurdles left for Biogreen to clear include water and labor. The plant would use about 300 gallons per minute on the hottest days of the year. Allen said that's how much the whole city of La Pine currently uses on a hot day. City officials would want to be sure the city system could supply enough water to the plant, as well as to current and future customers.

CORRECTIONS

The East Oregonian works hard to be accurate and sincerely regrets any errors. If you notice a mistake in the paper, please call 541-966-0818.

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AccuWeather.com Forecast

TODAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY	SUNDAY
Sunny to partly cloudy	Mostly sunny and mild	Sunny to partly cloudy and mild	Cloudy, a shower or two; cooler	Sunny, pleasant and warmer

PENDLETON TEMPERATURE FORECAST

61°	36°	67°	42°	71°	44°	60°	36°	66°	42°
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HERMISTON TEMPERATURE FORECAST

65°	33°	70°	38°	72°	44°	65°	33°	68°	38°
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ALMANAC

PENDLETON

through 3 p.m. yesterday

TEMPERATURE	HIGH	LOW
Yesterday	50°	43°
Normals	55°	36°
Records	76° (1900)	10° (1906)

PRECIPITATION

24 hours ending 3 p.m. 0.18"
Month to date 0.46"
Normal month to date 0.71"
Year to date 2.01"
Last year to date 3.61"
Normal year to date 3.22"

HERMISTON

through 3 p.m. yesterday

TEMPERATURE	HIGH	LOW
Yesterday	56°	47°
Normals	58°	35°
Records	76° (1972)	19° (2002)

PRECIPITATION

24 hours ending 3 p.m. 0.08"
Month to date 0.19"
Normal month to date 0.53"
Year to date 1.25"
Last year to date 2.23"
Normal year to date 2.77"

SUN AND MOON

	New	First	Full	Last
	Mar 20	Mar 26	Apr 4	Apr 11

Shown is today's weather. Temperatures are today's highs and tonight's lows.

REGIONAL FORECAST

Coastal Oregon: Sunny to partly cloudy today, but clouds giving way to sun across the north.

Eastern and Central Oregon: Mostly sunny today. Clear to partly cloudy tonight.

Western Washington: A blend of sun and clouds today. Mostly cloudy tonight. A little rain tomorrow.

Eastern Washington: Partly sunny today; a couple of showers near the Idaho border and in the mountains.

Cascades: Clouds giving way to sun today; not as cool in central parts. Mainly clear tonight.

Northern California: Clouds and sun today; pleasant in central parts. Clear tonight. Mostly sunny tomorrow.

REGIONAL CITIES

	Today			Thu.		
	Hi	Lo	W	Hi	Lo	W
Astoria	58	42	pc	61	46	r
Baker City	56	25	s	64	32	s
Bend	56	29	s	66	36	pc
Brookings	58	43	s	58	45	pc
Burns	58	25	s	64	28	s
Enterprise	53	31	s	62	33	s
Eugene	61	37	pc	67	41	pc
Heppner	60	33	s	66	35	pc
Hermiston	65	33	s	70	38	pc
John Day	56	30	s	64	37	s
Klamath Falls	60	26	s	65	31	s
La Grande	58	28	s	66	37	s
Meacham	52	26	pc	63	33	s
Medford	67	37	s	70	42	pc
Newport	55	41	pc	59	45	c
North Bend	58	42	s	61	45	pc
Ontario	62	33	s	66	34	s
Pasco	67	35	s	70	38	pc
Pendleton	61	36	s	67	42	s
Portland	63	40	pc	67	44	pc
Redmond	60	24	s	67	33	pc
Salem	62	38	pc	67	42	pc
Spokane	56	35	sh	59	40	pc
Ukiah	56	31	s	64	36	c
Vancouver	62	39	pc	66	41	pc
Walla Walla	62	42	s	68	47	s
Yakima	67	35	s	69	38	pc

WORLD CITIES

	Today			Thu.		
	Hi	Lo	W	Hi	Lo	W
Beijing	58	38	pc	67	40	s
Hong Kong	77	70	c	78	67	c
Jerusalem	63	46	s	57	43	pc
London	52	38	sh	49	38	pc
Mexico City	74	51	pc	74	51	pc
Moscow	46	28	pc	46	28	pc
Paris	61	40	s	51	41	pc
Rome	62	44	s	62	44	s
Seoul	56	39	r	65	38	pc
Sydney	86	69	pc	83	68	s
Tokyo	64	50	c	60	49	r

WINDS

(in mph)	Today	Thursday
Boardman	WSW 6-12	SW 3-6
Pendleton	WSW 6-12	WNW 3-6

UV INDEX TODAY

0 2 4 4 2 0

8 a.m. 10 a.m. Noon 2 p.m. 4 p.m. 6 p.m.

0-2, Low 3-5, Moderate 6-7, High; 8-10, Very High; 11+, Extreme

The higher the AccuWeather.com UV Index™ number, the greater the need for eye and skin protection.

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NATIONAL WEATHER TODAY

Shown are noon positions of weather systems and precipitation. Temperature bands are highs for the day.

National Summary:

Snow showers and cold winds will affect the Northeast today. Rain will expand over the South Central states. Areas of rain and snow will affect the southern Rockies and the Dakotas to Montana.

Yesterday's National Extremes:

(for the 48 contiguous states)
High 91° in Palm Springs, Calif. Low 0° in Houlton, Maine

NATIONAL CITIES

	Today			Thur.		
	Hi	Lo	W	Hi	Lo	W
Albuquerque	68	46	c	60	41	c
Atlanta	66	50	pc	55	48	r
Atlanta City	39	27	pc	40	32	pc
Baltimore	46	29	s	50	35	pc
Billings	57	36	sh	60	41	s
Birmingham	70	56	c	69	57	sh
Boise	59	37	pc	64	40	s
Boston	29	15	pc	33	20	s
Charleston, SC	65	50	pc	63	54	sh
Charleston, WV	51	33	s	52	41	r
Chicago	50	37	pc	52	40	pc
Cleveland	44	27	s	43	32	pc
Dallas	69	59	t	74	62	c
Denver	68	39	c	49	35	sh
Detroit	50	28	s	46	31	pc
El Paso	69	53	pc	72	50	c
Fairbanks	38	15	s	40	16	pc
Fargo	50	36	s	52	32	pc
Honolulu	82	66	s	81	69	pc
Houston	74	62	t	78	63	c
Indianapolis	49	35	pc	52	40	c
Jacksonville	72	59	pc	75	57	pc
Kansas City	47	36	r	51	37	c
Las Vegas	77	58	r	79	54	pc
Little Rock	54	47	r	57	52	r
Los Angeles	74	59	c	74	57	c
Louisville	54	40	pc	50	47	r
Memphis	58	49	r	61	52	r
Miami	86	69	s	86	68	pc
Millwaukee	51	36	pc	49	39	pc
Minneapolis	48	35	r	53	36	c
Nashville	60	45	pc	58	51	sh
New Orleans	78	63	sh	79	64	sh
New York City	39	28	pc	43	30	s
Oklahoma City	60	48	r	63	46	c
Omaha	57	34	c	59	34	pc
Philadelphia	45	29	pc	48	32	pc
Phoenix	76	62	c	81	63	c
Portland, ME	28	12	pc	31	16	s
Providence	29	18	pc	36	22	s
Raleigh	58	40	pc	52	41	r
Sacramento	56	30	c	58	29	pc
Reno	67	37	pc	69	37	s
Sacramento	77	48	r	80	49	s
St. Louis	52	39	s	51	42	r
Salt Lake City	63	40	c			