

# Legislative leaders seek compromise on tax reform

By **PARIS ACHEN**  
Capital Bureau

The heads of the Oregon House and Senate said Monday they still have not brought together two opposing sides over how to fix the state's unstable revenue system and a \$1.8 billion shortfall in the next two years.

House Speaker Tina Kotek, D-Portland, and Senate President Peter Courtney, D-Salem, have been leading an effort to negotiate a compromise between public unions and business leaders. But they are making slow progress with just a week before the 160-day legislative session.

"I'm very discouraged right

now," Courtney said. "We do not have them in the room together."

The two groups last year waged the most expensive political battle in the state's history over a \$6 billion corporate sales tax measure.

Voters overwhelmingly defeated Measure 97 on the November ballot.

Since then, victorious business leaders have acknowledged the state needs more revenue stability. The state's system is overly dependent on income tax revenue, which fluctuates drastically with economic spikes and dips.

However, business leaders say they won't support new business taxes until lawmakers curtail rising costs associated with the Public

Employees Retirement System.

Courtney said he spurred the Legislature's budget writers last week to release a budget without any new revenue to give lawmakers a reality check on what they're facing in terms of cuts. Budget writers unveiled a plan that would entail kicking more than 350,000 people off Medicaid, larger class sizes, university tuition hikes and cuts in child welfare workers.

Beyond having informal meetings with business and labor leaders, Gov. Kate Brown has largely distanced herself from the push for revenue reform since the failure of Measure 97, which she endorsed. In her proposed budget last month, Brown laid out several new taxes to address the state's revenue shortfall but excluded any

that would raise business taxes.

"She has seven taxes we're supposed to vote on individually, but basically, long-term she's thinking 2018," Courtney said. "This also complicates this long-term perfect fix" that some lawmakers are pursuing.

In an email to the Pamplin Media Group/EO Media Group Capital Bureau, Chris Pair, a spokesman for Brown, did not address the governor's preference for timing in revenue reform.

"The cuts proposed put into human terms the devastating consequences families face with a tax system that is unstable, inadequate, and fundamentally out of balance to meet Oregon's essential needs," Pair wrote in the email.

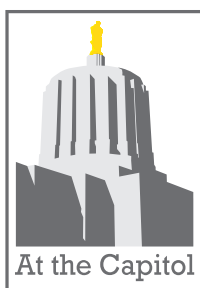
"While Gov. Brown will continue working hard to make sure state

government does more with less, she maintains that we must work to develop a long-term solution that doesn't put Oregonians at risk every two years.

"Gov. Brown looks forward to working with legislators, business leaders and advocates to come together on these tough choices and build a budget and revenue package that keeps the doors of opportunity open for all Oregonians."

Kotek said 2017 is the best time for lawmakers to reform the revenue system.

"I don't want to wait until '18 because we might be dealing with a whole different set of problems ... because of what the federal government decides to do," Kotek said. "There is a lot of unknowns on the horizon."



## Oregon officials kill cougars preying on pets

SALEM (AP) — Normally timid mountain lions are being forced by this winter's heavy snows into some remote Oregon communities, where they are preying on pets and chickens.

Cougars prowling through La Pine have killed two pets and at least 12 chickens, stoking fear in the town in the piney woods of Oregon east of the Cascade Range.

On Saturday, Deschutes County deputies shot and killed a cougar that was hiding under a porch after attacking a dog. On Monday, state and federal wildlife officials went to investigate and killed three more of the cougars that have been leaving their paw prints in the snow on the decks of homes and in backyards.

The Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife said in a statement Tuesday the cougars are causing public safety issues in and around town.

It said officials from the Oregon agency and the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Wildlife Services were tracking at least one cougar after it was sighted at a store.

There has never been an attack by a wild cougar on a person in Oregon, which is home to about 6,300 cougars, although attacks have occurred in other states and Canadian provinces, the Oregon agency said.

Resident Shannon Shahan said 14 of her chickens were killed or died of shock and two survived.

She told Bend TV station KTZZ the cougars had jumped a fence to get at the chickens. Her surveillance cameras caught at least one cougar on her property, leaving large paw prints in the snow.

The state wildlife department said



In this 2012 file photo, an approximately 2-year-old female cougar runs away from a Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife trap after being released northeast of Arlington, Wash. Cougars prowling near the remote community of La Pine, have killed two pets and at least 12 chickens.

**"The cougars are having trouble hunting their traditional prey so are coming to residential areas for an easier meal."**

— **Corey Heath**, wildlife biologist with ODFW

deep snow is likely a factor in the appearance of the cougars.

"The cougars are having trouble hunting their traditional prey so are coming to residential areas for an easier meal," said Corey Heath, a wildlife biologist with the department. "Unfortunately at this point we consider them a significant human safety risk, so they need to be removed for the safety of La Pine residents."

Some people think killing the trespassing cougars is going too far. They said people should protect their pets

and appreciate the cougars as a part of living in a rural area.

A dog and a cat have been killed, in addition to the chickens.

In its statement, the state wildlife department said wildlife managers will not relocate the trespassing cougars because the animals would cause problems in new areas or return to La Pine.

Officials recommended residents feed their pets indoors, walk their dogs on a leash and be aware of their surroundings, especially at dawn and dusk.

### BRIEFLY

#### Man pleads guilty to possessing machine gun

EUGENE (AP) — An Oregon man with ties to the armed occupation of the Malheur National Wildlife Refuge has pleaded guilty to illegally possessing a machine gun.

The Register-Guard reports that 54-year-old Michael Ray Emry on Monday pleaded guilty. Sentencing is scheduled for April 3.

The ATF says the M2 machine gun Emry possessed was capable of firing 550 to 650 rounds per minute.

Emry admitted that he took the gun from a shop where he works in Idaho. Emry says the owner of the shop didn't know that he had taken the weapon.

Emry described himself as an "embedded reporter" during the refuge takeover one year ago. He was not indicted for his role in the occupation and the

weapons charge was not connected to the incident.

#### Woman pleads guilty in murder-for-hire plot

PORTLAND (AP) — An Oregon woman accused of hiring a hit man to kill her ex-husband has pleaded guilty to using interstate commerce in a murder-for-hire plot.

Pamela Gygi of Lane County entered the plea Monday at the federal courthouse in Eugene.

Federal officials said Gygi paid a parolee to kill her ex-husband, but the parolee decided to instead alert the man to the plot.

The woman was arrested in July after the would-be hit man had several audio-recorded meetings with her.

Court documents state Gygi paid the hit man \$600, and promised him a residence in California, the title to a 2005 Dodge Stratus and an online business.

### Corrections

Umatilla County Republican Chairman Larry B. Moore was misrepresented in the article "Local reactions" in Saturday's *East Oregonian*. He said Democrats are not the enemy, but they are the opposition. 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
Fog in the a.m.; mostly cloudy	Mostly cloudy; fog, cold	Areas of fog, freezing early	Areas of fog, freezing early	Areas of fog, freezing early
<b>34° 26°</b>	<b>34° 22°</b>	<b>35° 22°</b>	<b>36° 22°</b>	<b>38° 29°</b>
PENDLETON TEMPERATURE FORECAST				
<b>34° 26°</b>	<b>35° 25°</b>	<b>36° 24°</b>	<b>35° 24°</b>	<b>37° 28°</b>
HERMISTON TEMPERATURE FORECAST				
<b>35° 26°</b>	<b>35° 25°</b>	<b>36° 24°</b>	<b>35° 24°</b>	<b>37° 28°</b>

### ALMANAC

PENDLETON through 3 p.m. yesterday

TEMPERATURE HIGH LOW

Yesterday 31° 29°

Normals 42° 28°

Records 71° (1935) -15° (1930)

PRECIPITATION 24 hours ending 3 p.m. 0.00"

Month to date 1.33"

Normal month to date 1.14"

Year to date 1.33"

Last year to date 1.13"

Normal year to date 1.14"

HERMISTON through 3 p.m. yesterday

TEMPERATURE HIGH LOW

Yesterday 33° 30°

Normals 43° 28°

Records 63° (1935) -16° (1949)

PRECIPITATION 24 hours ending 3 p.m. 0.00"

Month to date 1.39"

Normal month to date 1.00"

Year to date 1.39"

Last year to date 0.87"

Normal year to date 1.00"

SUN AND MOON

Sunrise today 7:24 a.m.

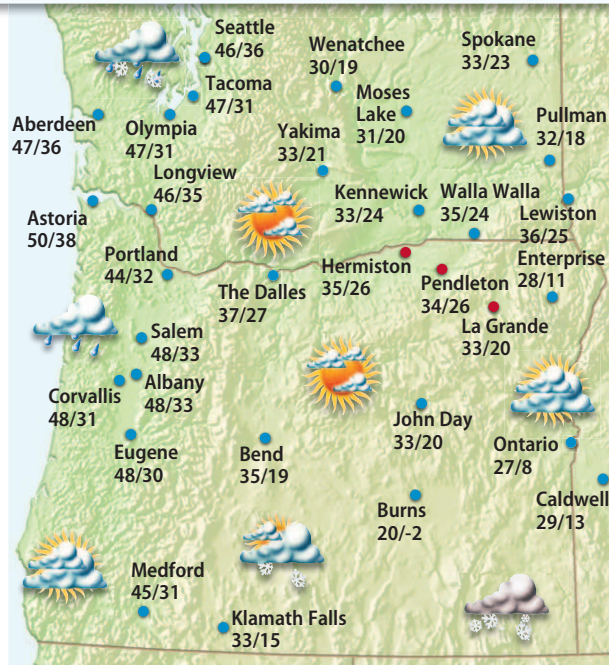
Sunset tonight 4:51 p.m.

Moonrise today 5:30 a.m.

Moonset today 3:04 p.m.

New First Full Last

Jan 27 Feb 3 Feb 10 Feb 18



Coastal Oregon: Mostly cloudy today; a shower in spots across the north.

Eastern Washington: Mostly cloudy today; areas of freezing fog during the morning.

Eastern and Central Oregon: Mostly cloudy and cold today, except some sun in central parts; fog across the north.

Western Washington: Mostly cloudy today. A shower in spots; arriving in the afternoon in central parts.

Cascades: A little snow at times with little or no accumulation today.

Northern California: Some sun, then clouds today; frigid in the interior mountains.

### REGIONAL CITIES

	Today			Thu.		
	Hi	Lo	W	Hi	Lo	W
Astoria	50	38	c	50	36	pc
Baker City	25	3	c	24	5	c
Bend	35	19	pc	36	16	c
Brookings	49	39	pc	51	36	pc
Burns	20	-2	pc	21	-3	c
Enterprise	28	11	c	27	9	c
Eugene	48	30	c	47	28	pc
Heppner	35	24	c	34	20	c
Hermiston	35	26	c	35	25	c
John Day	33	20	pc	33	17	c
Klamath Falls	33	15	pc	34	9	pc
La Grande	33	20	c	32	16	c
Meacham	31	18	c	30	15	c
Medford	45	31	c	49	28	pc
Newport	49	38	c	49	36	pc
North Bend	51	39	c	52	36	pc
Ontario	27	8	pc	24	8	c
Pasco	34	23	c	34	21	c
Pendleton	34	26	c	34	22	c
Portland	44	32	c	45	29	pc
Redmond	37	19	pc	38	16	c
Salem	48	33	c	48	29	pc
Spokane	33	23	c	31	23	c
Ukiah	31	16	c	31	12	c
Vancouver	44	32	c	45	29	pc
Walla Walla	35	24	c	33	22	c
Yakima	33	21	pc	34	22	c

### WORLD CITIES

	Today			Thu.		
	Hi	Lo	W	Hi	Lo	W
Beijing	42	22	pc	48	19	pc
Hong Kong	71	60	s	68	61	s
Jerusalem	64	48	c	56	43	c
London	44	28	c	40	31	s
Mexico City	76	46	s	77	44	s
Moscow	14	-8	c	10	8	pc
Paris	33	22	s	39	32	s
Rome	56	39	s	54	40	s
Seoul	33	15	s	43	24	pc
Sydney	78	70	c	81	72	c
Tokyo	48	35	s	49	40	s

### WINDS

(in mph)	Today	Thu
Boardman	NE 3-6	NE 3-6
Pendleton	WNW 4-8	NNW 4-8

### UV INDEX TODAY

0 0 1 0 0 0

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

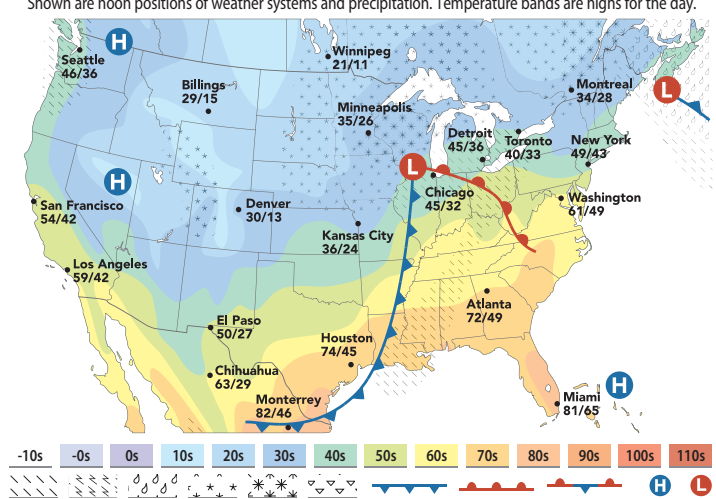
0-2, Low 3-5, Moderate 6-7, High; 8-10, Very High; 11+, Extreme

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: Rain will fall from the eastern Great Lakes to the central Gulf coast today. Snow and colder air will sweep over much of the northern Plains and the Upper Midwest. Much of the West will be dry.