

Governor defends state's cannabis regulations

By **PARIS ACHEN**
Capital Bureau

SALEM — Gov. Kate Brown is pushing back against accusations by U.S. Attorney General Jeff Sessions that Oregon's marijuana regulations have failed to adequately protect public health and prevent leakage into the illicit market.

In a letter to Sessions Aug. 22, Brown detailed protections and improvements Oregon has made to its cannabis regulation and enforcement systems and challenged the accuracy of information Sessions cited in his questioning of the state's compliance with the Cole Memorandum.

The memo by the U.S. Department of Justice during the Obama administration in 2013 allowed states to operate legal marijuana programs without federal interference on the condition that states protect the public and keep cannabis from leaking out of the regulated market.

In the letter, the governor addressed concerns outlined in a letter from Sessions last month.

She noted she has signed into law several new regulations this year to prevent illegal sales and transport of cannabis products. For example, one law expands strict tracking requirements to medical marijuana, requiring all products to be tracked with radio frequency identification tags. Another law increases criminal penalties for marijuana crimes, such as illegal extraction and import and export.

Brown and several other govern-



Budtender Josh Mitchell holds out a container with a marijuana strain called Caramel OG in June at Kind Leaf in Pendleton. Kind Leaf is one of three legal marijuana retailers in Pendleton.

EO file photo

nors have encouraged Sessions to keep the Cole memo in place. A federal task force also concluded the memo is the best strategy for handling states with legal cannabis programs, according to an Aug. 3 report by The Associated Press.

"Tax revenue from the marijuana industry is used to fund schools, to provide mental health and drug treatment and to assist both state and local law enforcement," Brown

wrote. "This does not even take into account cost savings to the criminal justice system."

The governor's response followed one earlier in August by Oregon State Police Superintendent Travis Hampton.

Sessions cited a draft report by OSP, leaked to and reported by The Oregonian, as evidence of Oregon's noncompliance with the Cole memorandum.

The draft report by an outside analyst indicated only about 30 percent of marijuana market activity in Oregon complies with state regulation.

The conclusions relied on subjective data such as blog posts and unsubstantiated information from the internet and failed to take into account regulatory improvements, said OSP spokesman Bill Fugate.

The agency lacks enough objective data to draw conclusions on how well the state's marijuana regulations are working, Hampton claimed. For instance, OSP didn't start testing for marijuana use in vehicular fatalities until May, he noted.

The agency had no plans to publish the report until more objective information was available in the next several years, he said. "The agency attempted to make clear the document was not accurate, not validated, outdated and the Oregon State Police did not endorse the conclusion in the draft baseline report," Hampton wrote to Sessions Aug. 16. "Unfortunately, you sourced the same leaked draft documents as evidence against Oregon's marijuana regulatory structure."

Oregon's legal marijuana industry sustains 12,500 jobs and yields a projected \$105 million in annual recreational marijuana tax revenue, used to support public education and services, according to a white paper by Rep. Ann Lininger, D-Lake Oswego, who served on the marijuana regulation committee until July. Lininger has resigned from the Legislature Aug. 15, and is set to be sworn in as a Clackamas County Circuit Court judge Monday, Aug. 28.

Twenty-nine states, the District of Columbia and the U.S. territories of Guam and Puerto Rico allow cannabis use for medical conditions. Another 17 states permit limited use of cannabidiol, or CBD, the non-psychoactive element in marijuana.

HERMISTON

Police arrests two teens for graffiti

East Oregonian

Police arrested two Morrow County teenagers early Wednesday morning suspected of graffiti in the southwest section of Hermiston.

On Wednesday at about 2:20 a.m., a Hermiston patrol officer was driving in the area of West Juniper Avenue and Southwest Ninth Street when he saw two males in dark clothing crossing the street in front of him. As he approached, he saw graffiti on a fence and the two males started running. The officer could smell fresh paint in the area as he got out of the car.

The officer found the two juvenile males, a 15-year-old from Irrigon and a 16-year-old from Boardman, hiding under a trailer in the 800 block of West Juniper Avenue. They were both taken into custody and charged with felony criminal mischief in the first degree, unlawfully applying graffiti, unlawful possession of graffiti implements and violating curfew.

The males were released to their parents, who were also cited for failure to supervise a minor. The two parents cited were Nadia Aguilar and Marina Sanchez.

Hermiston Police Chief Jason Edmiston said there was no direct gang affiliations with the graffiti, which referred to marijuana. He said further investigation revealed that several businesses, homes and pieces of public property had also been vandalized in the southwest part of town, and estimated that clean-up costs would be in the thousands of dollars.

"The corporal did a good job getting out into the neighborhood and being proactive," Edmiston said. "Our department continues to take the strong stance if a child wants to act in this manner and graffiti is involved, we will take action every single time against the parent(s) or responsible adult(s) as someone other than society should be holding these kids accountable."

MILTON-FREEWATER

Replacement begins for Birch Creek Road Bridge

East Oregonian

The Birch Creek Road Bridge near Milton-Freewater will be closed beginning Monday as the 112-foot structure is replaced. The Oregon Department of Transportation announced drivers needing access to Birch Creek Road on the opposite side of the bridge will have to detour along Highway 11 and Eastside Road.

The department's Bridge Inspection Report of Oct. 15, 2009, lists the condition of the bridge as critical, with a sufficiency rating of 15.3. According to the agency, a rating of 50 or lower means replacement is recommended as soon as possible.

ODOT estimates the project, including road work, will cost about \$4.25 million and continue through the summer of 2018.

And the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers reported repair work is in progress on the Milton-Freewater levee

system's Nursery Bridge drop structure on the Walla Walla River.

The drop structure provides for fish passage, prevents riverbed degradation and allows irrigators to divert water, according to a written statement from the Corps' Walla Walla District. The structure has sustained damage and undergone multiple repairs since its installation in 1967, the Corps stated, and high flows in 2015 caused the most recent damage.

The Corps reported LKE Corporation, Washington, won the \$357,000 contract for the work to help protect the structure's gabions — metal, cage-like boxes filled with rocks — by adding rocks across the gabion mattress downstream of the drop structure. Members of the Milton-Freewater Boy Scout Troop 315 will acquire 275 willow cuttings to plant in the repair area. The Corps stated the project should wrap up by October.

Friday last day to fill out HSD grad venue survey

HERMISTON — Friday is the last day for Hermiston residents to give their input to a survey about venue options for Hermiston High School graduation. The district is looking at four options for the end-of-the-year ceremony. Those include continuing to hold the ceremony in the high school gymnasium or moving it to one of three locations: Kennison Field, the EOTEC rodeo grounds, or the Toyota Center in Kennewick.

The survey is available at <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/SRW5VFV>. There is also a video available on the Hermiston School District's Facebook page.

BRIEFLY

Collective Goods sale benefits hospital auxiliary

HERMISTON — A variety of books and gifts at affordable prices are available for purchase during the Collective Goods sale.

Hosted by the Good Shepherd Hospital Auxiliary, money raised will be used to support scholarships for those pursuing a medical career and medical equipment for Good Shepherd Medical Center. The sale is Tuesday, Sept 5 and Wednesday, Sept. 6 from 7:30 a.m. to 6 p.m. in Conference Room 2 at the hospital, 610 N.W. 11th St., Hermiston.

Also, applications for membership in the auxiliary can be picked up at the hospital gift shop. For more information, contact juner1942@gmail.com.

Inland Northwest Musicians begin rehearsals

PENDLETON — It's time to start warming up your voice as the chorale with Inland Northwest Musicians is gearing up for its 19th season.

Participants are welcome who have a desire to sing and fellowship with other area musicians. Auditions are not required.

The Inland Northwest Chorale will begin rehearsals Monday, Aug. 28. They will meet Mondays at 7 p.m. at Harris Junior Academy, 3121 S.W. Hailey Ave., Pendleton. Concerts will begin in October.

For more information, contact 541-289-4696, inwm@machmedia.net or visit www.inlandnorthwestmusicians.com.

COMING EVENTS

THURSDAY, AUGUST 24

MEGA SPORTS CAMP: CONQUER THE DAY, 8-11:30 a.m., Salvation Army, 150 S.E. Emigrant Ave., Pendleton. Kids in grades 1-6 can choose baseball, basketball, soccer or cheerleading and learn new skills and fundamentals in a positive and encouraging environment. Between sports session, coaches lead songs and inspiring sports and Bible stories. (Ricky and Sylvia 541-276-3369)

PRESCHOOL STORY AND CRAFT TIME, 10:30 a.m., Milton-Freewater Public Library, 8 S.W. Eighth Ave., Milton-Freewater. (Lili Schmidt 541-938-8247)

BOARDMAN SENIOR MEAL SERVICE, 12 p.m., Boardman Senior Center, 100 Tatone St., Boardman. Cost is \$4 for seniors 55 and over or \$5 for adults. (541-481-3257)

PENDLETON SENIOR MEAL SERVICE, 12 p.m., Pendleton Senior Center, 510 S.W. 10th St., Pendleton. Costs \$3.50 or \$6 for those under 60. Pool, puzzles, crafts, snacks, Second Time Around thrift store 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. For Meals On Wheels, call 541-276-1926. (541-276-7101)

HERMISTON SENIOR MEAL SERVICE, 12 p.m., Our Lady of Angels Catholic Church parish hall, 565 W. Hermiston Ave., Hermiston. Cost is \$4 for adults, free for children 10 and under, \$4 for Meals on Wheels. Extra 50 cents for utensils/dishes. Bus service to parish hall by donation. (541-567-3582)

SENSORY STORY TIME, 12:30 p.m., Boardman Public Library, 200 S. Main St., Boardman. For children from birth to age 4. (541-481-2665)

SKILLS FOR LIFE, 3-5 p.m., Pendleton Recreation Center, 510 S.W. Dorion Ave., Pendleton. Gym activities and life skills for middle and high school students. Registration requested. (Danny Bane 541-379-4250)

KARATE OPEN GYM, 5-6 p.m., Pendleton Recreation Center gym, 510 S.W. Dorion Ave., Pendleton. Lars Hansen will lead this all-ages class. Wear comfortable clothes. No experience necessary. (Casey Brown 541-276-8100)

INFUSION: A NIGHT OF ARTFUL PAIRINGS, 5-8 p.m., Arts Portal Gallery, 508 N. Main St., Milton-Freewater. Enjoy pairings of Forgeron Cellars wines and appetizers by Steven Gabinski of Ox & Cart in Walla Walla. Tickets are \$30, available for purchase online at <http://artsportalgalleryevents.brownpaperickets.com>, \$35 at the door or \$50 which includes a bottle of Forgeron Cellars 2014 Chardonnay. (Laura 541-938-3727)

YARN CLUB, 5:30 p.m., Hermiston Public Library, 235 E. Gladys Ave., Hermiston. (541-567-2882)

THE ARC UMATILLA COUNTY BINGO, 6-10 p.m., The Arc Building, 215 W. Orchard Ave., Hermiston. Doors open at 6 p.m., seats may be

held until 6:30 p.m., then all seats first come, first served; games begin at 7 p.m. Proceeds benefit Umatilla County citizens with developmental disabilities. 18 years or older, must have proof of age and photo I.D. Basic pot \$20, prizes range from \$20-\$750. (541-567-7615)

FIDDLERS NIGHT, 6:30-8:30 p.m., Brookdale Assisted Living, 980 W. Highland Ave., Hermiston. Enjoy light refreshments, listen to some favorite oldies or join in the jam session. All ages welcome. (541-567-3141)

FRIDAY, AUGUST 25
MEGA SPORTS CAMP: CONQUER THE DAY, 8-11:30 a.m., Salvation Army, 150 S.E. Emigrant Ave., Pendleton. Kids in grades 1-6 can choose baseball, basketball, soccer or cheerleading and learn new skills and fundamentals in a positive and encouraging environment. Between sports session, coaches lead songs and inspiring sports and Bible stories. (Ricky and Sylvia 541-276-3369)

HEPPNER FARMERS MARKET, 9 a.m.-2 p.m., Heppner City Park, 444 N. Main St., Heppner. Local produce, crafts, baked goods and more. (Don or Jo Ann Shannon 541-676-8957)

STORY TIME, 10:15 a.m., Hermiston Public Library, 235 E. Gladys Ave., Hermiston. (541-567-2882)

PENDLETON FARMERS MARKET, 4-7 p.m., 300 block, South Main Street, Pendleton. Local produce, baked goods, crafts, jewelry, live music, food vendors and more. (Cheryl Montgomery 541-969-9466)

VFW BINGO, 6 p.m., Hermiston VFW, 45 W. Cherry St., Hermiston. Doors open at 6 p.m.,

games begin at 7 p.m. Everyone welcome. (541-567-6219)

PENDLETON BLOCK PARTY WITH HILLSTOMP, 6:30-10 p.m., 400 block, South Main Street, Pendleton. The Joseph Hein Band will open for headliners Hillstomp. 21-and-over beer garden, all-ages show. Free. (Adam Mack or Peter Walters 503-720-5370 or 541-310-1768)

SATURDAY, AUGUST 26
PENDLETON ON WHEELS RELAXED BIKE RIDE, 7 a.m., Chamber of Commerce Parking Lot, 501 S. Main St., Pendleton. Weekly casual ride. Meet with those taking a longer ride, but take a shorter route that matches participant interests that day. Usually in the 10 to 20 mile ride as participants desire. (Pete Wells 541-379-2180)

POW SATURDAY BIKE RIDE, 7 a.m.-1 p.m., Information kiosk at Museum Park, 108 S.W. Frazer Ave., Pendleton. Weekly bike ride by Pendleton on Wheels. Rides are open to the public, as far and at a speed comfortable for you. (Pete Wells 541-379-2180)

IMAC FUNDRAISING BREAKFAST, 7:30-10:30 a.m., Stokes Landing Senior Center, 150 Columbia Lane, Irrigon. Supports Irrigon Multicultural Arts Center project to preserve 1921 building and create regional art center. Costs \$4.50. (Peggy price 541-567-3806)

HERMISTON FARMERS MARKET, 9 a.m.-1 p.m., Festival Plaza, Northeast Second Street and Main, Hermiston. Local produce, baked goods, crafts, jewelry, art, live music, food vendors and more.

FREE FOR ALL, 9:30-10:15 a.m., Pendleton Center for the

Arts, 214 N. Main St., Pendleton. Free art classes for children up to age 12. Children under 8 should be accompanied by an adult. (Roberta Lavadour 541-278-9201)

FAMILY HISTORY WORKSHOPS, 10 a.m., Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, 850 S.W. 11th St., Hermiston. Workshops, photo scanning and more. (Stephanie Blackburn 541-567-6251)

YARN CLUB, 10 a.m.-12 p.m., Hermiston Public Library, 235 E. Gladys Ave., Hermiston. (541-567-2882)

DRIVE 4 UR SCHOOL FUNDRAISER, 10 a.m.-5 p.m., Hermiston High School parking lot, 600 S. First St., Hermiston. Ford will donate \$20, up to \$6,000, for every test drive by a licensed driver. Proceeds benefit the Hermiston High School choir program. (Maria Duron 541-667-6036)

HIP & HANDMADE, 11 a.m.-12 p.m., Pendleton Center for the Arts, 214 N. Main St., Pendleton. Free drop-in project class for adults. (Roberta Lavadour 541-278-9201)

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SUBMIT COMMUNITY NEWS

Submit information to: community@eastoregonian.com or drop off to the attention of Tammy Malgesini at 333 E. Main St., Hermiston or Renee Struthers at 211 S.E. Byers Ave., Pendleton. Call 541-564-4539 or 541-966-0818 with questions.