



Rachel Comstock of Athena shoots photos of her son, Isaiah, 2, as Chantel Pilch of Pendleton looks on Tuesday while trick or treating in Pendleton.



Austin Williamson, 16, of Pendleton portrays a headless man on Main Street in Pendleton.



Ten-year-old Aaron Bazan shows off his "Aarogonian" custom costume on Main Street in Hermiston.



Jennifer Keeton makes sure the balloons of her son Brave Pereira's costume don't get caught in a tree while trick or treating Tuesday on Main Street in Pendleton.

House GOP leaders delay tax plan release amid changes

WASHINGTON (AP) — House Republicans, straining to make last-minute changes to their far-reaching tax proposal, on Tuesday delayed the rollout by a day after they failed to finalize the details.

The plan pushed by President Donald Trump and Republican leaders in Congress is a top legislative priority. The details originally were to be unveiled on Wednesday, but that was delayed until Thursday, said Rep. Kevin Brady, R-Texas, chairman of the tax-writing Ways and Means Committee.

The committee had worked throughout the day and evening to produce a plan for the first overhaul of the nation's tax code in three decades.

"We are making excellent progress. We are very close," Brady told reporters late Tuesday night. "A lot of work remains with the drafters, they are continuing to work through the night. We are moving forward."

At the White House, an official said Trump looked forward to seeing legislation this week, adding the administration was confident the delay wouldn't affect the ultimate timing of the bill. Brady said his panel plans to vote on the bill next week.

Although they had settled on some key details — such as a cut in the corporate tax rate to 20 percent and maintaining the top personal income tax rate for the wealthy of 39.6 percent — other elements still had to be resolved, including the income levels for the tax brackets.

Trump has intensified his lobbying for the nearly \$6 trillion tax overhaul plan, seeking a major legislative achievement after the collapse of the health care repeal. Republicans see taxes as a political imperative that will decide whether they keep their congressional majorities in next year's midterm elections.

The president set an ambitious



Treasury Secretary Steve Mnuchin listens as President Donald Trump speaks during a meeting on tax policy with business leaders in the Roosevelt Room of the White House, Tuesday in Washington.

timetable and predicted a grand signing ceremony before Christmas at "the biggest tax event in the history of our country."

Late Tuesday, Trump renewed his cheerleading on Twitter.

"The Republican House members are working hard (and late) toward the Massive Tax Cuts that they know you deserve. These will be biggest ever!"

The plan originally unveiled by Trump and congressional Republicans called for shrinking the number of tax brackets from seven to three, with respective tax rates of 12 percent, 25 percent, 35 percent. That plan drew immediate criticism from Democrats, who complained it was too favorable to the wealthy and undermined Trump's rhetoric about it benefiting the middle class.

The current Republican plan calls for nearly doubling the standard deduction used by most average Americans to \$12,000 for individuals and \$24,000 for families, and increasing the per-child tax credit.

In addition to slashing the corporate tax rate, it also seeks to repeal inheritance taxes on multimillion-dollar estates, a big break for the wealthy.

Brady did not answer directly when he was asked — while leaving House Speaker Paul Ryan's suite Tuesday — whether the drop in the corporate tax rate would happen immediately. But, he said: "I want as much growth right from Day One as I can."

Trump intensified his lobbying for the tax overhaul plan even as its shape was still under negotiation by the Republicans on Capitol Hill.

"The process is complicated but the end result will not be that complicated. It's going to be: People are going to pay less tax by a lot, companies are going to pay less tax by a lot - that's a big difference — and companies are going to start rebuilding and they're going to stay here," Trump said in the Roosevelt Room, where he was joined by the heads of more than a dozen business and trade allies.

SCANNERS: Edmiston said the cost of the service could be the deciding factor

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Hermiston Police Chief Jason Edmiston said he is fine with the public having access to the main police channel, but circumstances can arise that create a thin line between officer safety and being open to the public. For tactical situations, encryption could prove valuable.

Even without encryption, Edmiston said there are workarounds to keep sensitive information private, such as text messages and the police computer system that can send messages between police vehicles. He said those communications also stymie bad guys who might have a scanner or radio.

Encryption also costs, but Halsey said how much would depend on the vendor. He said the data district can afford to pay about \$400,000 a year for a radio system.

Edmiston said as a department head he has to keep an eye on the bottom line, and cost for the service could be the deciding factor.

Bill Medlock, a 55-year-old Hermiston man who is never far from a police scanner, is against encryption.

"I hope they never do that," he said.

Medlock dispatches for a trucking operation and listens to an emergency scanner much of the day. He said he has one in his home office and another in his pickup.

"It's mainly for the weather," he said, "I really don't care where the cops are."

But he listens to emergency chatter and posts information from some transmissions on the Facebook page What's Happening Hermiston. When it comes to emergencies, he said people want immediate information.

"I can update as soon as I hear more," he said.

The Oregon Department of Transportation's website Tripcheck.com does not update often enough, he said, so he and others, including a buddy at Meacham, can find out real-time information on road conditions and more.

"We need to know what's going on," Medlock said. "I think it's our right to know what the police are doing, if there is an emergency, a shooting somewhere. We need to know about it then, not the next day. If the freeways are shut down, we need to know."

Encryption cuts out the public's right to know, he said, and allows agencies to hide what they do. Medlock said public agencies need a good reason to operate in secret. During a raid or an armed standoff, for example, police probably should not broadcast certain information, he said, but emergency agencies also should let people know what places to avoid or when to stay indoors.

"It's not just a safety situation for police, but also concern for others that could show up," he said.

Halsey said the data district board and local agencies are going to have to answer whether public safety outweighs the public's right to know. Halsey said he did not have that answer.

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