

How could toll revenue be used in Oregon?

By **PARIS ACHEN**
Capital Bureau

PORTLAND — If it cost \$3.50 when a driver crossed Interstate 205's Abernethy Bridge, the toll would yield about \$50 million per year and support the sale of enough bonds to pay for a significant share of the widening and seismic reinforcement of the bridge, according to an analysis by WSP USA.

That project — which includes adding a third lane to segments of I-205 where there are only two — is estimated to cost about \$500 million.

The Oregon Transportation Commission voted unanimously Aug. 16 to seek approval from the Federal Highway Administration to toll the bridge and all lanes of Interstate 5 between Northeast Going Street/Alberta Street and Southwest Multnomah Boulevard. Meanwhile, commissioners have instructed the Oregon Department of Transportation to conduct a feasibility study of tolling all seven interstates to form a "seamless loop" around Portland.

Gov. Kate Brown said she is supportive of the commission's work so far on tolling. "No one else has been

able to come up with another resource for how we would pay for these extremely expensive seismic resiliency projects and congestion reduction projects," Brown said during a phone conference call with reporters Aug. 17.

Brown, who grew up in Minnesota, brought up the collapse of the Interstate 35 West bridge in Minneapolis during rush hour on Aug. 1, 2007. Vehicles plummeted onto the banks of the Mississippi River, killing 14 and injuring 145 people.

"My family wasn't individually impacted. My family had friends who were impacted," Brown said. "I don't want to see that happening under my watch, and I don't think any Oregonian would want that to happen here. We have to invest in our transportation infrastructure, and projects like the Abernethy Bridge significantly if we want not to be devastated after a 9.0 earthquake."

Under the Oregon Constitution and state statute, toll revenue may be used to pay for seismic upgrades and widening of bridges and almost any road improvement imaginable.

The Constitution states that revenue from any tax or fee on the ownership, oper-



Pamplin Media Group

Gov. Kate Brown says she wants tolling revenue to help pay for seismic upgrades to the state's bridges, but a lot of other ideas also are under consideration.

ation or use of motor vehicle "shall be used exclusively for the construction, reconstruction, repair, maintenance, operation and use of public highways, roads, streets and roadside rest areas in this state."

It's still unclear whether the commission could legally use the money to enhance public transit services or to give incentives to drivers for carpooling and hence, reducing the amount of traffic on

the interstates.

ODOT officials are seeking guidance from the Oregon Department of Justice, which has yet to complete its analysis, said ODOT Assistant Director Travis Brouwer.

Another unknown is whether the commission will place restrictions on the use of tolling revenue.

For instance, could the proceeds from an I-5 toll be used to pay for electronic

tolling infrastructure on Interstate 84?

"That would certainly be an eligible use because under the Constitution and state statute, you could use that money on any road," Brouwer said. "The question would be what restrictions would the Oregon Transportation Commission place on the revenue, whether the revenue would be restricted to the corridor where it's collected or could be used

in another corridor. That's not a question that has been answered at this point."

An initiative proposed for the 2020 ballot would require voter approval for any tolls that don't raise revenue that goes directly to adding capacity to the interstates, such as building new lanes. Passage of that measure — should it make it onto the ballot — could further restrict how the money could be used.

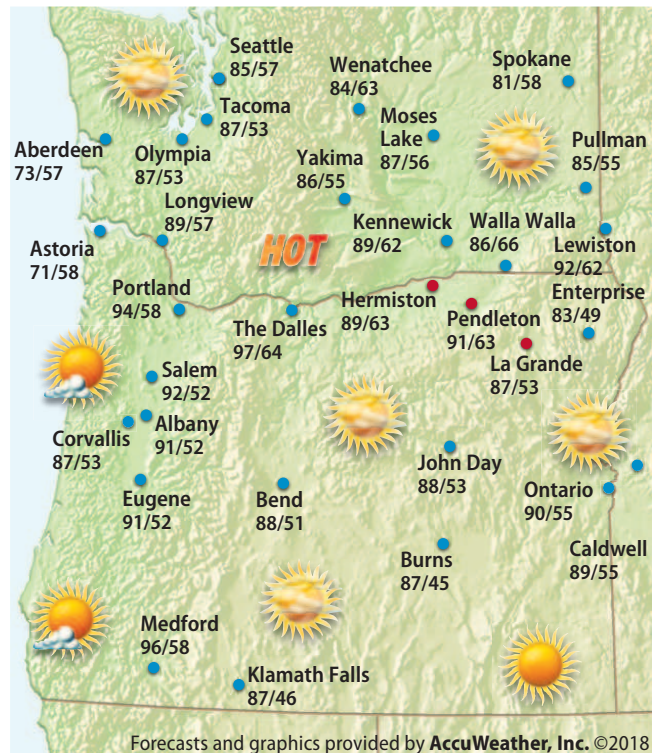
Forecast for Pendleton Area

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TODAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY	SUNDAY
Smoky with hazy sunshine	Breezy with hazy sunshine	Hazy, breezy and not as warm	Mostly sunny	Breezy with clouds and sunshine
PENDLETON TEMPERATURE FORECAST				
91° 63°	88° 56°	77° 49°	77° 55°	76° 57°
HERMISTON TEMPERATURE FORECAST				
89° 63°	91° 56°	81° 54°	80° 57°	79° 58°

OREGON FORECAST

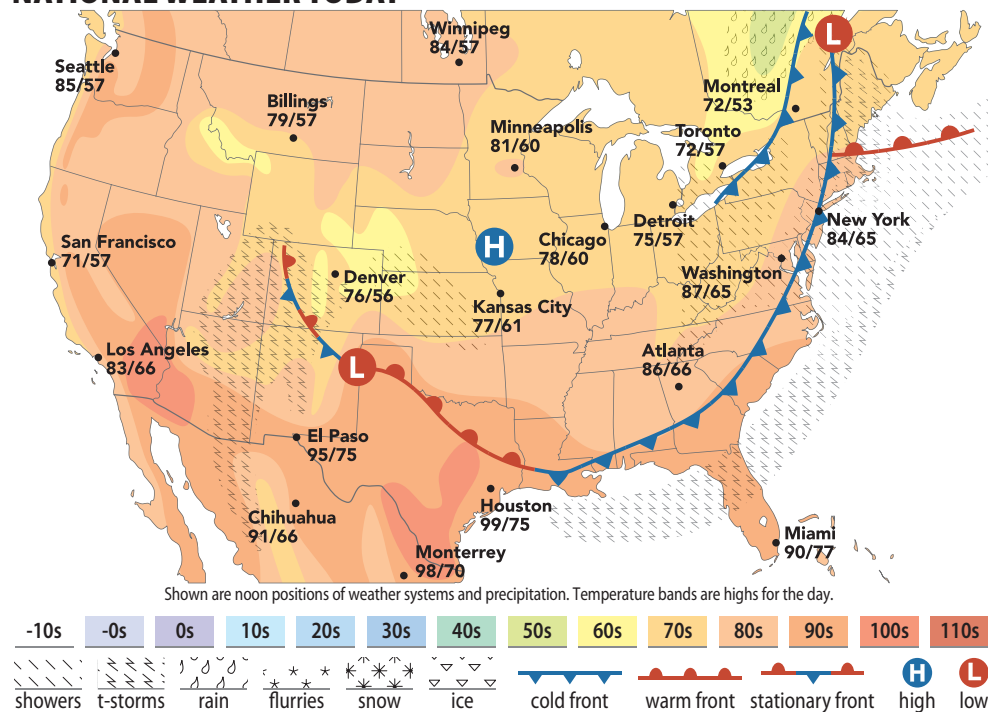
Shown is today's weather. Temperatures are today's highs and tonight's lows.



NATIONAL EXTREMES

Yesterday's National Extremes: (for the 48 contiguous states)
High 108° in Needles, Calif. Low 30° in Bodie State Park, Calif.

NATIONAL WEATHER TODAY



ALMANAC

PENDLETON through 3 p.m. yest.

TEMP.	HIGH	LOW
Yesterday	81°	51°
Normals	86°	56°
Records	106° (1897)	37° (1904)

PRECIPITATION
24 hours ending 3 p.m. 0.00"
Month to date Trace
Normal month to date 0.29"
Year to date 6.49"
Last year to date 11.37"
Normal year to date 8.24"

HERMISTON through 3 p.m. yest.

TEMP.	HIGH	LOW
Yesterday	85°	55°
Normals	87°	56°
Records	101° (1977)	41° (1945)

PRECIPITATION
24 hours ending 3 p.m. 0.00"
Month to date 0.03"
Normal month to date 0.14"
Year to date 5.13"
Last year to date 6.65"
Normal year to date 6.06"

WINDS (in mph)

	Today	Thu.
Boardman	SW 4-8	WSW 10-20
Pendleton	WNW 4-8	WSW 10-20

SUN AND MOON

Sunrise today	6:04 a.m.
Sunset tonight	7:52 p.m.
Moonrise today	5:54 p.m.
Moonset today	2:23 a.m.

Full Last New First
Aug 26 Sep 2 Sep 9 Sep 16

BRIEFLY

Health officials confirm second measles case linked to Portland airport cafe

PORTLAND (AP) — State health officials say a second case of measles has been confirmed in Portland.

The Oregon Health Authority on Tuesday said a person who was diagnosed Sunday had been in contact with a person who was diagnosed with the measles earlier in August.

People at most risk in the second case would have been at the Portland International Airport between 9:15 and 10:45 a.m. Friday; and between 8 and 11 a.m. Saturday at Marco's Cafe and Espresso Bar in Portland.

The agency says the virus spreads easily to those who aren't vaccinated, and people infected can spread it even before symptoms appear.

Symptoms include coughing, fever, runny nose and rash. It can cause ear and lung infections, diarrhea and brain swelling if not treated.

Idaho gets \$3.2M in grant money for election security

BOISE, Idaho (AP) — Idaho is receiving \$3.2 million from a federal commission to secure and modernize its elections systems.

The U.S. Election Assistance Commission released a report Tuesday showing how states plan to spend \$380 million allocated by Congress last spring to strengthen voting systems amid ongoing threats from Russia and others under the Help America Vote Act.

All but a fraction of the money has already been sent to the states, the District of Columbia and U.S. territories. The largest chunk — roughly 36 percent — is being spent to improve cybersecurity in 41 states and territories.

More than a quarter of the money will be used to buy new voting equipment in 33 states and territories, although the bulk of this is unlikely to happen until after the Nov. 6 midterm elections.

Idaho's plan to spend the federal money includes devoting \$1 million to upgrade the state's election system and voter registration database.

The updated system will include new election night reporting, campaign finance reporting and lobbyist registration. The project is estimated to cost \$4 million over five years, meaning the federal dollars will help pay for nearly a quarter of the project.

The Secretary of State's office has said further details of the contract — as well as the plan to cover the remaining costs of the project — will be disclosed once the contract is signed.

Meanwhile, \$581,000 of the federal funds will be spent on tightening cybersecurity and \$700,000 for election auditing — both of which will cover training for county election officials in the upcoming months.

Ashland City Council considers ride-sharing services, like Uber and Lyft

ASHLAND (AP) — The Ashland City Council is considering updating its policies to allow ride-sharing services such as Uber and Lyft within city limits.

The Daily Tidings reported Tuesday that Uber reached out to the small city and asked it to consider a policy similar to nearby Medford's because the two cities are so close.

The city council will hear a first reading of an ordinance that would replace the current taxi code and address ride-sharing.

The recommended ordinance closely mirrors Medford's, but also incorporates some safety measures used in larger cities, such as a 10-year search for criminal convictions, and required vehicle safety inspections.

Portland, Salem, Corvallis, Bend, Roseburg, Medford and Eugene now use vehicle-for-hire services.

Ashland attracts 400,000 tourists a year, mostly because of its well-known Oregon Shakespeare Festival.

State lawmaker calls journalists 'dirty, godless, hateful' at gun-rights rally

SPOKANE, Wash. (AP) — A Washington state lawmaker lashed out at the media at a gun-rights rally by calling journalists "dirty, godless, hateful people."

The Spokesman-Review reports that Republican Rep. Matt Shea of Spokane Valley made the comments Saturday at what was initially a protest against a gun control ballot measure tightening sales.

The ballot measure was tossed by a judge days before over technicalities and is now in limbo with an appeal of that decision ahead of the November election.

Gun advocates gathered Saturday at Franklin Park to rally.

Shea addressed the crowd, defending gun rights and free speech while also slamming the media.

Shea is also on the Washington Legislature's public records task force, a group set to meet next month — and includes representatives of the media — to discuss the state's disclosure laws in the wake of a lawsuit by a coalition of news groups, led by The Associated Press. In a tweet Tuesday, Washington Gov. Jay Inslee said the comments should disqualify him from the task force.

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