

# Richardson's treatment for cancer raises concerns

By GORDON FRIEDMAN  
The Oregonian/OregonLive

only, "It's as serious as brain cancer is."

PORTLAND — How severely brain cancer is affecting Oregon Secretary of State Dennis Richardson remains unclear, as a curtailment of his public schedule and delegation of some duties to a deputy raise questions about his future in the state's second-highest office.

Richardson, 69, was elected secretary of state in 2016 and is the only Republican holding statewide office in Oregon. He disclosed his cancer diagnosis in June and said he has been aware of the brain tumor since May.

Richardson and his aides have declined to give specifics about his diagnosis or treatment regimen. Asked for details Wednesday, Deb Royal, his chief of staff, said

Since Richardson revealed his diagnosis, his office has continued its usual work of releasing audit reports, registering corporations and preparing for the Nov. 6 election.

Richardson has continued posting occasional videos to his official Facebook page, such as ones in which he encourages residents to vote or asks fifth-graders to apply for his Kid Governor program. The latter was posted just this week.

Yet there have been signs that the cancer or the treatment of it may be taking a toll. Richardson's physical appearance has changed as a side effect, giving the normally trim statesman a puffy face and eyes. In September, he attended the national conference of ombudsmen, but

Deputy Secretary of State Leslie Cummings gave his scheduled opening remarks. And a senior state official, who recently had a meeting



AP Photo/Timothy J. Gonzalez, File

In this Nov. 8, 2016, file photo, Oregon Republican Secretary of State candidate Dennis Richardson greets supporters at the Salem Convention Center in Salem.

with Richardson, described his cognitive abilities as "severely diminished." The official said it is unclear if that is due to cancer treatments

or the disease itself. "He was such an energetic person," the official said. "It just makes the contrast stronger."

Richardson, who as secretary of state is second in line to the governorship, has declared he does not intend to resign. Royal signaled Wednesday that he hopes to be re-elected in 2020.

But Richardson has delegated away one key duty, even if temporarily. This week he informed Brown and state Treasurer Tobias Read that Cummings will sit in his place with them on the State Land Board, after he struggled to communicate at the board's previous meeting. Royal said that struggle was because cancer treatments have rendered Richardson exhausted.

"These treatments, they knock your socks off sometimes," Royal said. Cummings, the deputy, is already charged with overseeing day-to-day operations of Richardson's agency. Cummings was previously a state technology manager, and briefly embroiled in a controversy involving an expensive IT project, before being named deputy secretary of state by Richardson. If Richardson were to leave office, Brown would appoint an interim secretary of state. She has already done that once, when she appointed longtime Democratic legislative aide Jeanne Atkins in 2015 after she became governor upon John Kitzhaber's resignation. Royal said Richardson's aides have not discussed his leaving office and remain positive. "We're planning for him to pull through this," she said.

# Measure 104 could make it harder to raise state fees

By CLAIRE WITHYCOMBE  
Capital Bureau

Oregon imposes thousands of fees on everything from wastewater permits to overnight camping fees in state parks, and is expected to round up about \$1.5 billion worth of them in the current two-year budget.

Many fees are tied to the state's commodity commissions, which promote and

regulate certain crops like blueberries and hazelnuts, and licensing boards, which oversee professions from teaching to tattooing.

Creating or increasing fees now only takes a majority of legislators to say yes.

Supporters of Measure 104 say they want the state's Constitution to require a

greater number of lawmakers to approve fee changes.

Measure 104 means three-fifths, or a "supermajority," of lawmakers in the House and Senate would have to vote "yes" to pass fee changes.

That matters because the current makeup of the Legislature — where Democrats are one seat shy of a supermajority in each chamber — means that bills subject to a three-fifths voting requirement have to get some Republican support to pass.

Supporters point to recent efforts by Democratic lawmakers to create a carbon pricing fee as justification for changing the Constitution.

They say such legislation raises revenue but isn't technically considered a tax, which requires 60 percent approval by lawmakers in the House and Senate.

"By calling it a fee instead of a tax, they get around a three-fifths majority," said Paul Rainey, who manages the Yes on 104 campaign.

Measure 104 would also impose stricter voting requirements on bills that change tax credits, exemptions and deductions.

The "Yes" campaign has received significant backing from the real estate industry, which is eager to protect a tax deduction on mortgage interest that saves Oregonians about a \$500 million on their taxes per year.

And had Measure 104's provisions been in place earlier this year, certain Oregon

business owners may have gotten a bigger tax break in the wake of last year's recent federal tax overhaul.

A majority of lawmakers voted to disallow a 20 percent income tax deduction for qualifying business owners on the state level, sparking a lawsuit from state Sen. Brian Boquist, R-Dallas, and state Sen. Herman Baertschiger, R-Grants Pass.

Anthony Smith, state director at the Oregon chapter of the National Federation of Independent Business, said that a non-controversial fee increase likely would pass even with a supermajority requirement.

And Smith thinks such a requirement will require legislators to work together to reach a consensus on the more controversial fees — which he would see as a positive change.

"More debate, more consensus, more coalition building is probably a good thing for the state," Smith said.

Meanwhile, state Sen. Mark Hass, chair of the Senate Finance and Revenue Committee, opposes the measure because he thinks tax policy shouldn't be written into the Constitution. He said including fees in its provisions could affect the overall budget process. Budget bills often include fee increases.

"I think it's not out of the question, it could have an effect," Hass said. "Now you're giving decision-making on day-to-day operations to a small group of people,

12 to 13 people, on a fee, whether it's necessary to a particular group or to run a state agency."

Hass, a Democrat from Beaverton in the Legislature since 2001, said fees have gotten more controversial with the rise of the fiscally conservative tea party. "There's just certain people who will vote against all fees, no matter what," Hass said. "Even if the constituent group requested the fee increase, they'll still vote against it."

Revenue to fund state operations is harder to come by, which means the state has been more dependent on sources, such as fees, said Legislative Fiscal Officer Ken Rocco.

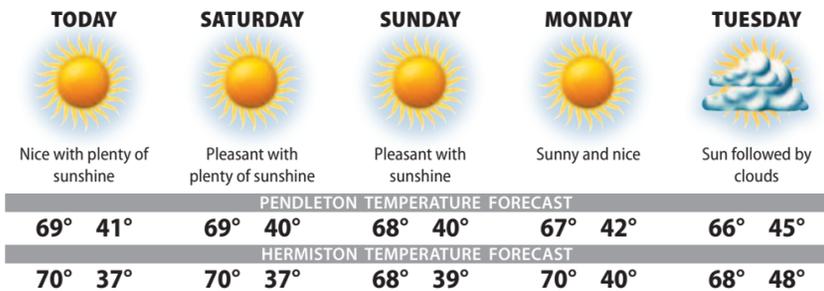
The Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife, for example, got about 29 percent of its revenues from license fees in the 2015-17 budget.

"I think what people are more apt to question is, how often do you raise fees?" Rocco said.

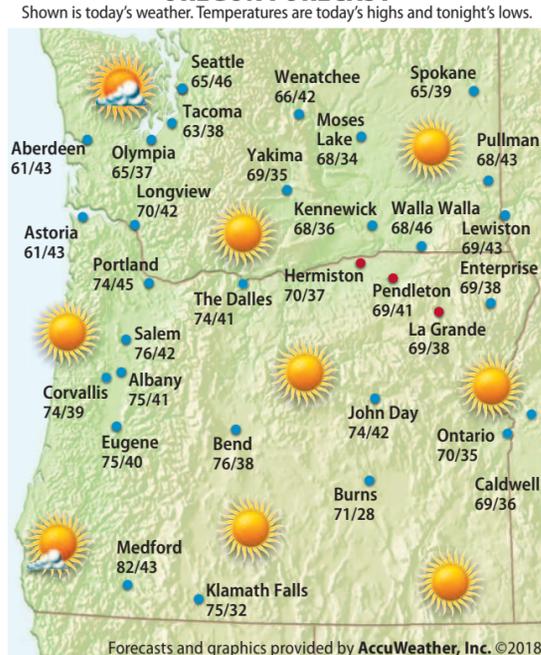
"And how big is the increase? And how is it justifiable, what are you doing differently that would require you to generate more money from fees?"

Reporter Claire Withycombe: cwithycombe@eomediagroup.com or 503-385-4903. Withycombe is a reporter for the East Oregonian working for the Oregon Capital Bureau, a collaboration of EO Media Group, Pamplin Media Group, and Salem Reporter.

## Forecast for Pendleton Area



## OREGON FORECAST



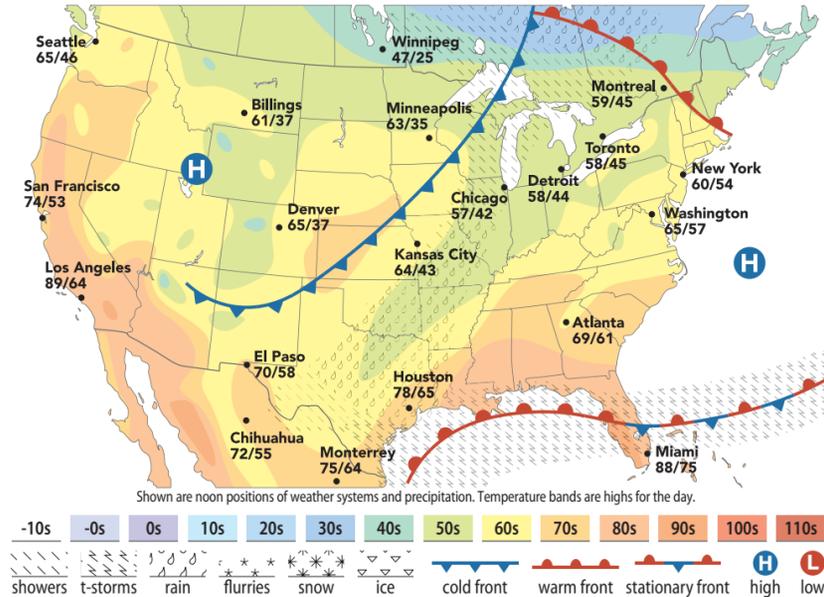
## ALMANAC

PENDLETON through 3 p.m. yest.		
TEMP.	HIGH	LOW
Yesterday	65°	37°
Normals	63°	39°
Records	85° (1940)	20° (1917)
PRECIPITATION		
24 hours ending 3 p.m.	0.00"	
Month to date	1.39"	
Normal month to date	0.59"	
Year to date	7.91"	
Last year to date	12.55"	
Normal year to date	9.53"	
HERMISTON through 3 p.m. yest.		
TEMP.	HIGH	LOW
Yesterday	65°	31°
Normals	64°	38°
Records	85° (1940)	23° (1976)
PRECIPITATION		
24 hours ending 3 p.m.	0.00"	
Month to date	1.14"	
Normal month to date	0.33"	
Year to date	6.29"	
Last year to date	7.19"	
Normal year to date	6.89"	
WINDS (in mph)		
	Today	Sat.
Boardman	NE 3-6	NE 3-6
Pendleton	N 4-8	NNE 4-8
SUN AND MOON		
Sunrise today	7:17 a.m.	
Sunset tonight	6:03 p.m.	
Moonrise today	4:15 p.m.	
Moonsset today	1:47 a.m.	
	Full	Last
	New	First
	Oct 24	Oct 31
	Nov 7	Nov 15

## NATIONAL EXTREMES

Yesterday's National Extremes: (for the 48 contiguous states)  
High 93° in Winter Haven, Fla. Low 4° in Bodie State Park, Calif.

## NATIONAL WEATHER TODAY



## BRIEFLY

**Commissioner: Lawmakers ignored subpoenas in #MeToo probe**

PORTLAND (AP) — State Labor Commissioner Brad Avakian in a court filing has accused top legislative officials of ignoring subpoenas issued by his agency in its investigation of sexual harassment at the Oregon Capitol.

The Oregonian/OregonLive reports the filings Wednesday seek contempt of court rulings and \$1,000 a day fines against Senate President Peter Courtney, House Speaker Tina Kotek, Senate Republican Leader Jackie Winters and nine others who Avakian accuses of disregarding subpoenas.

Through a private attorney, Edward Harnden, legislative officials subpoenaed by the bureau all declined to turn over requested records and sit for interviews.

They argued its demand for information was overly broad, and said compliance would require them to break pledges of confidentiality made to people who reported harassment.

Representatives for Courtney, Kotek and Winters directed questions to Harnden, who said he's confident a judge will find no wrongdoing by members of the Legislature.

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**Federal court: Salmon must have protection from warm water**

PORTLAND (AP) — A federal court has ruled that the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency must come up with a plan to protect salmon from warm water temperatures, which can be fatal for the fish species.

Oregon Public Broadcasting reports Thursday that record-high water temperatures in rivers across the Pacific Northwest in 2015 led environmental groups to sue the agency. That summer, around 250,000 adult sockeye died in the Columbia and Snake rivers.

The threatened and endangered salmon and steelhead can die if water gets above 70 degrees.

The Wednesday ruling says dams are a big reason rivers get too warm.

Columbia Riverkeeper's Brett Vandenberg says the EPA now must figure out how to minimize the impact of the dams on water temperature.

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