

# Cap and trade coming, Oregon legislator warns

By **GEORGE PLAVERN**  
EO Media Group



George Plaver/Capitol Press

**Oregon state Sen. Cliff Bentz, R-Ontario, speaks to the Oregon Cattlemen's Association convention on Dec. 1 in Bend. He told the group that passage of a cap and trade program is likely in the legislature.**

BEND — Cap and trade is all but certain to pass the Democrat-controlled Oregon Legislature in 2019, whether rural Oregonians like it nor not, says state Sen. Cliff Bentz, R-Ontario.

Bentz provided an update of cap and trade legislation on Dec. 1 at the Oregon Cattlemen's Association annual convention in Bend, telling conservative ranchers they must realize their political limitations and focus on making the law work for them.

"You can stand and yell, but it's not going to stop cap and trade from passing," Bentz said.

Under cap and trade, the state would implement a limit on carbon emissions beginning in 2021, which gradually lowers over the course of 30 years. Companies can buy credits on the open market to exceed the limit, and money raised by the program would go into a funding pool for climate-friendly initiatives.

Multiple agricultural groups — including the Oregon Cattlemen's Association, Oregon Farm Bureau and Northwest Food Processors Association — oppose cap and trade, arguing the proposal will raise fuel prices without making a dent in global carbon emissions.

The bill aims to reduce

carbon tax, but the Legislature, where Democrats hold a supermajority, appears set on putting a price on carbon instead.

Bentz said the odds of cap and trade passing the 2019 Legislature are 95 percent.

"We Republicans are not in control," he said. "I cannot stop this bill. This bill is going to pass."

The bill language has been postponed, Bentz said, after Gov. Kate Brown released her budget and policy agenda that proposes creating a new Oregon Climate Authority to take the place of the Department of Energy and Carbon Policy Office. The Oregon Climate Authority will include the cap and trade marketplace, greenhouse gas emissions reporting and accounting.

The question now, Bentz said, is how they can design the program to do the least amount of economic damage possible. He pointed to markets for offset projects that would allow ranchers and private timber owners to sell "sequestration credits," locking carbon into trees and rangeland, as a possible resource.

Bentz said the time has come to "stop with the outrage, and stop with the screaming," and instead focus on how do we craft the bill correctly.

"Let's figure out how to make this situation work for us," he said. "That's what I'm trying to do."

Oregon's emissions from 55 million tons of carbon dioxide each year to 10 million tons. But as Bentz was quick to point out, those savings are 0.00125 percent of global emissions, which total 36 billion tons of carbon dioxide annually.

"This will not resolve climate issues," he said.

Meanwhile, Bentz said fuel providers will buy allowances to exceed the carbon cap at \$16 per ton of carbon dioxide, which he calculated will increase the price of gas by 14 cents per gallon in the program's first year.

That does not mean Oregon should do nothing to address climate change, Bentz said. According to NASA, the average global temperature has risen by 1.4 degrees Fahrenheit since 1880, and the last four years have ranked as the warmest on record. The results are reduced snowpack, increasing drought and bigger wildfires burning across the West.

Bentz said lawmakers should focus on policies that resonate globally, without hindering local farms and businesses. He previously advocated a revenue-neutral

**BRIEFLY**

**White Eagle Grange announces holiday event**

PENDLETON — A Christmas dinner and program is planned at White Eagle Grange.

Meteorologist Vincent Papol will make a short presentation about weather and will answer questions. In addition, the event features door prizes and a raffle drawing for a rifle.

The event is Thursday at 6 p.m. at the grange, 43828 White Eagle Road, located off Highway 395 between Pendleton and Pilot Rock. The free meal includes ham and scalloped potatoes with all the trimmings.

For more information contact Gail Wilson 541-310-9655.

**Red Cross seeks 'hero' nominations**

PORTLAND — Who inspires you? The American Red Cross is seeking nominations to honor ordinary people who have done extraordinary things in the community.

The Hero Awards recognizes people in seven categories, including Community Hero: someone who displayed leadership and commitment to the community by making a positive and significant impact; First Responder: an individual or group who serves the public as a paramedic, firefighter or in law enforcement who went above and beyond the call of duty to save a life; Give Life: a person's commitment to blood and platelet donation played a significant role in ensuring the health of patients; Military: an active, reserve or retired member of the Armed Forces or ROTC or a civilian that has made a significant impact on the military community; Voluntary Service: someone who has displayed exemplary commitment to voluntary service resulting in a signif-

icant impact on the community; Good Samaritan (adult) and Youth Good Samaritan (under 21): a person who displayed courage and compassion when encountering an unusual, significant or unexpected incident.

Those being nominated must reside or work in Oregon or southwestern Washington, or the heroic act or humanitarian service must have occurred in the region. In addition, it must have occurred in the past year. Nominations must be submitted by Saturday, Dec. 15 at [www.redcross.org/Heroes2019](http://www.redcross.org/Heroes2019).

Sponsored by the Red Cross Cascades Region, an awards breakfast will honor the recipients. The event is Friday, March 22 at the Hilton, 301 W. Sixth St., Vancouver, Washington.

For more information about the breakfast or the nomination process, contact Amelia Holmes at 503-440-3701 or [amelia.holmes2@redcross.org](mailto:amelia.holmes2@redcross.org).

**Hospital auxiliary sets annual craft and bake sale**

HERMISTON — The Good Shepherd Medical Center Auxiliary is hosting its annual Baked Food & Craft Sale.

Just in time for the holiday season, the sale is Wednesday, Dec. 12 from 7:30 a.m. to 4 p.m. in Conference Room 5-6 at the hospital, 610 N.W. 11th St., Hermiston. The event serves as a fundraiser with money going to provide scholarships to area students pursuing a medical career and to purchase medical equipment for the hospital.

Auxiliary member June Rosenberg said there is a wide assortment of holiday treats. In addition, she said there are some great cooks among the membership.

For more information, contact Rosenberg at [juner1942@gmail.com](mailto:juner1942@gmail.com).

**PENDLETON**

## SAT scores lower than state average

By **ANTONIO SIERRA**  
East Oregonian

Pendleton High School has touted its sky-high graduation rate in recent years, but its college entrance exam scores need more work.

At a school board meeting on Tuesday, PHS Principal Melissa Sandven shared scores from the SAT and ACT, which showed that students were falling behind the pack.

The class of 2018 had a mean score of 524 on the reading and writing test and a 507 in the math test, far below the state mean scores of 563 and 556, respectively.

The 2018 scores represent a backslide from the class of 2017's scores, and although preliminary data for the class of 2018 shows improvements, they're still significantly below the means for the state.

The ACT scores were much better, with the percentage of students meeting the ACT's college readiness benchmark right around the state average. But only 27 students from the class of 2018 took the test, and Sandven noted that the students who take the ACT tend to be applying for top colleges and competitive scholarships.

Sandven said she's heard theories for the low scores, like Pendleton encouraging more students to take

the SAT while other districts are more selective or some Pendleton students taking the test just to gain access to a certain scholarship.

But given that it's still her first year at Pendleton High School, Sandven said she needs more time to investigate.

The high school offers free practice SATs for sophomores, free SATs for juniors, SAT vocabulary review in core classes, and resources through ASPIRE and the library. But Sandven said the school could look into a SAT prep course.

Sandven said it's been a part of all the schools she's worked at previously, but local staff members told her previous efforts were cut short when the after-school course conflicted with extra-curricular activities. Some board members suggested finding some way to integrate a SAT prep course into the school day to avoid this conflict.

Board member Debbie McBee said she remembers years when SAT scores hovered in the 400s, but she also encouraged district staff to raise the overall level of academic vigor, which could

better prepare students for the test and help ease the transition between high school and college.

"We have a lot of kids still who drop out of college in their first semester or their first year because it's just too big a leap from high school to college for what we prepare them for," she said.

Sandven said she also wants Advanced Placement teachers to encourage students to take the accompanying exam, which has seen a downturn in participation in recent years.

After some board members said it may take some time to change the culture around test taking, Superintendent Chris Fritsch cautioned against pointing fingers.

"What (staff members) do, their attitude and direction, is going to be based on the leadership and the model that they get," he said. "You can't fault anyone who's never been asked to do something. If they've never been asked, you can't be too critical."

Contact Antonio Sierra at [asierra@eastoregonian.com](mailto:asierra@eastoregonian.com) or 541-966-0836.

For a complete listing of regional events, visit [easternoregonevents.com](http://easternoregonevents.com)

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