

16 states sue Trump over emergency wall declaration

Oregon joins suit alleging president's action violates the Constitution

SACRAMENTO, Calif. (AP) — California and 15 other states filed a lawsuit Monday against President Donald Trump's emergency declaration to fund a wall on the U.S.-Mexico border.

California Attorney General Xavier Becerra released a statement Monday saying the suit alleges the Trump administration's action vio-

lates the Constitution. "President Trump treats the rule of law with utter contempt," Becerra said. "He knows there is no border crisis, he knows his emergency declaration is unwarranted, and he admits that he will likely lose this case in court."

Joining California in filing the lawsuit are the attorneys general of Colorado, Connecticut, Delaware, Hawaii, Illinois, Maine, Maryland, Michigan, Minnesota, Nevada, New Jersey, New Mexico, New York,

Oregon, and Virginia. All the states involved in the lawsuit have Democratic attorneys general.

Trump declared a national emergency to fulfill his promise of completing the wall. The move allows the president to bypass Congress to use money from the Pentagon and other budgets.

The states say diversion of military funding to wall-building will hurt their economies and deprive their military bases of needed upgrades. They say taking away funds from count-

er-drug efforts for the wall will also cause damage. California and New Mexico, the two Mexican border states in the lawsuit, say the wall will harm wildlife.

California has repeatedly challenged Trump in court.

"President Trump is manufacturing a crisis and declaring a made-up 'national emergency' in order to seize power and undermine the Constitution," said California Gov. Gavin Newsom in a statement. "This 'emergency' is a national disgrace."



AP Photo/Daniel Ochoa de Olza, File
In this Dec. 21, 2018, file photo, a Honduran youth jumps from the U.S. border fence in Tijuana, Mexico.

Oregon students make impassioned case for cap and trade

Agriculture sector concerned about effect of gas tax

By AUBREY WIEBER
Oregon Capital Bureau

SALEM — About 75 people answered the legislative Joint Committee on Carbon Reduction's call for comments Monday, weighing in on a proposed sweeping change that would put a price on carbon emissions.

The second public hearing ran nearly three hours and again the bulk of the testimony was in favor of the cap and trade proposal,

which would impact every Oregonian in multiple ways, from increasing the cost of heating a home to providing cleaner air.

The testimony started with 10 high school and middle school students. They spoke with a level of desperation unmatched by most witnesses, even those leading businesses or industries that stand to be financially pummeled by the legislation.

A week ago, the committee finished stakeholder testimony and on Monday night finished public testimony from the Capitol. The committee will now travel

around the state to take testimony in remote locations and take video testimony.

The proposal, similar versions of which stalled in past sessions, would set a 52 million metric ton cap on greenhouse gas emissions. Individual polluters emitting 25,000 metric tons per year in industries covered by the cap would have to pay for their pollution through allowances auctioned off by the state.

Over time the cap would become more restrictive until reaching 11 million tons in 2050.

The idea is to put pressure on polluters to find

cleaner ways of doing business, whether it's switching to a greener energy source or finding ways to manufacture products with less pollution. Companies that succeed could then sell their unused allowances.

The state would spend polluters' money on climate change projects of all sizes, with a priority being placed on low-income and minority communities, as well as those most impacted by climate change.

Jeremy Clark, a 14-year-old from Portland, has been lobbying the Legislature for three years to support the proposal. He passionately

recited a list of stats with dizzying speed. He talked about the parts of the state he's seen burn to the ground as drought and hotter summers made Oregon's forests more susceptible to wildfires. He said the world as we know it could disappear.

"What will we call Glacier National Park if there are no glaciers?" he said. "What will we call Iceland if there is no ice?"

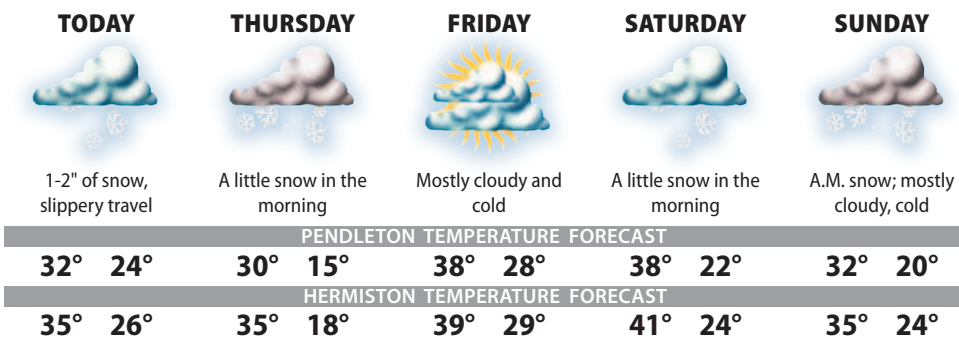
The youngest generation's civic engagement became a theme for the night, as many adults harrowed back to their words, calling them inspiring. But not all were in favor.

Several witnesses from the agriculture sector talked about how an estimated 16 cent per gallon increase in gasoline would cost them tens of thousands of dollars every year.

The agriculture sector would not be directly covered by the cap, but would pay higher fuel costs to suppliers to who are.

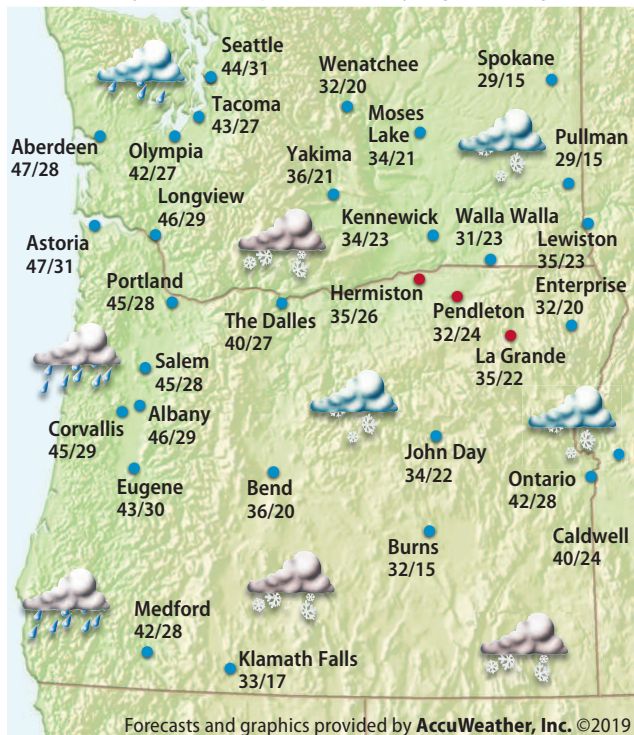
Mike McCarthy, of the Hood River County Farm Bureau, said he supports the concerns the younger witnesses have about the climate. But he and his fellow farmers can't eat the costs cap and trade would bring.

Forecast for Pendleton Area



OREGON FORECAST

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



ALMANAC

PENDLETON through 3 p.m. yest.

TEMP.	HIGH	LOW
Yesterday	37°	30°
Normals	48°	30°
Records	68° (1930)	8° (2006)

PRECIPITATION
24 hours ending 3 p.m. 0.00"
Month to date 1.54"
Normal month to date 0.78"
Year to date 3.61"
Last year to date 2.17"
Normal year to date 2.16"

HERMISTON through 3 p.m. yest.

TEMP.	HIGH	LOW
Yesterday	36°	18°
Normals	49°	29°
Records	66° (1995)	9° (1936)

PRECIPITATION
24 hours ending 3 p.m. 0.00"
Month to date 1.40"
Normal month to date 0.65"
Year to date 2.93"
Last year to date 1.61"
Normal year to date 1.93"

WINDS (in mph)

	Today	Thu.
Boardman	N 4-8	N 6-12
Pendleton	WNW 7-14	WNW 6-12

SUN AND MOON

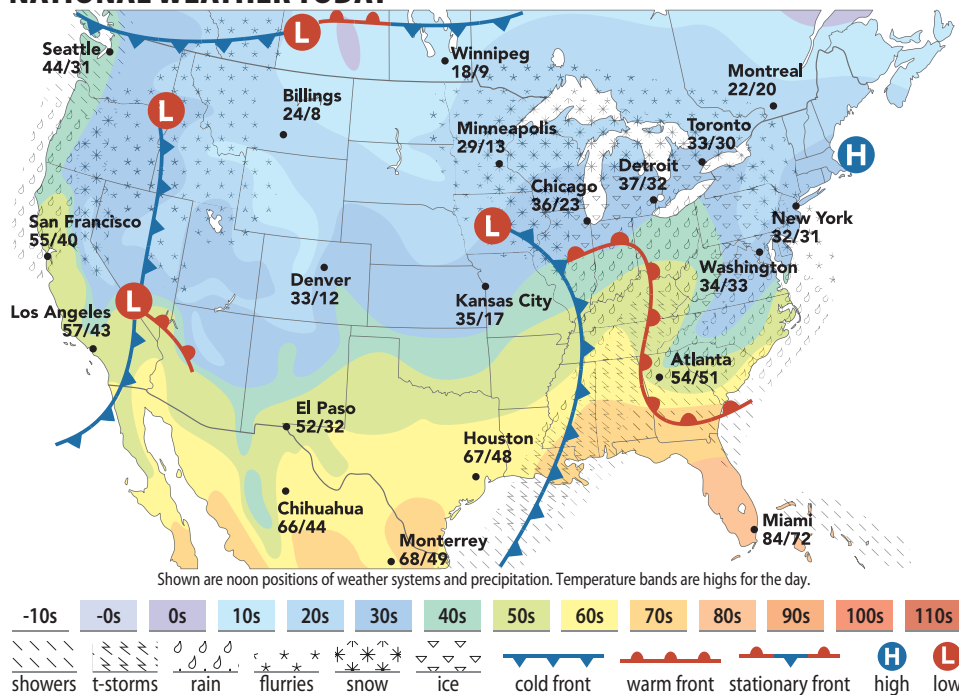
Sunrise today	6:50 a.m.
Sunset tonight	5:29 p.m.
Moonrise today	7:08 p.m.
Moonset today	7:46 a.m.

Last New First Full
Feb 26 Mar 6 Mar 14 Mar 20

NATIONAL EXTREMES

Yesterday's National Extremes: (for the 48 contiguous states)
High 90° in Immokalee, Fla. Low -33° in Daniel, Wyo.

NATIONAL WEATHER TODAY



Gov. Brown weighing moves to reduce school pension costs

PORTLAND (AP) — Gov. Kate Brown is reportedly considering selling the state's workers compensation insurance corporation or tapping its substantial capital surplus to hold down future pension costs for school districts around the state.

The Oregonian/OregonLive reports that according to documents it obtained via a public records request the idea is still tentative, and it's not clear it would raise enough money to accomplish the goal on its own.

Chris Pair, a spokesman for the governor's office, said Monday "our office will not be providing comment."

The proposal to tap SAIF, the state's 100-year-old employer-funded workers compensation agency, was initially floated in 2017 by a task force Brown set up

to look for ways to reduce PERS' huge unfunded liability. That liability now stands at about \$26.6 billion.

At the time, the idea of selling SAIF or tapping its surplus was staunchly opposed in some quarters of the business community.

Oregon businesses enjoy some of the cheapest workers compensation rates in the country, and employers who are policyholders of SAIF receive large annual dividends from investment earnings on the capital surplus that the governor may look to tap.

Transferring that surplus or selling the company might raise costs for workers' compensation, erasing one of the few competitive advantages that Oregon offers business, opponents have said.

At the same time, schools, municipalities and public

agencies around the state face large pension debts and the relentless cost increases they are driving. Collectively, school districts have a funding deficit with PERS of more than \$9 billion. They face a \$375 million increase in their pension costs in the next two-year budget cycle and potentially much larger cost increases in the following biennium.

This at a time when Brown has been promising to increase school funding to lengthen the school year, bring down class sizes and address Oregon's high school graduation rates, which are the second lowest in the country.

Critics have said it would be a mistake to pump billions more into schools when much of that money would go to increased pension costs, not to the classroom.

BRIEFLY

Snowbound man calls for help, arrested on sex charges

ASTORIA (AP) — A 37-year-old Oregon man, who called for help getting his rental car out of deep snow, was instead arrested on suspicion of attempted rape and custodial interference after sheriff's deputies found him with a 13-year-old girl.

Clatsop County Sheriff Tom Bergin said Tuesday that Christopher Thomas Knox, of Hillsboro, told deputies the girl was his daughter, but she was actually missing from her home in King County, Washington. Investigators believe Knox sexually abused her

near her home, and then a second time somewhere between Tacoma, Washington, and Astoria.

Anyone who saw the two in a black 2018 Dodge Journey with California license plates at a rest stop or state park on the evening of Feb. 15 is asked to call authorities.

Oregon House advances Medicaid funding protections

SALEM (AP) — The Oregon House has approved a measure to protect a revenue stream that injects more federal funds into the state's Medicaid program.

Legislators voted 44 to

15 on Tuesday to extend the expiration date of the state's health care assessment program to 2025. The program is a tax on health care providers and is common practice by states to draw down extra federal Medicaid funds.

The bill also extends the state's tax on health insurers, which proponents say will further stabilize preventative health care costs.

But lawmakers note the measure will do little to address Oregon's Medicaid funding gap, which has snowballed to over \$800 million. Rep. Rob Nosse, D-Portland, said extending these tax programs gives the Legislature time to find additional healthcare funds.

The bill now heads to the Senate.

CORRECTIONS: The East Oregonian works hard to be accurate and sincerely regrets any errors. If you notice a mistake in the paper, please call 541-966-0818.

EAST OREGONIAN

— Founded Oct. 16, 1875 —

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333 E. Main St., Hermiston 541-567-6211
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East Oregonian (USPS 164-980) is published daily except Sunday, Monday and postal holidays, by the EO Media Group, 211 S.E. Byers Ave. Pendleton, OR 97801. Periodicals postage paid at Pendleton, OR.
Postmaster: send address changes to East Oregonian, 211 S.E. Byers Ave. Pendleton, OR 97801.
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Single copy price:
\$1.50 Tuesday through Saturday

Circulation Manager:
Bonny Tuller, 541-966-0828

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