

# Pioneering legal pot states aim to ease rules on industry

Washington, Colorado look to roll back strict rules

By GENE JOHNSON  
Associated Press

SEATTLE — When Washington and Colorado launched their pioneering marijuana industries in the face of U.S. government prohibition, they imposed strict rules in hopes of keeping the U.S. Justice Department at bay.

Businesses would need to track plants and products with bar codes. Regulators would have to approve money invested to ensure it was not tied to criminals. Owners of pot operations would have to live in-state and pass background checks.

Five years later, federal authorities have stayed away, but the industry says it has been stifled by over-regulation. Lawmakers in both states have heard the complaints and are moving to ease the rules.

“There’s a saying in the business world: ‘Pioneers get slaughtered, and settlers get fat,’” said Greg James, publisher of industry magazine Marijuana Venture, based near Seattle. “These rules have made the entire



In this photo taken March 28, 2019, employees Dan Giroux, left, and Dustin Barrington ring up sales for customers at a marijuana shop in Seattle.

AP Photo/Elaine Thompson, File

industry very inefficient. We’re going to get left in the dust unless we change some things pretty quickly.”

Since Colorado and Washington became the first states to legalize the recreational use of marijuana, eight others have joined them. California, Nevada, Oregon and Michigan are among the legal states that have taken a more permissive approach to out-of-state ownership and investment.

In Colorado, which already loosened its rules to allow licensed businesses to have up to 15 out-of-state owners, lawmakers from

both parties want to further open the industry to include ownership by publicly traded companies and to limit background-check requirements. A similar measure was vetoed by former Gov. John Hickenlooper last year, but his replacement, Gov. Jared Polis, has indicated support.

Washington lawmakers are considering a dual approach: easing financial restrictions while taking a more lenient view of rules violations, making it less likely businesses will lose their licenses for things like sloppy record-keep-

ing. Three dozen have had their licenses canceled since 2015, while 32 more face revocation notices, according to the state Liquor and Cannabis Board.

One measure pending in the Democratic-led Legislature would open the industry to out-of-state ownership and allow businesses to become bigger, with a caveat: Any licensees hoping to take advantage would have to agree to let their workforce unionize.

Those that do could have up to 40 percent of their ownership held outside of Washington. They

would also be able to obtain two additional marijuana licenses, allowing them to have up to seven retail shops or up to five growing and processing licenses, said the main sponsor, Sen. Rebecca Saldaña.

Investors could hold up to 10 percent of the business without undergoing background checks, though their names would still need to be disclosed.

“Banks don’t give lines of credit in our space, so we’re limited to private investors in the state of Washington,” said Ryan Kunkel, chief executive of Have A Heart, a chain of marijuana stores that has agreed to let its workers unionize. “It’s a tiny pool of investors, and it’s stifling our ability to expand. Meanwhile, there’s a massive industry expansion taking place in every other state.”

Another proposal, a wide-ranging overhaul of Washington’s regulatory enforcement, is a compromise between industry groups, including the Washington CannaBusiness Association, and the Liquor and Cannabis Board.

The association has lobbied hard for the changes, arguing that the board’s enforcement has been aggressive and uneven. Its director, Vicki Chris-

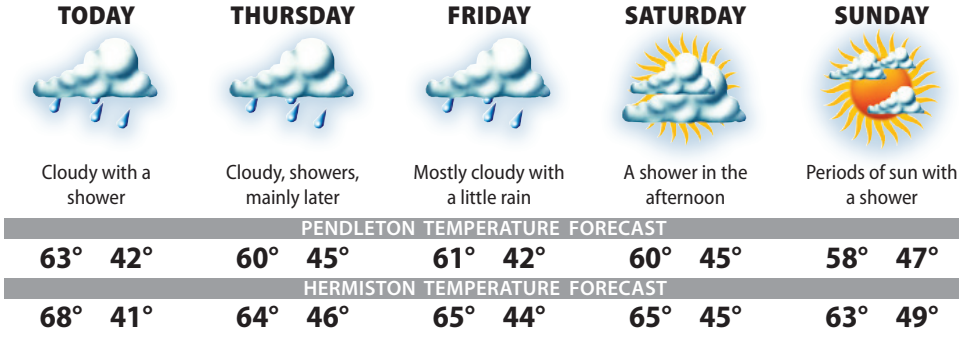
tophersen, went as far as helping organize an unsuccessful effort by lawmakers to have Russ Hauge, a former prosecutor, removed as one of the board’s three members because he was seen as unfriendly to the industry.

“The industry overall has made long strides in being a safe and fully regulated marketplace,” Christophersen said. “The legislation stems out of several years of frustration, of folks feeling like they want to be regulated, they want to be taxed, they want to do the right thing, but they feel they’re still being treated as criminal enterprises.”

The legislation would create a program where businesses could seek the board’s advice on compliance issues without risking penalties, and it would require inspectors to give licensees time to fix a problem before issuing a citation, unless the violations concern public safety, sale to a minor or repeat offenses.

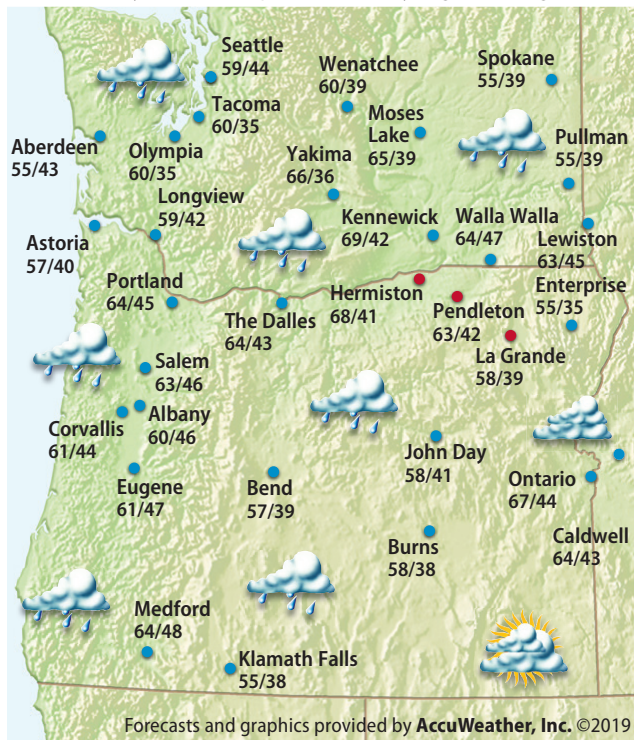
Businesses could face cancellation if they accumulate multiple violations for certain offenses, such as failing to properly tag plants, over two years, rather than the current window of three years — giving them a clean slate sooner.

## 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	64°	43°
Normals	58°	38°
Records	84° (1944)	20° (1935)

**PRECIPITATION**  
24 hours ending 3 p.m. 0.00"  
Month to date 0.00"  
Normal month to date 0.09"  
Year to date 6.08"  
Last year to date 3.71"  
Normal year to date 4.05"

**HERMISTON** through 3 p.m. yest.

TEMP.	HIGH	LOW
Yesterday	67°	45°
Normals	62°	38°
Records	80° (1944)	18° (1935)

**PRECIPITATION**  
24 hours ending 3 p.m. 0.00"  
Month to date 0.00"  
Normal month to date 0.04"  
Year to date 3.59"  
Last year to date 2.38"  
Normal year to date 3.15"

**WINDS** (in mph)

	Today	Thu.
Boardman	WSW 8-16	NNW 3-6
Pendleton	WSW 8-16	NE 4-8

**SUN AND MOON**

Sunrise today	6:32 a.m.
Sunset tonight	7:25 p.m.
Moonrise today	6:19 a.m.
Moonset today	5:52 p.m.

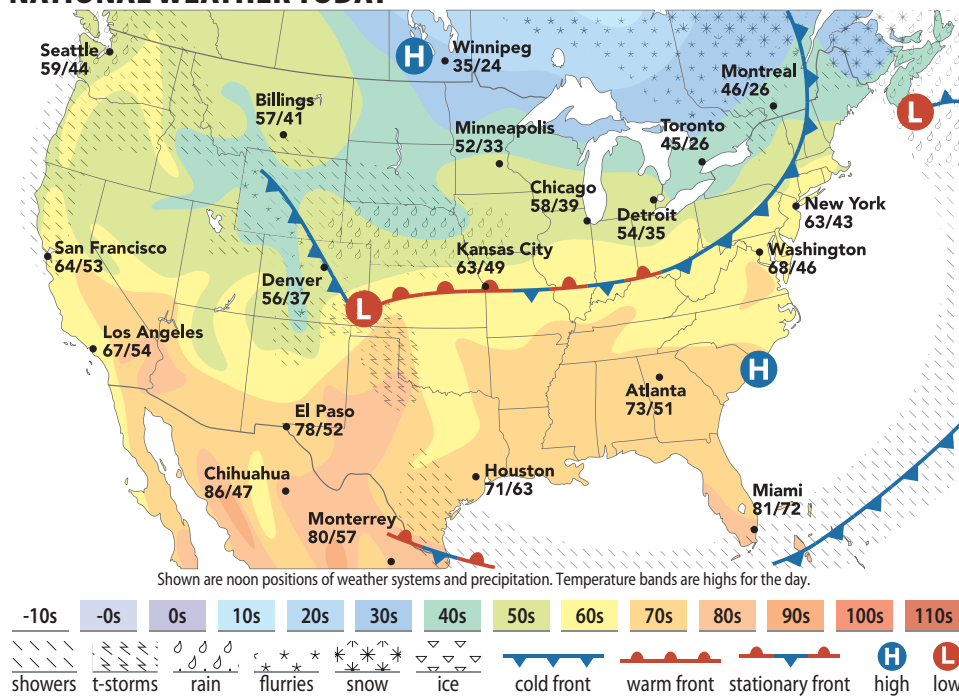
**New First Full Last**

Apr 5	Apr 12	Apr 19	Apr 26
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## NATIONAL EXTREMES

Yesterday’s National Extremes: (for the 48 contiguous states)  
High 92° in Marathon, Fla. Low 2° in Gothic, Colo.

## NATIONAL WEATHER TODAY



# Bill would require schools to distribute free menstrual products

By CLAIRE WITHYCOMBE  
Oregon Capital Bureau

“THESE ARE NOT LUXURY ITEMS OR SOMETHING A YOUNG WOMAN CAN DECLINE TO USE.”

Trish Garner, state public policy chairwoman for the American Association of University Women of Oregon,

SALEM — Oregon students could access free feminine hygiene products at school under a proposal from their peers.

A group of students from South Eugene High School brought the idea to state Rep. Julie Fahey, D-Eugene.

Fahey is chief sponsor of House Bill 3020, which would require public schools with students in grades 7 to 12 to make free menstrual products available in at least half of the school’s bathrooms.

Fahey said low-income students may not have consistent access to the products they need. While the products might be available at the nurse’s office or an administrator’s office, students may not feel comfortable approaching adults at school to ask for them.

“I was a middle school girl some years ago, and I can tell you that there is probably no chance I would have gone to an adult to ask for menstrual products if I had needed them at that point in my life,” Fahey said in testimony before the House Education Committee on Monday.

The committee moved the bill to the Joint Committee on Ways and Means on Monday, though some members expressed concerns about an “unfunded mandate” for schools to provide the products.

The bill could affect about 529 schools in the state, but budget analysts for the Legislature say the cost isn’t clear.

Fahey said she warned the students that although she loved the bill, a primary

objection the proposal could face was the cost to schools.

Committee members Rep. Jeff Reardon, D-Aloha, and Rep. Cheri Helt, R-Bend, initially voted against the proposal over the cost issue.

The Legislature is currently trying to raise more money for the state’s beleaguered public school system.

“I’m gonna be a ‘no’ on this, and I hate myself for it, but I just can’t do an unfunded mandate when we’re already not supporting our schools,” Reardon said.

After a tie vote, though, both Reardon and Helt changed their votes to “yes” to allow the proposal to advance.

Rep. Teresa Alonso Leon, D-Woodburn said that perhaps schools could host fundraisers to offset the cost.

Portland Public Schools started providing free feminine hygiene products in girls’ and unisex restrooms in high schools this year, after a pilot project at Grant High School.

Supporters say menstrual products like tampons and pads are necessary to maintain hygiene.

“These are not luxury items or something a young woman can decline to use,” said Trish Garner, state public policy chair for the American Association of

University Women of Oregon, in written testimony in support of the bill. “Just as toilet paper and paper towels are seen as necessities, so are menstrual products.”

The legislation is one part of increasing efforts by governments around the world to reduce the stigma around periods and expand access to feminine hygiene products in public places and to make them more affordable.

Oregon lawmakers are also considering House Bill 2515, which would provide free feminine hygiene products in the state’s jails, prisons and youth detention facilities.

“While menstruation is a normal bodily function, many girls and women feel shame and embarrassment about it,” Garner wrote.

“The fact that menstrual products aren’t available in our schools underscores the message that this natural function needs to be hidden. There is a social stigma attached to menstruation that clearly continues.”

Contact reporter Claire Withycombe at [cwithycombe@eomediagroup.com](mailto:cwithycombe@eomediagroup.com) or 971-304-4148. Withycombe is a reporter for EO Media Group working for the Oregon Capital Bureau, a collaboration of EO Media Group, Pamplin Media Group, and Salem Reporter.

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— Founded Oct. 16, 1875 —

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333 E. Main St., Hermiston 541-567-6211  
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