

Oregon lawmakers move to prepare for interstate marijuana commerce

By ANDREW SELSKY
Associated Press

SALEM — It may seem like a pipe dream now, but Oregon lawmakers are anticipating the federal government legalizing, or at least tolerating, the interstate transfer of marijuana.

The Senate Judiciary Committee moved forward a bill this week empowering the governor to enter into agreements with other states for such transactions. The bill, which was completely rewritten in an amendment, goes to the Senate floor for a vote.

Unlike the original bill, the new version specifies that it would not be operative until federal law is amended to allow for the interstate transfer of marijuana, or the U.S. Department of Justice issues an opinion or memorandum allowing or tolerating it.

Sen. Cliff Bentz, one of two Republican committee members who voted against the bill, said he prefers to wait for the federal government to take action.

But Sen. Shemia Fagan of Portland, who was among four Democrats and one Republican who voted in



AP Photo/Andrew Selsky, File

In this Sept. 30, 2016, file photo, a marijuana harvester examines buds going through a trimming machine near Corvallis.

favor Wednesday, said it would give Oregon marijuana businesses an advantage if and when the federal government opens the path.

“Oregon’s industry is basically first in line for when the feds do act,” Fagan said. “If we wait until the feds act, then all the other states will be working with their legislatures to then pass, and Oregon will kind of be at the tip of the spear and take advantage of what could be a lucrative opportunity for Oregon industry.”

There are several bills in

Congress that would take marijuana off the federal controlled substances list. Their future remains uncertain, but even a decision by the federal Justice Department to de-prioritize prosecuting interstate marijuana commerce would be enough for Oregon’s governor to start seeking cooperation with other states, according to the bill and its co-sponsor, Sen. Floyd Prozanski, D-Eugene.

“The governor would not be able to move forward unless there was something like a new Cole memo,

MORE INSIDE

25 local governments sue over California pot delivery
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or something happening in Congress to permit this type of transaction, or something else coming out of the U.S. Attorneys as to tolerance,” Prozanski told the judiciary committee, which he chairs.

The Cole memorandum restricts federal marijuana law enforcement in states where pot is legal. Oregon was the first state to decriminalize personal possession, in 1973. It legalized medical marijuana in 1998, and recreational use in 2014. Ten states have legalized recreational marijuana.

Any agreement with other states must ensure enforceable public health and safety standards, and include a system to regulate and track the interstate delivery of marijuana items, the bill says.

The judiciary committee’s action was hailed by Adam J. Smith, executive director of the Craft Cannabis Alliance, an Oregon association of cannabis and allied businesses.

“We had an exciting week as export moved forward in Oregon, and we are laying the groundwork for a national campaign,” Smith said in a statement. “We are pushing so hard to open new markets for Oregon’s world-class cannabis by 2021.”

A yes vote on the Senate floor, which hasn’t been scheduled yet but could happen as early as next week, would send the bill to the House side.

Democratic Gov. Kate Brown has not staked out a position on the bill, telling reporters instead that her priority is opening up the banking industry to cannabis businesses. In an indication of how much the industry is booming, cannabis generated a record-high \$82 million in tax revenues for the state during the last fiscal year, according to the Oregon Department of Revenue.

Oregon newsrooms team up to ‘break silence’ around suicide

By SARAH ZIMMERMAN
Associated Press

SALEM — If you’re a regular reader of your local news, it’s likely you’ll have a good sense of how many people died in a car crash or of a terminal illness. But it’s less likely you’ll hear when somebody dies by suicide.

It’s partly because of a long-held rule across newsrooms not to report on suicide, out of respect for the family and from the belief that reporting on the topic could have a “contagious effect” and inspires others to also take their own lives.

While there’s some evidence for that logic, the nation’s growing number of suicides has become difficult for reporters to ignore. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention reports the national suicide rate is at a 50-year high, climbing 33% since 1999. It’s estimated 25,000 Americans died by suicide in 2016 alone.

“Journalists stopped covering suicide for some very good reasons,” said Nicole Dahmen, an associate professor of journalism at the University of Oregon. “But the unintended consequence of that is that suicide has remained unreported, and death by suicide has been on the rise so much so that it’s become a public health crisis.”

The issue has prompted reporters in Oregon, which has a suicide rate 40% higher than the national average, to take a different approach to tackling the topic.

Over 30 newsrooms from around the state are banding together in an unprecedented, weeklong reporting collaboration to shed light on suicide and its effect on the community. The project, known as “Breaking the Silence,” will run from April 7 to 14 and involve newspapers, T.V. stations and student media organizations from

across Oregon.

Stories will shed light on how the suicide crisis touches every community in the state, regardless of age, gender or sexuality. They’ll also showcase best prevention methods, and how different groups are working to save lives.

“With better information about the scope of the problem and the best practices by way of prevention, we in the media have the possibility of truly saving lives,” said Therese Bottomly, editor of *The Oregonian*/Oregon Live, one of the newsrooms participating in the project.

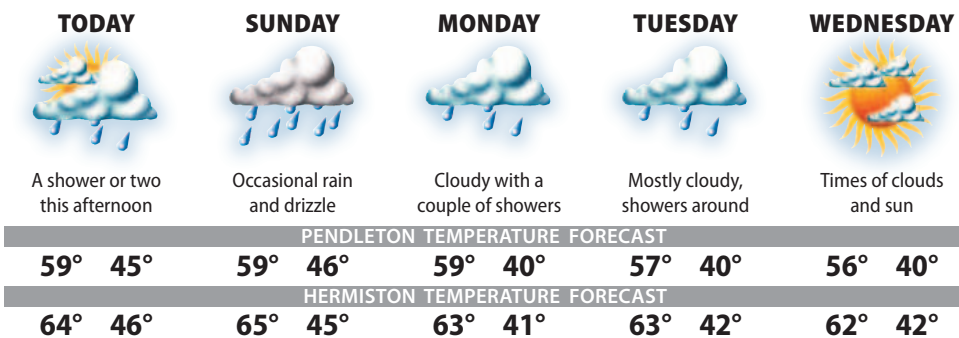
The initiative stemmed from a series of roundtables between Oregon media organizations and Dwight Holton, CEO of Lines for Life, a Portland-based suicide prevention nonprofit that also runs a number of crisis lines.

Holton, a former federal prosecutor, has previously counseled reporters on how to sensitively cover suicide by avoiding sensationalist details and by guiding readers toward support services. If done right, he said, journalists can do their part to break down misconceptions about mental health.

“The reality is we have a crisis around addiction and suicide,” he said. “Part of addressing that is changing the way journalists and communities talk and think about suicide.”

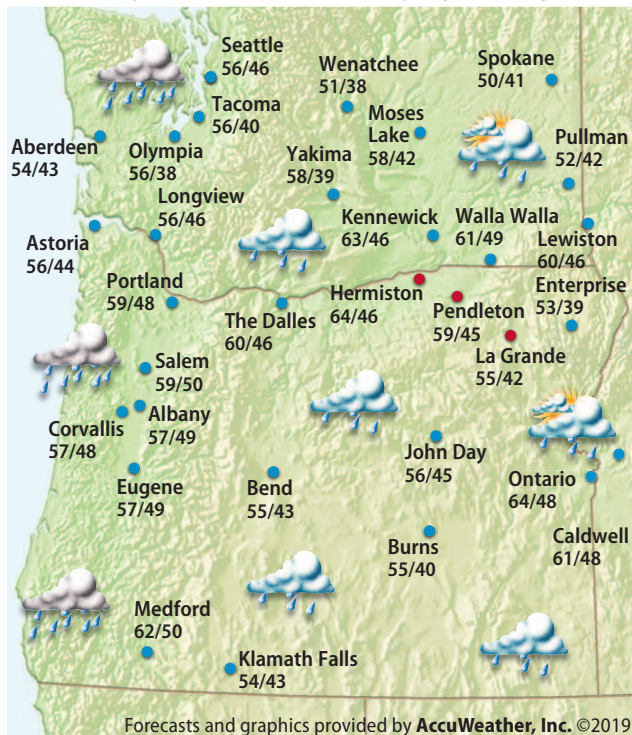
This type of project, he adds, takes on an added significance in Oregon, which, like other mountain states, is experiencing suicide rates far higher than the national average. Oregon’s suicide rate jumped 35% in less than two decades, and suicide is the eighth leading cause of death in the state. The Oregon Health Authority estimates 825 people died by suicide in 2017, and approximately 14,000 people end up in the emergency room each year from trying to harm themselves.

Forecast for Pendleton Area



OREGON FORECAST

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



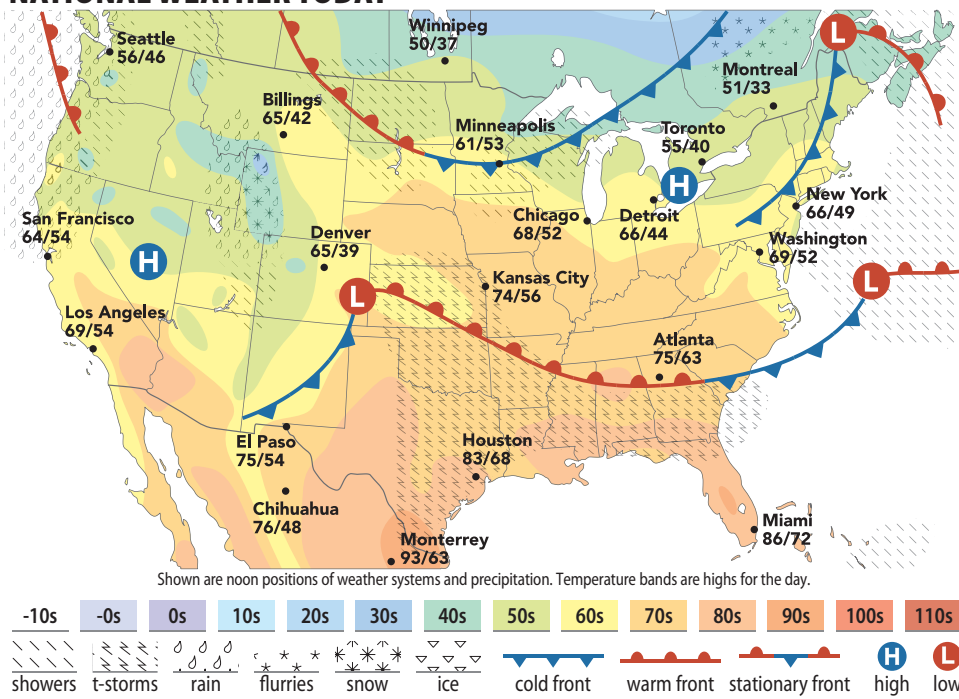
ALMANAC

PENDLETON through 3 p.m. yest.				
TEMP.	HIGH	LOW		
Yesterday	65°	47°		
Normals	59°	38°		
Records	81° (1952)	24° (1975)		
PRECIPITATION				
24 hours ending 3 p.m.	0.04"			
Month to date	0.04"			
Normal month to date	0.22"			
Year to date	6.12"			
Last year to date	3.85"			
Normal year to date	4.18"			
HERMISTON through 3 p.m. yest.				
TEMP.	HIGH	LOW		
Yesterday	67°	46°		
Normals	62°	38°		
Records	82° (1960)	21° (1975)		
PRECIPITATION				
24 hours ending 3 p.m.	Trace			
Month to date	Trace			
Normal month to date	0.11"			
Year to date	3.59"			
Last year to date	2.53"			
Normal year to date	3.22"			
WINDS (in mph)				
	Today	Sun.		
Boardman	SSW 7-14	WSW 8-16		
Pendleton	SSW 8-16	WSW 8-16		
SUN AND MOON				
Sunrise today	6:27 a.m.			
Sunset tonight	7:29 p.m.			
Moonrise today	7:30 a.m.			
Moonset today	9:03 p.m.			
	First	Full	Last	New
	Apr 12	Apr 19	Apr 26	May 4

NATIONAL EXTREMES

Yesterday's National Extremes: (for the 48 contiguous states)
High 90° in Immokalee, Fla. Low 6° in Champion, Mich.

NATIONAL WEATHER TODAY



Man arrested in rape of Seattle woman seeking ride-share

SEATTLE (AP) — A 34-year-old man has been arrested on suspicion of raping a Seattle woman who thought he was her Uber driver, police said.

The arrest came days after a University of South Carolina student was killed after getting into a car that she thought was her Uber ride.

The Seattle arrest was made on Wednesday after the King County Sheriff's Office shared images on social media taken from surveillance video.

A judge on Thursday found probable cause to hold the man on investigation of third-degree rape and ordered him held in lieu of \$750,000 bail.

Sheriff's Office spokesman Sgt. Ryan Abbott said the man's name hasn't been officially released yet, pending formal charges.

He said the woman was

raped Dec. 16 after she left a Seattle bar to catch an Uber that had been ordered by her friend.

The sheriff's office says a man in a black vehicle led her to believe he was her driver before pulling the car over and raping her. Abbott said a relative saw a photo on television news and told the suspect that he was being investigated for rape.

The man reportedly said he was going to go to the sheriff's office to clear his name.

The statement of probable cause outlining the sheriff's case said the man provided his information to authorities then left a precinct.

He and his wife then drove to the home of the victim and knocked on her door and her neighbors' doors, the statement says. Someone called police and the man was arrested.

Police say he claimed

he thought the woman consented to sex, but he acknowledged she was intoxicated.

In the South Carolina case, authorities say Samantha Josephson was killed after getting into a car thinking it was her Uber ride. A 24-year-old man charged in that case is accused of using the childproof locks in his car to imprison her.

Safety advocates advised that ride-sharing services will send a description of a vehicle, its license tag number and a photo of the driver. They recommended passengers check the information before getting inside a vehicle.

They also suggest requiring the driver to give the name of the person requesting the ride as an extra level of safety.

Uber also advises people to match the license plate number and driver's photo.

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.

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