

Legislature passes sweeping changes to state's juvenile sentencing rules

By DIRK VANDERHART
Oregon Public Broadcasting

The Oregon House of Representatives on Thursday passed sweeping changes to sentencing rules for juvenile offenders, a dramatic shift to tough-on-crime guidelines voters approved 25 years ago.

In a tight vote — held earlier than expected due to a speed-up maneuver by House leadership — representatives voted 40-18 for Senate Bill 1008, the bare minimum required to pass it.

Before the vote, representatives first shot down two alternative “minority report” proposals floated by Republicans — one to modify the bill and refer it to voters, the other simply to refer it to voters. The bill now heads to the desk of Gov. Kate Brown, who will sign it.

“Our juvenile system creates a class of people who reoffend at a higher rate,” said state Rep. Jennifer Williamson, D-Portland, a central backer of the sentencing changes. “It targets our communities of color. My question is, ‘What is our responsibility knowing that?’”

SB 1008 eases rules vot-

ers adopted in 1994’s Ballot Measure 11, which set mandatory minimum sentences for a collection of serious crimes.

Among its most weighty changes, the bill will ensure that juveniles 15 years of age and older aren’t automatically tried as adults for major crimes such as murder, rape and kidnapping. Instead, judges will be able to decide on an individual basis whether a defendant is tried as an adult.

The bill also ensures young offenders aren’t sentenced to life without parole, makes them eligible for a parole hearing after serving half their sentence and creates a new pathway for certain defendants to secure early release rather than being transferred to the adult prison system.

The changes have support from a far-ranging swath of organizations — the ACLU of Oregon and Koch Industries are both behind it — but also from retired judges, prison guards, the Oregon Department of Corrections and Attorney General Ellen Rosenblum. The support has roots in science that shows juveniles don’t have fully developed decision-making ability and concerns that funneling young offenders

to the adult prison system creates hardened criminals.

Still, the bill is contentious. It ruffled prosecutors, who didn’t want judges to have sole discretion on which juvenile defendants were tried as adults. They argued the legislation should be changed.

“There is broad consensus that we have to change Measure 11 for youth,” said state Rep. Mike McLane, R-Powell Butte, who put forth a substitute bill on behalf of the Oregon District Attorneys Association. “How to do it reasonable people disagree.”

Opponents also argued that the bill should go before Oregon voters, since they approved Measure 11 in the first place. But the bill’s backers pointed out that, the same year Measure 11 passed, voters also approved Measure 10, which allowed lawmakers to alter the rules if they secured a two-thirds vote in the House and Senate.

Representatives who spoke against the bill expressed support for the overall concept, but said it was too lax, and that the worst-of-the-worst young criminals should not have the opportunity of being tried as juveniles.

Students protest death of gun bill

By CLAIRE WITHYCOMBE
Oregon Capital Bureau

SALEM — One recent Monday, the phones of students from Portland to Salem lit up.

The news came through a Slack channel of student activists: A bill to tighten the state’s gun laws had been nixed, the result of a political deal hashed out over Mother’s Day weekend.

There was disappointment. The students, organizing to advocate for tighter gun laws through their activist group March For Our Lives, had spent several days this year lobbying lawmakers to pass the new restrictions.

Then Parkrose happened. A few days after the deal was struck, on Friday, May 17, a football coach at Portland’s Parkrose High School tackled an armed student.

March For Our Lives reacted, with students planning to return to the Capitol to convey their displeasure.

A Florida high school shooting has played a part in motivating a new generation of student activists to seek state policy changes. And last week’s incident at Parkrose kept the Oregon students going.

March For Our Lives, a national group, formed



OCB Photo/Claire Withycombe

March For Our Lives students talk with the media in Salem to convey their displeasure over the deal that led to Senate Bill 978, a gun bill to tighten the state’s gun laws, being nixed.

last year, after a gunman killed 17 people at Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School in Parkland, Fla. Students from across the country have joined the movement.

Shootings at schools claimed 114 lives in 2018, according to Education Week, which tracked incidents where people have been injured or killed by guns on school campuses.

Senate Bill 978 would have made sweeping changes to the state’s gun laws, including setting standards for gun storage and allowing retailers to raise the minimum purchase age to 21.

But it got squashed after Gov. Kate Brown and Senate President Peter Court-

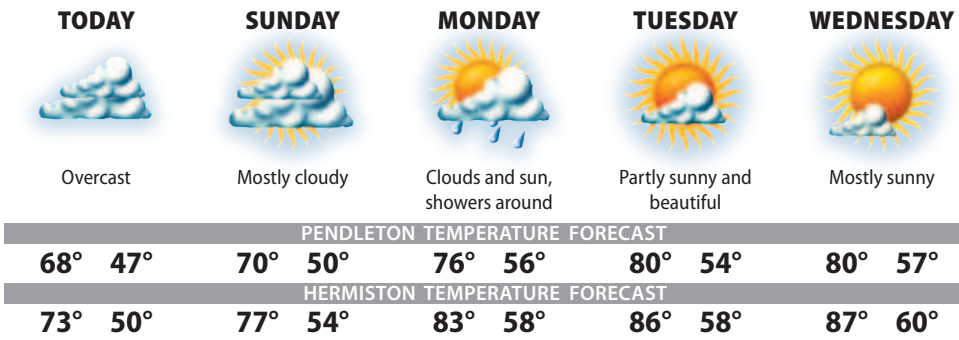
ney, D-Salem, hammered out a deal with Senate Republican Leader Herman Baertschiger Jr. of Grants Pass over the weekend of May 11-12.

The deal was intended to get Republican senators back in the Senate chamber so legislation could move.

Opponents of the gun bill had appeared angered about the proposed restrictions on gun ownership, lining up in droves to testify against the bill.

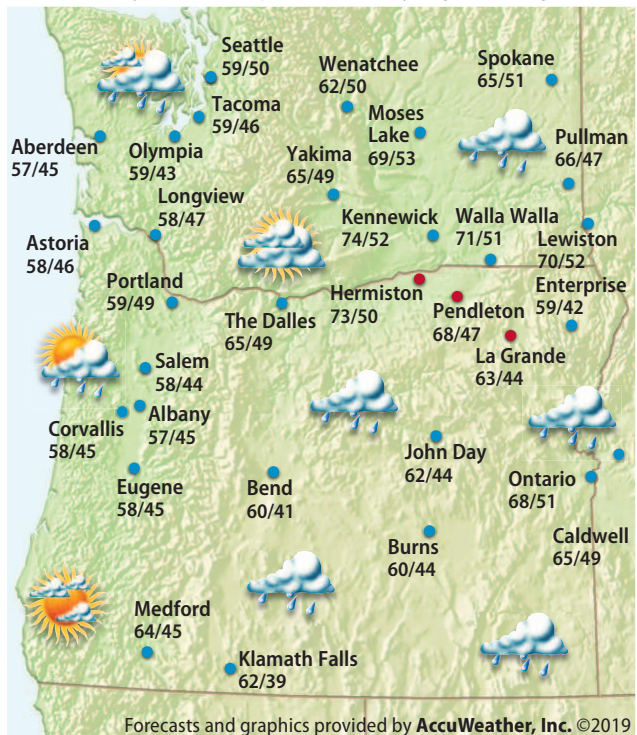
Proponents were equally motivated to stop what they feel is an epidemic of gun violence. Brown and Attorney General Ellen Rosenblum testified for the bill, which never made it to the floor of either the House or Senate.

Forecast for Pendleton Area



OREGON FORECAST

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



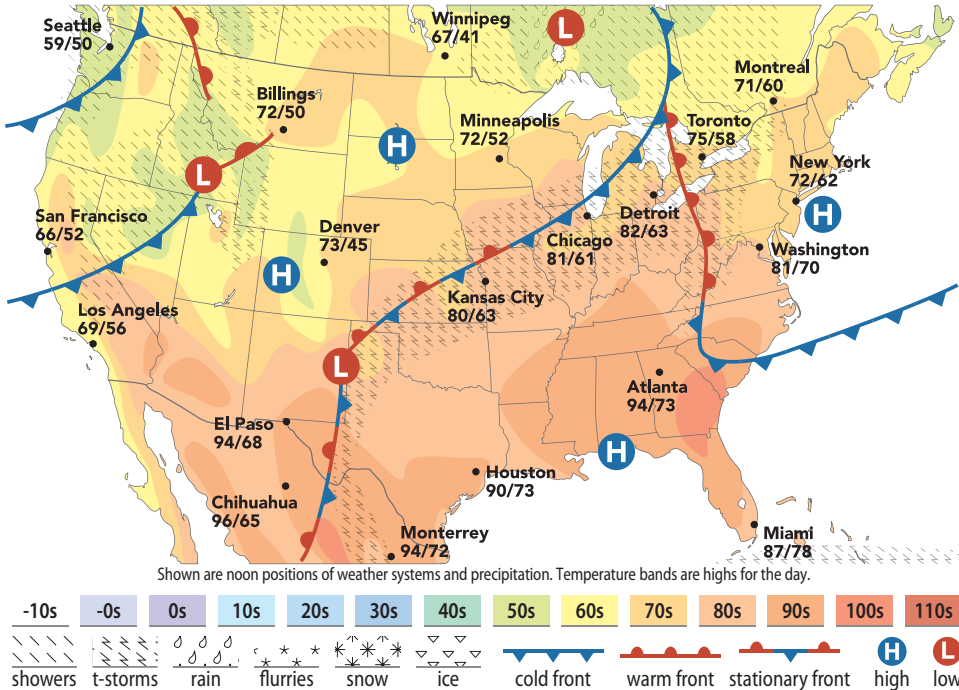
ALMANAC

PENDLETON through 3 p.m. yest.				
TEMP.	HIGH	LOW		
Yesterday	65°	57°		
Normals	73°	49°		
Records	93° (1928)	34° (1920)		
PRECIPITATION				
24 hours ending 3 p.m.	Trace			
Month to date	1.35"			
Normal month to date	1.01"			
Year to date	9.11"			
Last year to date	6.07"			
Normal year to date	6.12"			
HERMISTON through 3 p.m. yest.				
TEMP.	HIGH	LOW		
Yesterday	72°	61°		
Normals	75°	49°		
Records	97° (1928)	35° (2010)		
PRECIPITATION				
24 hours ending 3 p.m.	Trace			
Month to date	0.44"			
Normal month to date	0.87"			
Year to date	4.32"			
Last year to date	4.96"			
Normal year to date	4.86"			
WINDS (in mph)				
	Today	Sun.		
Boardman	SW 8-16	NNW 6-12		
Pendleton	W 6-12	NW 6-12		
SUN AND MOON				
Sunrise today	5:14 a.m.			
Sunset tonight	8:30 p.m.			
Moonrise today	1:31 a.m.			
Moonset today	11:24 a.m.			
	Last	New	First	Full
	May 26	June 3	June 9	June 17

NATIONAL EXTREMES

Yesterday's National Extremes: (for the 48 contiguous states)
High 100° in Cherry Point, N.C. Low 13° in Climax, Colo.

NATIONAL WEATHER TODAY



OREGON IN BRIEF

Jury: Man guilty in 1989 murder of teen near Bellingham

BELLINGHAM, Wash. (AP) — A Whatcom County jury has found a man guilty of first-degree murder in the death of an 18-year-old woman nearly three decades ago.

The Bellingham Herald reports 51-year-old Timothy Bass of Everson was found guilty Friday after the jury deliberated for about a day.

The jury also found Bass guilty of rape, attempted rape, kidnapping and attempted kidnapping.

On Nov. 24, 1989, Stavik went for a jog near her home east of Bellingham, and never returned. Her body was found three days later in the Nooksack River.

A co-worker of Bass collected a plastic cup and Coke can that he discarded and gave it to detectives. Authorities matched Bass' DNA to evidence found on Stavik's body and arrested him in December 2017.

The defense argued that Bass had a consensual sexual relationship with Stavik prior

to her disappearance and that Bass had nothing to do with her death.

Jury finds woman guilty in Newport man's murder

ASTORIA (AP) — A jury has found a woman guilty of the 2016 murder of a 71-year-old Newport man by aiding and abetting her boyfriend with the crime.

The Daily Astorian reports the jury in Clatsop County Circuit Court on Thursday also unanimously found Adeena Copell guilty of abuse of a corpse and two counts of unlawful use of a vehicle.

Christian Wilkins pleaded guilty earlier this month to the same charges.

Howard Vinge was beaten to death inside his RV in September 2016. His body was dumped down an embankment east of Astoria.

Prosecutors say Copell and Wilkins lived with Vinge for about two months before his death and that they took his RV and a car.

Prosecutors say they abandoned the RV after it broke down and drove the car to Arizona, where they were arrested.

They will be sentenced in June.

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