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EAST OREGONIAN

JUNE 8-9, 2019

143rd Year, No. 168

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Dems face angry unions

Unions feel betrayed and consider putting political money elsewhere

By **AUBREY WIEBER, CLAIRE WITHYCOMBE AND MARK MILLER**
Oregon Capital Bureau

SALEM — Last week, 31 Democrats voted to cut into benefits promised to public employees in what was likely their toughest vote of the 2019 legislative session, if not their career. It prompted 17 to file public explanations for why they voted.

In a political environment where public employee unions give generously to many Democrats' campaigns, cutting into pensions is a line rarely crossed.

Public employee unions have long been considered as the puppet masters of the Capitol, where Democrats reign supreme.

They fund Democrats' campaigns, and are increasingly getting their own members elected. Unions have schools where they groom potential candidates, and oftentimes politicians have to fill out a policy scorecard before securing union money for their race.

Rarely do they see Democrats veer from a union policy agenda like they did last week.

Because of that power, lawmakers and lobbyists were reluctant to speak publicly. The Oregon Capital Bureau allowed them to talk on background.

"It's the holy grail," said one veteran lobbyist of voting to cut benefits. "It's like a Republican voting to increase taxes."

Senate Bill 1049 was introduced in May by Senate President Peter Courtney, D-Salem, and House Speaker Tina Kotek, D-Portland, after a ballooning unfunded liability on the state's pension plan mounted pressure.

The pressure on leadership to pass pension reform increased May 13 when the Senate passed the Student Success Act, a large education

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WEEKEND SPECIAL

PLAYING A WAITING GAME



Staff photo by E.J. Harris

Boxes of electronic components from the Chinese telecommunication giant Huawei sit idle in a store room at Eastern Oregon Telecom headquarters in Hermiston. The Trump administration issued a ban on using information or communications technology from anyone it considers a threat to national security.

Huawei blacklist has local businesses waiting to see what happens next

By **JADE MCDOWELL**
East Oregonian

HERMISTON — In a storage room at Eastern Oregon Telecom, a wide stack of cardboard boxes each bear the flower-shaped Huawei logo.

The equipment inside was originally destined to become part of EOT's growing broadband network. But after the Trump administration placed the Chinese-based Huawei on a trade blacklist, the equipment may be destined to stay in the box.

Eastern Oregon Telecom CEO Joseph Franell and other internet service providers who



Staff photo by E.J. Harris

Eastern Oregon Telecom CEO Joseph Franell has been an outspoken critic of the Trump administration's ban on technology made by Huawei.

rely on Huawei's inexpensive products are waiting for clarification on what the blacklist means. There has been talk of forcing providers to not

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ODFW adopts revised wolf plan

Commissioners approve 155-page management plan with 6-1 vote Friday

By **GEORGE PAVEN**
Capital Press

SALEM — Oregon has revised and updated its plan for managing the state's growing wolf population, retaining provisions that allow depredating wolves to be killed.

The Oregon Fish and Wildlife Commission voted 6-to-1 on June 7 to approve the long-awaited, highly contentious plan after hours of public testimony and debate over last-minute amendments.

Commissioner Greg Wolley, of Portland, was the only member to vote against the plan.

Getting to this point was no easy feat. Wolf management has been a source of controversy ever since the species returned to Oregon in 1999. The state adopted

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Oregon State Police roll with Pride

By **PHIL WRIGHT**
East Oregonian

SALEM — Oregon State Police this month rolled out a new looking patrol car for Pride Month.

The 2019 Dodge Charger is among the 1,000 or so vehicles in the state police's fleet and packs the standard issue police equipment ready for road work. But rather than black graphics on silver paint, the Pride car displays rainbow lettering and a rainbow stripe on either side.

Pride Month recognizes and celebrates the LGBTQ community, and the rainbow is a common pride symbol. Capt. Tim Fox, Oregon State Police spokesperson, said the car serves two purposes.

"First, OSP is competing with other Oregon police agencies to attract and recruit police officers," he explained. "This is a tough market and we engage in scores of outreach efforts to show we are an inclusive and attractive employer. The patrol car graphics, like any other signage, promotional material or giveaways, is intended to be an ice breaker and invite conversation with the citizens we serve."

Equally important, he continued, the state police "understands LGBTQ citizens (and those perceived to be LGBTQ) are regrettably over represented in bullying, harassment and hate crimes. This includes school

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