

# Oregon senator must give notice before going to Capitol

By **ANDREW SELSKY**  
Associated Press

SALEM — A Republican lawmaker who threatened the Senate president and Oregon State Police on the eve of a revolt by GOP senators over a climate-change bill must give notice before coming to the Capitol, where state troopers will beef up their presence, a Senate committee decided Monday.

The committee of two Democrats and two Republicans unanimously passed the motion near the close of a hearing into Sen. Brian Boquist's conduct that lasted several hours. The hearing room in the Oregon State Capitol was jammed with onlookers, including many of his supporters who held small American flags.

Boquist, a Republican from Dallas, warned on June 19 that if the Oregon State Police were sent to force him to return during a walkout by GOP senators that they should "send bachelors and come heavily armed." He also told Senate President Peter Courtney that "hell is coming to visit you personally" if he sent the state police after him. He apolo-

gized minutes later for his comments.

"This is a very, very serious thing," said Sen. James Manning, a Democratic committee member and one of only two African-American members of the Senate. "If I had made those comments, I would have been drug out of the Capitol, at minimum."

Boquist said in an interview last week the troopers lacked legal authority to apprehend senators. Gov. Kate Brown, a Democrat acting on Courtney's request, ordered the state police to bring the boycotting senators to the Senate so a quorum could be established and a vote conducted on the climate-change bill.

At the hearing, Boquist read from a prepared statement, announcing he is suing Courtney and others. He refused to be questioned by committee members.

"Whether Kate Brown and/or Peter Courtney issued troopers an illegal order will now be determined in a court of law," Boquist said.

Brenda Baumgart, an outside attorney for the Senate, testified that while her investigation continues, the



AP Photo/Andrew Selsky  
**State Sen. Brian Boquist reads a statement on Monday to the Senate special committee on conduct in Salem.**

Senate should take steps to ensure it maintains an intimidation-free and safe work environment. She had said in a memo to legislative officials that the customary practice in such cases is to prevent the person who made threats from returning to the workplace.

The Senate committee members decided that Boquist must give at least 12 hours written notice that he planned to come to the Capitol, and that Oregon troopers, who provide security in the building, beef up their force by a couple of troopers while Boquist is present. That, the committee members said, should show that the Senate is taking the security concerns of others seriously.

Baumgart had said some Senate members and employees have reported concerns about their safety and that of others, but she did not identify them.

Sen. Alan Olsen, one of two Republican committee members, said that concerned him, and that the panel should be able to ask them about their concerns.

Baumgart said a full report would come in a month or two, and it would include who raised concerns.

"I think that this type of situation is grave, it is egregious, it is serious, and is one that puts the branch (the Legislature) at risk" if interim measures are not taken, she told the committee.

Boquist made his threats a day before Republican senators began a nine-day walkout on June 20, with the GOP caucus saying the climate bill would harm their rural constituents. The bill aimed to dramatically reduce greenhouse gases by capping carbon emissions and requiring businesses to buy or trade for an ever-dwindling pool of pollution "allowances."

# Bend Bulletin must fire employees prior to selling newspaper

By **MEERAH POWELL**  
Oregon Public Broadcasting

A new court filing outlining the sale of Central Oregon's only daily newspaper shows that all employees of the *Bend Bulletin* and other publications must be terminated before Rhode Island Suburban Newspapers takes control.

The Rhode Island company plans to buy Western Communications' Central Oregon publications for more than \$2 million.

As a part of the sale agreement, Western Communications must terminate all employees at the *Bend Bulletin*, the *Redmond Spokesman Weekly* and other publications including *Go! Weekly* entertainment tabloid and *Bend Homes* monthly.

"Effective as of the end of business on the day immediately prior to the Closing Date, Seller shall terminate all Business Employees," the filing states.

The Rhode Island company could re-hire any employees at its discretion.

This comes after Western Communications filed for bankruptcy in 2011 and again this past January. As of late May, Western Communica-

tions owed roughly \$30 million in debt.

It had listed its Bend headquarters for sale at \$20 million in 2017. The Rhode Island company will lease space there for a monthly rate of \$10,000.

Neither party is allowed to talk about the terms of the agreement, though documents are publicly available in bankruptcy court.

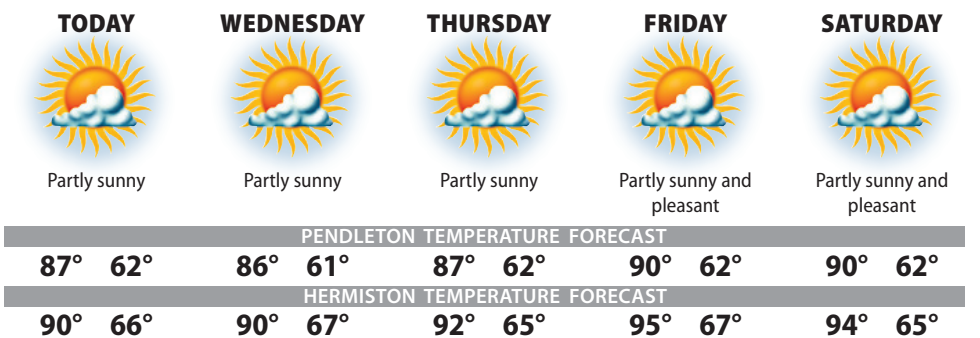
The Rhode Island company is also bidding on another Western Communications paper, and its real estate, in California — the *Sonoran Union Democrat*.

Two Oregon-based media groups are buying other Western Communications' publications. Last week, the court authorized the terms of sale for Country Media and EO Media Group to buy the company's other Oregon publications in La Grande, Baker City and Brookings and another in Crescent City, California.

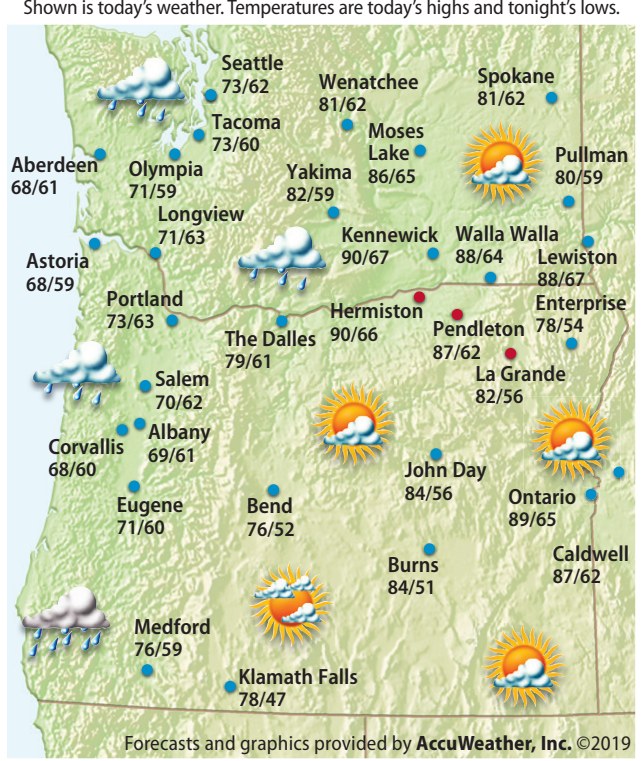
A judge will review the purchase agreement between Rhode Island Suburban Newspapers and Western Communications at a hearing later this month.

Western Communications didn't immediately respond to a request for comment.

## Forecast for Pendleton Area



## OREGON FORECAST



## ALMANAC

**PENDLETON** through 3 p.m. yest.

TEMP.	HIGH	LOW
Yesterday	80°	52°
Normals	87°	57°
Records	106° (1968)	41° (1911)

**PRECIPITATION**  
24 hours ending 3 p.m. 0.00"  
Month to date 0.02"  
Normal month to date 0.08"  
Year to date 9.59"  
Last year to date 6.49"  
Normal year to date 7.65"

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

TEMP.	HIGH	LOW
Yesterday	81°	58°
Normals	87°	57°
Records	104° (2012)	40° (1981)

**PRECIPITATION**  
24 hours ending 3 p.m. 0.00"  
Month to date Trace  
Normal month to date 0.06"  
Year to date 4.55"  
Last year to date 5.10"  
Normal year to date 5.76"

**WINDS** (in mph)

Board	Today	Wed.
Pendleton	SW 4-8	WSW 6-12
Hermiston	ENE 4-8	NW 6-12

**SUN AND MOON**

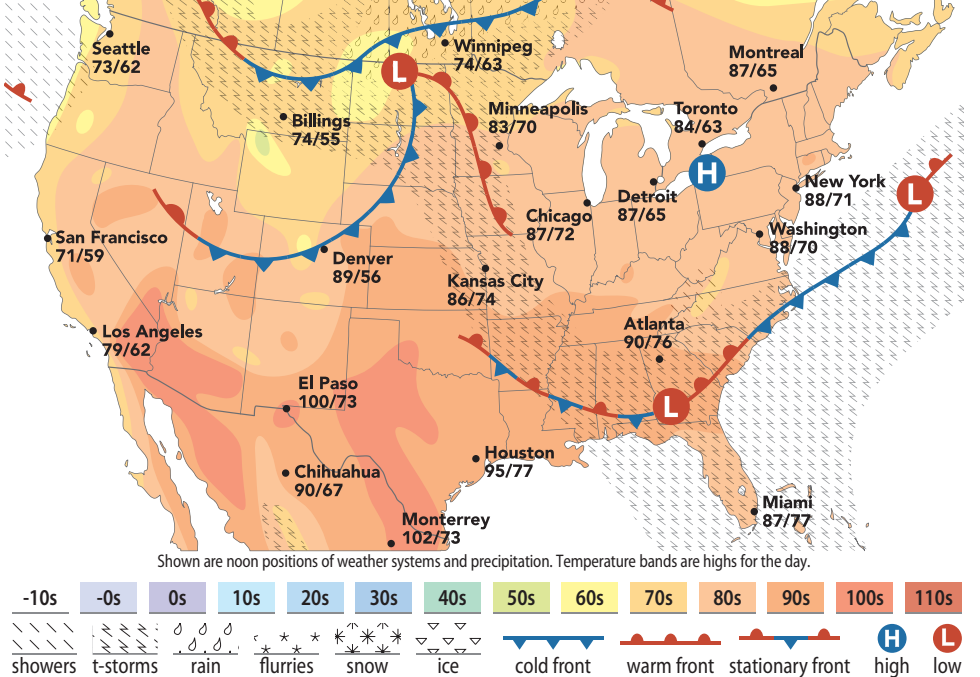
Sunrise today	5:15 a.m.
Sunset tonight	8:46 p.m.
Moonrise today	1:34 p.m.
Moonset today	12:46 a.m.

First Full Last New  
July 9 July 16 July 24 July 31

## NATIONAL EXTREMES

Yesterday's National Extremes: (for the 48 contiguous states)  
High 106° in Laredo, Texas Low 33° in Boca Reservoir, Calif.

## NATIONAL WEATHER TODAY



# Southern resident orcas spotted after unusual absence

SEATTLE (AP) — Breaking an unprecedented run of days this summer without frequenting their home waters, J, K and even possibly L pod southern resident orcas were recently seen on the west side of San Juan Island.

The *Seattle Times* reports that the endangered orcas had not been here this summer, except for one visit by J pod, in a brief lap around San Juan Island one day in early May. They immediately left. However, on Friday, the Canadian Department of Fisheries reported that members of all three pods, J, K and L, were seen on the west coast of Vancouver.

And Ken Balcomb, founding director of the Center for Whale Research, emailed the *Times* Friday morning and said: "J and K and maybe some L off my house in Haro Strait now."

Still, the whales' scarcity in what has long been their core summer habitat in the inland waters of the Salish Sea between the U.S. and Canada has scientists scrambling, with research scheduled but their star subjects nowhere in sight. Yet, whale watch tour operators are having one of their best years ever. Sightings of transient orcas — or Bigg's killer whales — have reached unprecedented numbers, humpbacks are enjoying a spectacular comeback and gray whales, seals and sea lions are also keeping the tourists coming.

At the root of it all is food. Transients are feasting on abundant harbor seals, rebounded in number since they were protected from hunting by the 1972 Marine Mammal Protection Act, which similarly has benefited other protected marine mammals. Their resurgence is one of the great conservation successes of our time.

However, a bad year for chinook salmon, the southern residents' primary food, particularly in the Fraser River, is thought to be driving the southern residents away this summer in search of sustenance.

While the resident orca death is unprecedented, it is not unexpected, researchers say. It's consistent with a longer-term trend.

Ken Balcomb, of the Center for Whale Research, is charged by the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration with keeping a current photo identification catalog and population statistics on the southern residents. "For the past 10 years, I have been reporting that the trend in (southern resident killer whale) occupancy of these inshore waters is decreasing, and we are going to have to gear up for more work in the western Strait of Juan de Fuca and along the coast."

Balcomb said he also has seen similar trends in Puget Sound, with the southern residents rarely coming around anymore except for chum runs in the autumn and winter.

"There is simply no reason for them to come into inshore waters unless they are following significant runs of salmon," he said.

Brad Hanson, a research biologist with the NOAA's Northwest Fisheries Science Center in Seattle, has for the last 15 years spent several weeks in June surveying the southern residents in the waters of the San Juan Islands.

But he was skunked this year despite two weeks in the field in last month that included a run toward the coast in the Strait of Juan de Fuca after Canadian colleagues reported seeing the southern residents off Vancouver Island. Bad weather turned the U.S. survey crew back.

Neah Bay is starting to look like a better base for tracking the whales than Friday Harbor, Hanson said.

Meanwhile, the Bigg's are being seen plenty.

Monika W. Shields with her co-authors in a December 2018 paper reported record sightings of Bigg's killer whales in the inland waters of the Salish Sea. The transients also are taking a big bite out of the local seal population, Shields and her co-authors reported, with the transients in the Salish Sea eating more than 1,000 seals in 2017 alone.

Their avid predation must be considered as salmon managers mull killing seals to protect declining salmon runs, the authors wrote. Seal populations have actually begun to level off, and even decline — while the population of Bigg's killer whales has doubled since 1990, according to the paper.

Jeff Friedman, owner of Maya's Legacy Whale Watching and U.S. President for the Pacific Whale Watch Association, could have told you that.

His customers this week saw dozens of Bigg's killer whales, including families with multiple babies, and often witness epic open sea orca take-downs of seals and sea lions, Friedman said. In one recent encounter, the sea-mammal eating orcas were tossing the pelt of a Stellar sea lion in the air — all that was left of it — seemingly just for fun.

"It's incredible to see," Friedman said. "You really get a sense of their power and coordination, you really, really get that you are looking at an apex predator."

"We have gotten so used to the sad story of the southern residents, we forget there are animals that are doing really well."

**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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