



HIGH SCHOOL TEENS GET A TASTE OF THE FAB LIFE
REGION, A3



RESURRECTING PENDLETON'S BOB WHITE FIELD
SPORTS, B1

EAST OREGONIAN

FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 21, 2020

144th Year, No. 90

WINNER OF THE 2019 ONPA GENERAL EXCELLENCE AWARD

\$1.50

Your Weekend



- **IMBIBE @ BLUE**, BMCC Student Union
- **MARDI GRAS FUNDRAISER DINNER/AUCTION**, Hermiston Community Center
- **ZWICKELMANIA**, Ordinance Brewing

FOR TIMES AND LOCATIONS CHECK COMING EVENTS, A5

Weekend Weather

FRI	SAT	SUN
53/31	54/38	57/35

Airport lease dispute lingers

By ANTONIO SIERRA
East Oregonian

PENDLETON — The Pendleton City Council was on the verge of significantly raising a street maintenance fee, but the crowd who filled council chambers Tuesday night weren't there to complain about their utility bills.

Airport business owners and their supporters came out in force for the public comment section of the council meeting to object to the way staff from the Eastern Oregon Regional Airport were negotiating leases with tenants near the airfield and surrounding industrial park.

The issue has been ongoing for more than a year and came to a head when the airport commission was updating the airport's lease language and included a "reversionary clause," a piece of contract language that allows the airport to take back rented land once the tenant's lease is over.

Airport business owners argued that the reversionary

See Airport, Page A8



AP Photo/Anna Reed, File

The Senate Chamber is viewed on the first day of the short legislative session at the Oregon Capitol in Salem. Critics of Senate Bill 1530 have argued that the session, which should last just 35 days and end on March 8, wasn't designed to pass transformational legislation like cap and trade.

'A horrible piece of legislation'

Oregon counties voice opposition to cap and trade

By ALEX CASTLE
East Oregonian

UMATILLA COUNTY — While tensions continue to boil on both sides of the aisle in the Oregon Legislature over cap and trade, Eastern Oregon counties are making it clear where they stand.

On Wednesday, the Umatilla County Board of Commissioners voted unanimously to issue an official letter of opposition against cap-and-trade legislation, while Morrow County Commissioners Melissa Lindsay and Don Russell recently signed a letter of opposition issued by the Eastern Oregon Counties Association.

"This is a horrible piece of legislation," Russell said. "It's just bad."

The EOCA letter, which all three of Umatilla County's commissioners signed too, includes signatures of representatives from all 14 Eastern Oregon counties and 34 commissioners in total. Along with those in Eastern Oregon, nine other counties have proclaimed opposition to the bill across the state.

As of Thursday, 64% of Oregon's counties have issued official opposition to cap and trade. Those counties make up 82% of the state's land mass.

Senate Bill 1530, this session's revised cap-and-trade bill, would cap carbon emissions for transportation,



Lindsay



Murdock



Russell

"I UNDERSTAND THE STATE HASN'T PERFORMED A FISCAL ANALYSIS YET, BUT THE SMALL BUSINESSES AND FARMERS I'VE TALKED TO HAVE, AND THEY'RE NERVOUS."

— Melissa Lindsay, Morrow County commissioner

manufacturing and utility companies throughout the state and require those companies to obtain allowances for each metric ton of emissions per year. Those

allowances could be purchased from companies that remain under the cap, with the idea that available allowances will dwindle as the state moves toward its goal of cutting emissions by more than 80% by 2050.

Lindsay said Morrow County received the notice about declaring official opposition from the EOCA on too short of notice this week, so the board was unable to bring it to a vote and issue a letter on behalf of the county.

Umatilla County opted to draft a letter of its own and made a late addition to Wednesday's agenda in order to vote on it. Commissioner George Murdock said he reworked a few portions provided in the EOCA letter to tailor their opposition specifically to SB 1530 rather than any potential environmental legislation to be considered in the future.

"We're concerned about the economic impact study that has not been conducted with respect to Senate Bill 1530," Murdock read from the letter at Wednesday's meeting. "It's a premature legislative action. We think it has a negative impact on Eastern Oregon."

Both Lindsay and Russell listed the lack of an economic study as primary reasons for their opposition as well.

"I understand the state hasn't performed a fiscal analysis yet, but the

See Legislation, Page A8

Hermiston associate takes advantage of program

Ashli Palmer one of the first to graduate using Walmart's Live Better U

By JADE MCDOWELL
East Oregonian

HERMISTON — Ashli Palmer's Walmart career has funded two different college degrees, but the company had a much more direct hand in the most recent one.

Palmer started at Walmart at age 20, working as an overnight stocker in their La Grande store to help pay her way through a bachelor's degree in business from Eastern Oregon University.

Now, more than 15 years later, she is the first Oregonian to graduate through Walmart's Live Better U,

which offers Walmart associates the opportunity to earn a college degree or other certifications for only \$1 per day.

"I push this program to everyone, because it's designed for people who are working and have lives," she said. "They made it so easy for working professionals, and at such a great cost."

Palmer has done "a little bit of everything" for the company over the years, but currently works as the human resources manager at the Walmart Distribution Center in Hermiston. When Walmart announced Live Better U in 2018, she jumped at the chance to increase her knowledge by pursuing a bachelor's degree in supply chain,

See Graduate, Page A8



Staff photo by Ben Lonergan

Ashli Palmer, the operations manager at the Walmart Distribution Center in Hermiston, recently completed Walmart's Live Better U program, a program that allows Walmart employees to get a college degree for \$1 a day.

