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Oregon Supreme Court rules on redrawing districts

Justices decide Oregon lawmakers can have first crack

By PETER WONG
Oregon Capital Bureau

SALEM — A decision by the Oregon Supreme Court will enable lawmakers, not Secretary of State Shemia Fagan, to get first crack at redrawing legislative district boundaries despite a pandem-

ic-caused delay in federal census data. The court, in an opinion issued on Friday, April 9, gives legislators until Sept. 27 to come up with a plan — even though the Oregon Constitution sets a deadline of July 1. After Sept. 27, if legislators do not come up with a plan, the Constitution gives the task to the secretary of state. The Census Bureau says it will



Fagan

be late summer before it will release census-block data, which Oregon and other states rely on to redraw their political maps after each 10-year census. Nothing in state law bars Oregon from using other sources of data.

Senate President Peter Courtney and House Speaker Tina Kotek, joined by Republican minority leaders, asked the court for an extension beyond July 1. Fagan said the court lacked the authority to order an extension, and that any delay would interfere with the timetables for the

2022 primary election. The filing deadline is March 8, 2021, for the May 17, 2022.

The justices decided the matter based entirely on written arguments and did not conduct a hearing.

The court's order takes effect on April 19, unless Fagan requests a reconsideration from the court — a request that the court rarely takes up.

The court, in the opinion written by Chief Justice Martha Walters, said the deadlines specified in the Oregon Constitution are less

important than the process laid out in amendments that voters approved in 1952 and updated in 1986.

Democrats react

Courtney, a Democrat from Salem, and Kotek, a Democrat from Portland, issued this statement after the court announced its decision:

"The Supreme Court has done its job. Now it's time for the Legislature to do its constitutional duty: to redraw the district boundaries for

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The migraine that never stops

Medical issues continue to present issues for Pendleton couple

By KATHY ANEY
East Oregonian

PENDLETON — More than most, Dave Wallace knows that life can change in an instant.

Up until 13 months ago, Wallace enjoyed an easy-going existence with his wife Danielle and their two children. The close-knit family liked to camp and mushroom hunt and take vacations together at the coast and Wallowa Lake. Some people know Dave as former Round-Up groundskeeper and master chef of the Pendleton High School Mud Wars tug-of-war pit. Wallace and his crew spent a couple of days each year masterfully bringing the pit to pudding-like consistency for the annual slimy event.

More recently, Dave worked as a saw filer at Blue Mountain Lumber. He was there when a sudden stabbing headache brought him to his knees. Dizzy and numb, he had trouble standing. Doctors checked him for a brain bleed, but the CT scan came back normal.

A visit with a neurologist followed, as well as an MRI and a spinal tap. All showed no irregularities. The neurologist concluded that Wallace was suffering from a severe migraine.

The migraine, if that's what it is, has lasted 13 months.

He must walk with a cane and suffers brain fog, tremors, earaches, tinnitus, numbness and sensitivity to noise. His eyes also are affected. When an ophthalmologist checked his vision, Dave couldn't read any of the rows on the eye chart.

"My vision was 20/100," he said. "I couldn't see anything."

As he said this, he looked dolefully at Danielle on the couch next

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Kathy Aney/East Oregonian
Dave Wallace misses his easy-going existence with wife Danielle and children Hadlee, 13, and Kyler, 5. Thirteen months ago, he experienced a baffling medical episode that left him with head pain, vision problems, tremors and an unsteady gait.

OREGON SENATE

Hansell facing backlash

By BRYCE DOLE
East Oregonian

SALEM — When Oregon State Sen. Bill Hansell told a colleague he was planning to show up to work on March 25, he received a firm warning.

"His immediate words to me were, 'Bill, you'll be crucified,'" the Athena Republican said.



Hansell

Hansell was one of six Senate Republicans who showed up to the floor on March 25 as the chamber took up a proposal to ban firearms in state buildings and lay the foundation for other bans.

The bill passed despite opposition from Hansell and other Republicans, who fought the bill for more than six hours on the floor, pointing out holes and sections they considered unconstitutional, Hansell said. Now, several Republicans, including Hansell, have received backlash for showing up and not leading a walkout.

"We've gotten some very nasty emails," Hansell said. "Even to the extent that we've had to turn over some of the emails to the state police because we were threatened to be shot."

Hansell said the Oregon Firearms Federation had requested Senate Republicans deny the quorum prior to March 25 with a walkout. He caucused with other Republicans about the proposition. Some agreed to walk out, but Hansell said he, and five other colleagues, decided to "stand and fight, rather than run and hide."

Since then, Hansell said his constituents have been contacted to gather signatures to recall him, though they have so far declined to do so.

"I've been told by others that

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M-F, A-W schools make the jump to full days

By JEREMY BURNHAM
Walla Walla Union-Bulletin

MILTON-FREEWATER — Oregon schools faced stricter restrictions earlier in the COVID-19 pandemic that prevented them from moving to a hybrid schedule as fast as many Washington schools.

Now, however, the Milton-Freewater and Athena-Weston school districts are jumping to full days of in-person learning faster than most of their neighbors to the north.

The Athena-Weston district made the jump for the remainder of their students on April 5.

Younger Athena-Weston students have been back for full days for some time. However, the high school classrooms are too small to accom-

modate full classes if students need to sit 6 feet apart.

Now, Gov. Kate Brown's decision to follow Centers for Disease Control and Prevention recommendations and switch to 3 feet of distancing for students have allowed high schoolers to return as well.

"We've been in hybrid for those students," Superintendent Laure Quaresma said. "But with 3 feet of distancing, we have been able to bring them back."

Like several other area superintendents, Quaresma said how to handle lunch was a concern due to the requirement that students remain distanced by 6 feet while eating. However, this was not an



Greg Lehman/Walla Walla Union-Bulletin

Ferndale Elementary School fourth grade teacher Heidi Smith talks to Principal Don Davis about the coming start of full-time, in-class students on Wednesday, April 7, 2021, in Milton-Freewater.

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