

Democratic allies float ballot measures to end GOP walkouts

By DIRK VANDERHART
Oregon Public Broadcasting

SALEM — The Democrat- and labor-backed group No More Costly Walkouts Coalition says it's committed to putting a measure before voters in November 2022.

The group, which formed to push back against obstruction tactics used by Republican lawmakers, says it's serious about ending the practice. So serious, in fact, it's preparing a stunning 10 distinct concepts that could appear before Oregon voters next year.

In a press conference on Thursday, May 6, the No More Costly Walkouts Coalition unveiled eight initiative petitions aimed at penalizing lawmakers who walk away from the Oregon Capitol, and limiting their ability to use delay tactics. At the same time, the group announced it has gathered at least 1,000 signatures for two existing proposals, enough to generate ballot language and begin collecting tens of thousands of signatures required to qualify for the November 2022 ballot.

The proposals — which represent mere options for a ballot measure, not ideas the coalition would pursue



Andrew Selsky/Associated Press, File

In this June 29, 2019, file photo, lawmakers convene at the Oregon Senate after the minority Republicans ended a walkout they had begun over a carbon-emissions bill they said would harm their rural constituents.

en masse — appear to be the most likely route Democrats and their allies will take to attempt to stop Republicans from stymieing priority bills.

The GOP's tactics have included walkouts in 2019 and 2020, where lawmakers fled the state in order to ensure Democrats did not

have a quorum necessary to pass a contentious climate change proposal. More recently, Republicans in both chambers have insisted that bills be read in full before a vote, a strategy that dramatically slows the passage of bills.

"Oregon deserves better

than lawmakers who walk off the job, or keep others from working," said Reed Scott-Schwabach, vice president of the Oregon Education Association. "When lawmakers take an oath of office, they promise to show up for Oregonians each and every day. ... If lawmakers

can't do that on their own, we will change the rules so that they have to."

The 10 concepts floated by No More Costly Walkouts amount to different combinations of five central themes. They are:

- fining lawmakers \$500 and stripping their pay for each unexcused absence, and prohibiting them from using political donations to replace lost salaries or pay fines
- ensuring days in which the House or Senate cannot secure a two-thirds quorum do not count against the constitutional time limits for legislative sessions
- changing the two-thirds quorum requirement to a simple majority if quorum is denied for five cumulative days during a session
- preventing senators or representatives with 10 or more unexcused absences from running for reelection
- eliminating the constitutional requirement that bills be read in full before a final vote when bills are posted at least 24 hours ahead of time, and requiring a simple majority vote to waive a full reading in other instances

No More Costly Walkouts says its own polling shows that voters support all of those proposals by strong margins. Exactly what

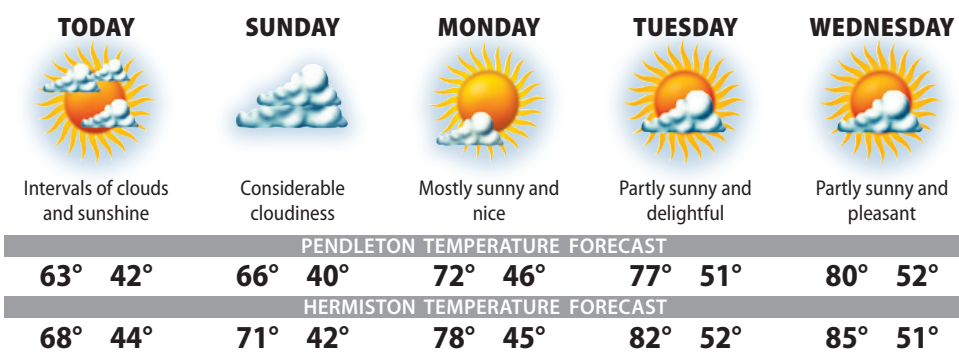
permutation of the concepts the group ultimately pursues will be dictated by ballot language crafted by the Department of Justice or courts.

"We will be moving forward with measures depending on, frankly, how voters respond to the different variations of them," said Patty Wentz, a consultant hired by the coalition. "The thing that I would take away from the fact that there are so many versions is that we are really serious about moving forward with a measure or measures. There will be lawmaker accountability measures around walkouts and gridlock on the ballot in November 2022."

The coalition pushing the potential ballot measures is made up of a variety of progressive and left-leaning groups typically supportive of Democratic politicians, including major public employee unions, the Oregon League of Conservation Voters and the Planned Parenthood Action PAC.

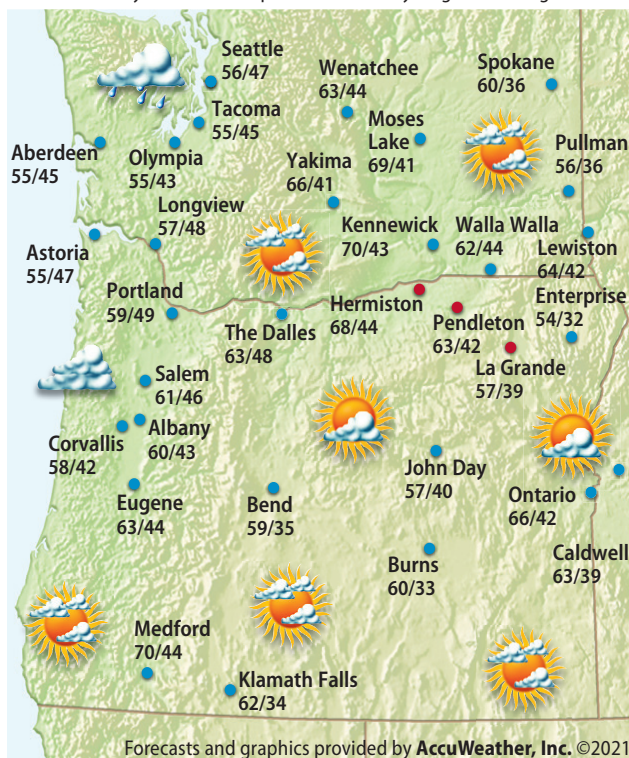
Campaign finance records show that a political action committee affiliated with the group has received all of its financial support from organized labor, House and Senate Democrats and Gov. Kate Brown.

Forecast for Pendleton Area



OREGON FORECAST

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



ALMANAC

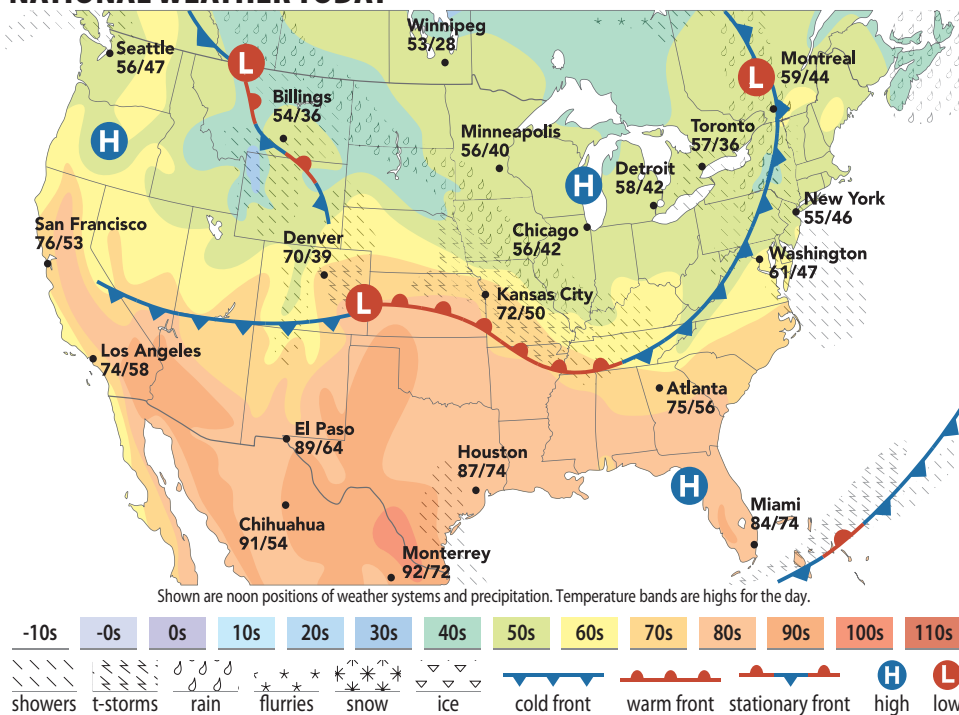
PENDLETON through 3 p.m. yest.				
TEMP.	HIGH	LOW		
Yesterday	60°	39°		
Normals	69°	44°		
Records	88° (1992)	26° (1927)		
PRECIPITATION	24 hours ending 3 p.m.			
Month to date	0.26"			
Normal month to date	0.25"			
Year to date	3.82"			
Last year to date	5.53"			
Normal year to date	5.36"			
HERMISTON through 3 p.m. yest.				
TEMP.	HIGH	LOW		
Yesterday	64°	47°		
Normals	71°	44°		
Records	95° (1992)	30° (2003)		
PRECIPITATION	24 hours ending 3 p.m.			
Month to date	0.18"			
Normal month to date	0.28"			
Year to date	1.46"			
Last year to date	0.72"			
Normal year to date	4.27"			
WINDS (in mph)	Today	Sun.		
Boardman	SW 8-16	SW 4-8		
Pendleton	WSW 8-16	WSW 6-12		
SUN AND MOON	Sunrise today 5:33 a.m.			
Sunset tonight	8:11 p.m.			
Moonrise today	4:38 a.m.			
Moonset today	5:14 p.m.			
	New	First	Full	Last
	May 11	May 19	May 26	June 2

NATIONAL EXTREMES

Yesterday's National Extremes: (for the 48 contiguous states)

High 98° in Pecos, Texas Low 18° in Minot, N.D.

NATIONAL WEATHER TODAY



One of the Oregon brothers charged in U.S. Capitol siege to remain in custody

By MAXINE BERNSTEIN
The Oregonian



J. Klein

M. Klein

SALEM — A federal judge on Tuesday, May 4, declined to release college senior Matthew Klein, one of two Oregon brothers accused in the Jan. 6 breach of the U.S. Capitol, after finding his parents unsuitable to supervise him pending trial.

The ruling came after prosecutors submitted examples of text messages that showed Klein's mother and father warning Matthew's younger brother, Jonathanpeter Klein, that "braggers get caught."

Their mother also sent texts to Jonathanpeter Klein warning him that his "phone is not encrypted," that he should "(b)e careful what (he) say(s)" and that he should "clear (his) phone" or that he should "(pull a Hillary and use a hammer" and "bleach" to destroy the phone, according to court records.

Matthew Klein, 24, and Jonathanpeter Klein, 21, both have pleaded not guilty to conspiracy to defraud the United States, aiding and abetting in the obstruction of an official proceeding, obstruction of law enforcement during civil disorder, destruction of government property, entering

and remaining in a restricted building or grounds and disorderly conduct in a restricted building or grounds.

Matthew Klein's lawyer had urged his client's release to his parents in Baker City, describing them as deeply religious Christian missionaries and very responsible people. Matthew Klein wants to continue his education at George Fox University, said defense attorney Steven R. Kiersh.

"We would like to see him get back and complete his college program, but, primarily, he would be — be required — again, without any opposition — to stay on the premises where his family members can monitor his conduct and where, quite frankly, pretrial can monitor his comings and goings," Kiersh argued last month in a Zoom hearing before the judge based in Washington, D.C.

Kiersh also sought to distinguish Matthew Klein from his younger brother, tell-

ing the court that Jonathanpeter Klein is accused of being a member of the Proud Boys, not Matthew Klein.

His lawyer argued that Matthew Klein was following the direction of then-President Donald Trump after attending a rally in Washington, D.C., before marching to the Capitol and didn't assault anyone.

"It was the President of the United States who told the crowd to go march to the United States Capitol," Kiersh said. "This was not Matthew Klein saying do it."

But federal prosecutor Christopher K. Veatch countered that Matthew Klein played a larger role than his brother in the Capitol breach, noting Matthew Klein helped others scale a wall on the west side of the Capitol to allow them to get inside.

After he and his brother entered the Capitol, and then left the building about 10 minutes later, the two wrenched open another door on the north side of the Capitol, Veatch said.

Once they got the door open, Jonathanpeter Klein walked away, but Matthew Klein put on his goggles, held out his Gadsden flag and confronted law enforcement officers before he was doused with pepper spray, Veatch said.

IN BRIEF

Oregon resumes paying grants to Black Oregonians after settling Cares Fund lawsuit

SALEM — Oregon once again began distributing grants last week through its unique \$62 million coronavirus relief fund for Black Oregonians.

Organizers of the fund distributed \$49.5 million to Black Oregonians, Black-owned businesses and Black-led nonprofits across 31 Oregon counties last fall, but they agreed to hand over their remaining funds to a federal court and stop allocating grant money in December 2020 after a John Day logging company and Portland coffee shop challenged the constitutionality of the state fund.

The state and organizers of the fund reached a settlement with John Day logging company Great Northern Resources in March,

allowing them to recoup \$5.3 million from the court to distribute to Black Oregonians.

Fund organizers began distributing that money last week. They are using the funds to provide grants to people and organizations that applied for support late last year, but never received funding due to the legal case. The fund is not accepting new grant applications.

"We are working as fast as possible to notify applicants and distribute awards, while ensuring security and compliance," said Anthony Jordan, president of The Contingent, the nonprofit administering the grants.

As part of the settlement, Oregon is also using its own risk fund to pay grants to up to 1,252 non-Black applicants that sought funding through the program before Dec. 8, 2020. The court is continuing to hold an additional \$3.5 million deposited by fund organizers until the state pays out those grants.

— The Oregonian

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