# **Oregonians will get 17% of their 2020 state income taxes back**

**By BETSY HAMMOND** The Oregonian

SALEM — Oregonians will get 17% of their 2020 Oregon income taxes back as a kicker credit when they file their 2021 taxes next year, the Oregon Department of Revenue announced Tuesday, Oct. 12.

Revenue officials determined more than a month ago that Oregon's unique kicker rebate law would generate a jaw-dropping \$1.9 billion. But they needed to finalize and certify exactly how

much each tax filer would be entitled to.

The official answer is 17.341% of 2020 state income taxes paid. Taxpayers can find their 2020 tax liability on line 22 of their 2020 Form OR.

Oregonians get a kicker rebate

when the state's revenue exceeds by 2% or more what state forecasters projected far ahead of time. No other state has a similar law.

People who paid 2020 Oregon income taxes can file for and receive the credit in 2022, even if they don't owe Oregon taxes on their 2021 income.

If you owe the state money, whether for back taxes or for other items, such as court fines or child support, however, the state may use all or part of your kicker for that debt first.

# State drops requirement for substitute teachers

**By DILLON MULLAN** Pamplin Media Group

SALEM — Oregon is relaxing requirements to become a substitute school teacher in the face of a widespread shortage stretching educators thin.

Oregon Teacher Standards and Practices Commission Executive Director Anthony Rosilez said the licensing agency filed a temporary rule to implement an emergency substitute teaching license.

In December 2019, he said, the state had at least 8,300 active substitute licenses, although that number does not include retirees and other part time school staff with active teaching licenses who can also substitute.

A year later, that number dropped to 5,500, and this month, Rosilez said, the state is down to around 4,738 substitute teachers.

The emergency rule relaxes the requirement for a bachelor's degree.

"It temporarily relaxes the specific higher education requirement of the traditional substitute license but mandates impactful administrative support for the emergency licensed sub,"



Pamplin Media Group/Contributed Photo

Substitute teacher Sarah Lewins at Jason Lee Elementary, Portland, helps Mintwob Mintwab properly put on her mask at the start of the first day of in-person, hybrid learning in spring 2021.

Rosilez said. "This license will allow school districts to reach a wider pool of potential substitute teachers. In terms of the number of people who are applying for sub licenses, we can see that number is significantly down."

New licenses can take up to seven weeks to process.

Every person issued an emergency license can only work inside the district sponsoring them. The license is not renewable and expires after a year.

'It could be a parent who is only working part time, or maybe lost a job. It could be a person who has been a regular volunteer at a school

... It could maybe be a college student who's looking to work while they go to school at night," Rosilez said.

In the Banks School District, which has about 1,050 students in rural Washington County, middle school Principal Darla Waite-Larkin said she submits to a third-party contractor called Education Staffing Solutions, for around 10 positions each day, some of which are unfilled staff positions. She said before the pandemic, the district traditionally has been able to fill positions open for hire and therefore not rely on substitutes as the pandemic hinders in-person learning. "It is a last-minute fix, and there isn't much time to prepare for a quality lesson. We have also had to combine classes and change the lesson plan for the day to provide a lesson for students who might be in different content classes or at a different place in the curriculum," Waite-Larkin said. "We have heard from a few of the substitutes that we have used in the past, that they are not interested in coming into the schools this year due to concern about the virus. I think this is the same for bus drivers and other positions. Most schools in the state are in the same predicament that we are."

The minimum pay for licensed substitutes, according to state law, is about \$195 per day, but it can vary by district.

'The trend we are seeing is we are not filling our absences with certified substitutes on a consistent basis. We're only in week three. You see more absences in winter," Banks Superintendent Jeff Leo said. "We usually fill in-house or have an administrator sub. If a spot doesn't get filled, we ask teachers during prep time if they can cover that class. We do the best we can."

## Workers rank what they value in a workplace in study

**By SUZANNE ROIG** The Bulletin

SALEM — Workers value having a job they can be proud of, that's close to home with flexible hours and that has health insurance, according to a survey by the Oregon Values and Beliefs Center

Rated the highest by all demographic groups by those surveyed, at 63%, was having a work-life balance, according to the survey. The second highest workplace feature was health insurance

when choosing a place to work and that it is really important to people without a college degree because a good salary can be more difficult for those to come by," said Amaury Vogel, associate executive director of the Oregon Values and Beliefs Center, which conducted the survey Sept. 14-22. "The ranking tells us a little bit more because it makes people choose a few priorities.

Earning a good salary was a priority for 72% of

work-life balance probably was not something workers placed such a high value on 20 years ago.

"Oregonians in the 30-44 age range are more likely than other age groups to have young children and therefore prioritize a flexible schedule, but it's a bit surprising that those 18-29, who are often just establishing their careers would prioritize flexible hours."

When Annis Henson was a full-time worker, health insurance was a priority for her and her family. The Bend resident worked for Habitat for Humanity as a field staffer prior to retirement. As a worker she valued the collaborative nature of work, and having a supervisor who

valued her opinion.

"My work was very satisfying," Henson said. "I could see results in the work we did."

The center's online survey was sent to 1,124 Oregon residents. The survey's margin of error is between 1.7% to 2.9%. The Oregon Values and Beliefs Center is an independent, nonpartisan organization.

Looking at the demographics, people of color and white people aligned on what is important about where they choose to work, according to the survey. The top priorities in both groups were earning a good salary, developing skills, flexible hours and feeling appreciated.

## **Former Secretary of State Clarno challenges** state redistricting map

### By DIRK VANDERHART Oregon Public Broadcasting

SALEM — Former Oregon Secretary of State Bev Clarno and three other Oregon Republicans have filed a challenge to new congressional districts recently passed by state lawmakers, arguing the plan amounts to blatant partisan gerrymandering that is unconstitutional and contrary to state law.

The suit, filed Monday, Oct. 11, in Marion County Circuit Court, is the first such attempt to alter the six-district map that Democrats pushed through during a contentious special legislative session last month.

That session nearly ended in a Republican walkout after House Speaker Tina Kotek, D-Portland, reneged on a deal to grant the GOP an equal say in new congressional and legislative maps. Instead, Republican lawmakers showed up on the last possible day and allowed Democrats to pass a map that could lead to Democratic control of five of the state's now-six seats in Congress. Oregon picked up an additional U.S. House seat because of population gains recorded by the recent U.S. Census.

"The result of this highly partisan process is a clear, egregious partisan gerrymander, as has been widely acknowledged both in Oregon and across the country," the lawsuit reads. Later it notes: "Democrats are projected to win five of the six of Oregon's congressional seats in a typical year, results that are not even arguably justified by the Democrats' overall political support in this State or the political geography of the State."

Clarno, of Redmond, the cretary of state until this

### MORE **INFORMATION**

The Oregon Values and Beliefs Center, a nonpartisan charitable organization, has partnered with Pamplin Media Group and EO Media Group to report how Oregonians think and feel about various subjects.

The Oregon Values and Beliefs Center is committed to the highest level of public opinion research. To obtain that, the nonprofit is building the largest online research panel of Oregonians in history to ensure that all voices are represented in discussions of public policy in a valid and statistically reliable way.

Selected panelists earn points for their participation, which can be redeemed for cash or donated to a charity. To learn more, visit oregonvbc. org.

of Eugene, a former House speaker. They argue that Democrats' handling of the process harms them "by frustrating their ability to vote for and campaign for congressional candidates who share their values, and who share their views on issues such as gun rights, transportation, and water rights."

Current Secretary of State Shemia Fagan is named as defendant, which is required by state law.

They have asked the court to block the plan and draw its own, along with awarding the plaintiffs attorneys fees.

The court challenge to Oregon's congressional map will be the state's first time operating under a new system for resolving such conflicts. Under a law passed in 2013, a panel of five judges — one from each of the state's current five congressional districts are the arbiters of the dispute. That panel has until Nov. 24 to decide whether to dismiss legal challenges to the new congressional maps.

and working with people that the survey respondents respected.

"It's unsurprising that most people rank earning a good salary as the most important consideration

Downtown association

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director resigns Chamber to take a bigger role in nonprofit's futu

those participating in the survey who were 30-54 years of age and 64% for all respondents. While it makes sense that earning a good salary ranks among the top priorities, Vogel said the

year, was joined by three other former Republican officials: Gary Wilhelms of Portland, a former House Republican leader; James Wilcox, former mayor of The Dalles; and Larry Campbell



### Committed to excellence for our readers

### **First Place Awards**

News Photo -"Embracing Disaster" by Ben Lonergan

Feature Story Personality - "Finding peace: Pendleton man coming to grips with trauma of Las Vegas shooting" by Kathy Aney

### Second Place Awards

Business or Economic Story - "A reopening plan 173 years in the making" by Antonio Sierra

Feature Photo - "Comet NEOWISE" by Ben Lonergan

Sports Photo - "Pickup Men" by Ben Lonergan

Local Column - Kathy Aney

Special Section - "Sidelined"

## Third Place Awards

**General Excellence** 

**Headline Writing - Andrew Cutler** 

Page One Design - Andy Nicolais

Feature Story - "At the brink: Local COVID-19 survivor remembers how close virus came to killing him" by Antonio Sierra

Spot News - "Community mourns: Colleagues mourn Pendleton city councilor" by Antonio Sierra, Kathy

Photo Essay - "Banjo Man" by Ben Lonergan

Enterprise Reporting - "Stuck in the middle: Police officers of color describe experiences in law enforcement" by Jade McDowell

Education Coverage - "Dashed dreams: \$3.6 million in Oregon Promise Grants revoked" by Kathy Aney

Lifestyle Coverage - "A spike in calls" by Kathy Aney



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