

Oregon to receive \$1.6 billion from federal infrastructure bill

By **JIM REDDEN**
Oregon Capital Bureau

SALEM — Oregon can expect to receive more than \$1.6 billion in additional federal dollars for infrastructure investments under the \$1.2 trillion public works bill approved by Congress late Friday, Nov. 5.

Members of Oregon's congressional delegation released the state's expected share of the bipartisan Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act after it was approved by the U.S. House.

The bill passed 228 to 206 on Nov. 5. Nine Democrats voted no and 13 Republicans voted yes. It had previously been approved by the U.S. Senate and now goes to President Joe Biden for his signature.

"The need for action in Oregon

is clear and recently released state-level data demonstrates that the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act will deliver for Oregon. For decades, infrastructure in Oregon has suffered from a systemic lack of investment. In fact, the American Society of Civil Engineers gave Oregon a C-grade on its infrastructure report card. The historic Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act will make life better for millions of Oregon residents, create a generation of good-paying union jobs and economic growth, and position the United States to win the 21st century," the White House said after the bill's passage.

According to the press releases, Oregon is expected to receive the following amounts in these categories:

- \$747 million in public transit investments.
- \$529 million to improve access to safe drinking water.
- \$268 million for bridge replacement and repairs.
- \$211 million for airport investments.
- \$100 million for internet broadband expansion.
- \$52 million to expand electric vehicle charging station network.
- \$39 million to help protect against wildfires.
- \$15 million to protect against cyber attacks.

The bill also reauthorizes the existing federal Highway Trust Fund, which is expected to generate \$3.4 billion for road projects over five years.

The releases did not identify specific agencies or projects that

would be funded. In a Sept. 29, story, the New York Times said the bill includes funding for TriMet's Southwest Corridor Light Rail Line and the Interstate 5 Bridge Replacement projects. The story did not say how much funding was included, however.

Additional information is expected to be available in coming weeks.

"We are proving that America can afford what our families need. This is an unprecedented investment, and I'm proud that I authored several key provisions included in this legislation to help Oregon improve our public transit systems, enhance the safety of our streets, get lead pipes out of our schools, protect us from wildfires, and expand access to broadband — all while making polluters

pay to clean up their toxic legacies. We have more work ahead of us to complement this legislation with a seismic investment in human infrastructure, but we've shown today that America can afford what it needs, and that we can get it done," said U.S. Rep. Earl Blumenauer, D-Oregon.

"I am proud of the significant role my Problem Solvers Caucus played in reaching this milestone. When talks between the White House and the Senate were breaking down earlier this year, my bipartisan group emerged as a leader in the tough negotiations and paved the way forward by assembling an ambitious framework that showed it was possible to make smart, significant investments in our nation's infrastructure systems," said U.S. Rep. Kurt Schrader, D-Oregon.

Gubernatorial candidate Nick Kristof reveals torrid fundraising contributions

By **DIRK VANDERHART**
Oregon Public Broadcasting

SALEM — It pays to have friends in high places. Just ask Nick Kristof's campaign treasurer.

After nearly a month of keeping his fundraising activity private — an option allowed under state law — the former New York Times columnist and Democratic candidate for governor revealed a massive flood of contributions Monday, Nov. 8. Kristof has raised more than \$1 million in less than a month, a torrid fundraising pace that is more than twice what his main Democratic rivals have raised to date.

The list of contributions his campaign filed with the Secretary of State includes donors from around the country, with more than half of 408 individual entries listing contributors from outside of Oregon.

Kristof's campaign suggested that number belied the number of small donors who have given less than \$100 to the campaign. Such contributions are reported in lump sums, rather than individually. According to the campaign, 2,522 Oregonians in every county except Sherman County have contributed to the effort so far.

"The number of Oregonians giving money says as much about the strength of the campaign as the overall number of dollars," said Carol Butler, a campaign consultant working with Kristof. "It is extraordinarily fast."

For many, the more head-turning contributions disclosed by Kristof might be the five-figure checks from supporters who tend to live out of state, including a \$50,000 contribution from philanthropist Melinda French Gates and \$10,000 from the Angelina Jolie Family Trust. Kristof also received a \$5,000 vote of support from former U.S. Treasury Secretary Larry Summers.

In total, Kristof reported \$1,010,999 raised since Oct. 15. That's far more than has been raised by his two most-prominent rivals for the Democratic nomination.

As of the afternoon of Nov. 8, House Speaker Tina Kotek, who announced her campaign Sept. 1, had reported raising \$414,103 since January. State Treasurer Tobias Read, who began his campaign in late September, has raised \$485,886 this year.

Kristof is also out-raising people vying for the Republican nomination. Only Salem oncologist Bud Pierce, who has contributed more than \$300,000 of his own money to his campaign, is anywhere close. Pierce has reported nearly \$750,000 in contributions this year. Sandy Mayor Stan Pulliam has reported more than half a million in contributions.

State Sen. Betsy Johnson, a Democrat who is leaving the party to run for governor as an independent next year, has said she will not begin campaigning in earnest until early 2022.

BOARDMAN Chamber of Commerce

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For more information, contact 541-481-9252

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