

EAST OREGONIAN

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LEGISLATIVE PREVIEW

Setting priorities

Three Eastern Oregon legislators line out what they are backing in the 2022 short session

By ERICK PETERSON AND ANTONIO SIERRA
East Oregonian

SALEM — Eastern Oregon lawmakers looking at the upcoming legislative session are focusing their efforts on more money for ranchers who lose livestock to wolves, increasing consumer protection and taking on illegal marijuana farms in Southern Oregon.

Rep. Bobby Levy, R-Echo, Rep. Greg Smith, R-Heppner, and Sen. Bill Hansell, R-Athena, told the EO Media Group about their priorities for the 2022 short session that begins Feb. 1 and must end by March 10.

Wolf bill drawing Levy's attention

Levy named two bills as most important to her, starting with House Bill 4127, a million-dollar ask for the Wolf Management Compensation and Proactive Trust Fund.



Levy

"Right now, we have already close to \$800,000 worth of cattle losses and missing livestock, not to mention all the incremental costs that go along when wolves have been chasing animals," she said, adding animals have suffered "continued weight loss, low birth rates and more because of wolves."



Smith



Hansell

She also is big on HB 4154, a \$400,000 request to provide the La Grande Airport with new fuel tanks.

Levy said she will be co-sponsoring bills as well, including HB 4022 to put course curriculum on school websites, and HB 4042, which would require doctors who prescribe drugs for chemical abortions to provide "certain information" to their patients. She said she also is adding her name to bills concerning animal predator control, a salmon habitat credit program and gun-free zone liability.

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Ben Lonergan/East Oregonian

An Elite Taxi taxicab on Thursday, Jan. 20, 2022, navigates Southwest Court Avenue in Pendleton near Roy Raley Park. Pendleton's lone taxi company faces opposition from members of the public who want the city to allow ride-hailing companies to operate in town.

A call for ride-hailing

Uber drivers lobby Pendleton for OK to operate; local taxi company pushes back

By ANTONIO SIERRA
East Oregonian

PENDLETON — Only one business in Pendleton has the authority to charge passengers to get from Point A to Point B. But a group of residents are pushing the Pendleton City Council to allow Uber to compete with the city's only taxi company for in-town rides.

At a Tuesday, Jan. 18, city council meeting, Alicia Reynen approached the podium

RIDE-HAILING VS. RIDE-SHARING

According to The Associated Press, ride-hailing services such as Uber and Lyft let people use smartphone apps to book and pay for a private car service or, in some cases, a taxi. They also may be called ride-booking services. Ride-sharing, however, refers to app-based services that let people book a shared shuttle. And Zipcar and similar companies are short-term car rental services.

would be in line with the city's mission statement, which encourages economic vitality and opportunity.

"Pendleton would benefit extremely from the services and friendly competition is always good," she said. "I believe your mission statement is true and the city holds to it. I'm asking the city transportation department to join me, to allow Uber into town."

'Let's make a change for the here and now'

Alicia Reynen's arguments are echoed by a Change.org petition started by her husband, Jesse Reynen. As of 3:30 p.m. on Friday, Jan. 21, the online petition had attracted 272 signatures.

In the petition, Jesse Reynen wrote they're seeking to update the city's law,

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Marcus Whitman statue up for debate

Editor's Note: This is Part 1 of a two-part article about the statue of Marcus Whitman on public display at Whitman College, Walla Walla. Part 2 is scheduled to run in the Thursday, Jan. 27, edition of the East Oregonian and focuses on arguments in favor of keeping the statue in place.

By EMMY DINMAN
Walla Walla Union-Bulletin

WALLA WALLA — More than a dozen members of the Walla Walla community and others spoke in support or in opposition to the removal of a statue of pioneer Marcus Whitman during a recent meeting of the city arts commission.

The statue of Whitman, the physician and missionary who established a mission nearly 200 years ago just west of what is now the city of Walla Walla, stands on the campus of Whitman College, which bears the figure's name.

Whitman has come under renewed scrutiny in recent years for his role in the colonization of the region, helping to establish the Oregon Trail and the introduction of a measles outbreak that killed Native peoples. In 2019, a vandal defaced the statue with spray paint, misspell-



Greg Lehman, Walla Walla Union-Bulletin, File

The Marcus Whitman statue at the corner of East Main Street and Boyer Avenue in Walla Walla, September 2020.

ing the word "genocide" on its base.

Still, other members of the community oppose removing the statue, arguing doing so erases the legacy of a founding father of the region who sought to heal the sick.


The arts commission meeting Wednesday, Jan. 19, came in response to a request to deaccession, or remove, the statue of Whitman that was started by Emily Tillotson, a professor at Walla Walla University.

That process, which allows a city resident to request reconsideration of any piece of public art the city owns, was created specifically in response to complaints about the statue of Whitman, Deputy City Manager Elizabeth Chamberlain previously told the Walla Walla Union-Bulletin.

In 2020, a local team of art researchers proposed removing the statue of Whitman and relocating it to Fort Walla Walla Museum.

"The statue tells us a lot, and it has a rich and fascinating history, but again, that history is not the history of Marcus Whitman, it is not the history of the Walla Walla Valley, and it's not the history of Whitman College," Libby Miller,

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