

# Local & State

KATE BROWN, RE-ELECTED IN NOVEMBER, WILL BE INAUGURATED ON JAN. 14

## Governor backs lower blood alcohol level law, talks taxes, fed shutdown

By Gary A. Warner  
WesCom News Service

SALEM — Gov. Kate Brown endorsed lowering the maximum blood alcohol level for drunken driving and talked about the impact of the federal government shutdown Thursday during her first press conference of 2019.

In a telephone interview with members of the state capital press corps, Brown also underlined her hopes for the upcoming session of the Legislature.

Brown will be inaugurated for her new term as governor Jan. 14. The 80th Oregon Legislative Assembly will begin Jan. 22 with sessions of the state House and Senate.

A leading source of concern for now is the partial shutdown of the federal government as President Donald Trump and the Democratic-controlled House are in a stalemate over Trump's demand for funding for a border wall with Mexico.

"We are watching very closely as Congress continues to renegotiate," said Brown, a Democrat.

In Oregon, about 9,000 federal employees have been affected by the shutdown, Brown said. "We are reaching out to make sure they have the resources they need."

Brown said she saw the impact of the federal shutdown while recently snowshoeing on federal lands near Mount Washington. Toilets were overflowing, and trash had not been removed. She said she asked Oregon State Parks and Recreation to help where it can.

"We got a call into parks to make sure some of the facilities are kept up," Brown said.

Her staff is also in touch with the state's Native American tribes, who have seen federal services curtailed by the shutdown.

Brown said she was worried an extended fight between Trump and Congress could hurt Oregonians who rely on the timely delivery of federal resources.

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*"I will say that if the shutdown continues we are going to see gaps in funding."*

— Oregon Gov. Kate Brown



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### State legislative session

Asked about some of the proposals for legislation expected to be introduced in the new session, Brown said she was still studying most of the proposals.

Brown did endorse an expected bill by Senate President Peter Courtney, D-Salem, to reduce the maximum allowable blood alcohol limit for drivers from the current 0.08 percent to 0.05 percent. The lower number was suggested as the standard by the National Transportation Safety Board in 2013. This year, Utah became the first state to enact the 0.05 percent limit.

"I think it sounds like the right way to go," Brown said. She said she would work with Courtney to encourage the bill's passage in the Legislature.

Opponents of the lower limit say it will turn casual drinkers into criminals, but Brown said she believed attitudes toward drinking and driving are changing.

"My experience is somewhat limited in this arena," Brown said, "but the dinner party I was at New Year's Eve, everybody who was driving was a designated driver and not drinking." Brown added, "I think we are seeing a huge cultural shift."

Brown said most of her current focus for 2019 is on her own budget proposal, unveiled late last year. It includes initiatives on K-12 education, health care, affordable housing and climate change.

### On climate change

"We are seeing in every community around the state the impact of climate change," Brown said. As examples, she pointed to wildfires and the

crabbing season that was delayed a month because crabs were too small.

Brown said she supported the concept of Oregon creating a cap-and-trade system that would require major polluters to cut emissions or purchase waivers from the state. Democrats in the Legislature have proposed a "Clean Energy Jobs Bill" that would create a carbon "cap-and-invest" program that would use the money received from waivers to promote environmental policies, including the creation of jobs in solar, wind and other "clean energy" projects.

Even though Oregon's carbon emissions are a relatively small part of the national or world pollution problem, Brown said Oregon taking up the issue would help "break the logjam" on the issue.

Brown said she would like to see Oregon join with California, other states and Canadian provinces to extend the buying and selling of waivers across state lines and borders.

### On housing

House Speaker Tina Kotek, D-Portland, has said she will introduce legislation that would bar cities over 10,000 residents from enacting single-family-only zoning. Brown stopped short of endorsing the bill, but said something had to be done about the lack of affordable housing in much of the state.

"From 2000 to 2015, we underbuilt by 150,000 homes," Brown said. "We have to make sure we are working to build the supply of housing."

### On marijuana

Sen. Floyd Prozanski, D-Eugene, says he will introduce legislation to allow the sale of Oregon marijuana to states where cannabis is

legal. Prozanski said the move would relieve the oversupply of marijuana within Oregon by sending it to legal markets instead of onto the illegal black market.

Brown said she had not seen the specifics of the bill yet, but said the federal government needs to "tackle the banking issues before we think about growing to other markets."

While 33 states have legalized cannabis for medical or recreational use, the federal government classifies it as a Schedule I drug "with no currently accepted medical use and a high potential for abuse." That puts marijuana in the same category as heroin and LSD.

One major problem for legal cannabis growers is that the classification bars much banking that comes under federal regulation.

### On federal action

Brown said she hoped that having the Democrats in control of the U.S. House while Republicans control the Senate might encourage debate over voting access across the country. She endorsed the idea — put forward by U.S. Sen. Ron Wyden, D-Ore. — that the best way to ensure ballot access was to use Oregon's vote-by-mail system.

"That would be extraordinary," Brown said.

While the partisan split in Washington, D.C., seems like a recipe for inaction, Brown said she saw some possible areas of cooperation. She singled out infrastructure improvements on transportation, dams and expanding access to broadband as examples.

### On Oregon's economy

Asked if she was worried about a possible recession, Brown jokingly interrupted. "Don't say those words!" she said.

Brown said Oregon's economy remains solid.

"We've certainly been given some signs of softening, but that is the same thing they told us a year ago," she said.

## LOCAL BRIEFING

### Volunteers sought to serve on review board for children in foster care

Baker County residents are needed to serve as volunteers on a board that reviews the cases for every child in foster care in the county.

The Citizen Review Board reviews every foster child's case every six months as required by state law.

The boards consist of three to seven volunteers who are appointed by the Chief Justice of the Oregon Supreme Court. Board members are given case files to review in advance. They serve on a panel for one day every other month to review foster care cases.

More information is available by calling John Nichols at 541-233-8142 or by email at john.a.nichols@ojd.state.or.us

### Emotions Anonymous support group starts meeting Wednesday in Baker City

Emotions Anonymous, a 12-step program that helps people experiencing emotional difficulties, will meet on Wednesdays from 2 p.m. to 3 p.m. starting Wednesday, Jan. 9, at the Eldon Court Apartments, 1645 Eldon Ave. There is no cost. For more information email Chantel Nichols at cnichols@dninc.org

### Jared Miller earns perfect 4.0 GPA at South Dakota State University

BROOKINGS, S.D. — Jared Christopher Miller of Baker City earned a perfect 4.0 GPA for the fall 2018 semester at South Dakota State University.

Miller is a student in the Jerome J. Lahr College of Engineering. He is the son of Chris and Heidi Miller of Baker City.

### Baker City Parks and Recreation Board meeting Jan. 22

Baker City's Parks and Recreation Board will meet Jan. 22 at 5:15 p.m. at City Hall, 1655 First St.

Agenda items include updating the community survey for the city's parks master plan, and a design for a sign at Central Park.

### Free six-week workshops for small business owners planned this winter

The Northeast Oregon Economic Development District is offering a free six-week series of workshops designed to help entrepreneurs and small business owners.

Lisa Dawson has taught the "Business Foundations" workshops for more than a decade.

The classes will take place on Wednesdays 6 p.m. to 9 p.m. at Launch Pad Baker, 2019 Main St. The schedule:

- Jan. 16, 23 and 30
- Feb. 6, 13 and 27 (no class on Feb. 20)

Topics that will be covered:

- Gaining Perspective: Consider your business concept.
  - Laying the Foundation: Define line of business and analyze financial essentials, from overhead costs to break-even point.
  - Getting into the Flow: Cover the financial essentials of cash flow, sales forecasting, and financial documents.
  - Mission and Markets: Revisit mission, discuss market research, and identify competitors in order to align with target markets.
  - Get the Word Out: Discuss creative marketing strategies and give peer feedback on marketing materials.
  - Goodbye and Good Luck: Present your business plan, share final pitch, and plan for next steps.
- Registration is required by Jan. 11. To register go to [www.neoedd.org](http://www.neoedd.org)

### Baker City Farmers Market annual membership meeting set for Jan. 22

The annual membership meeting for the Baker City Farmers Market is set for Jan. 22 at 6 p.m. at the Baker County Library, 2400 Resort St.

## State investigation finds Capitol a hostile workplace

### The Associated Press

SALEM — An Oregon Bureau of Labor and Industries investigation released Thursday finds state lawmakers didn't do enough to stop sexual harassment in the Capitol. As a result, the five-month investigation concludes the Capitol is a hostile workplace.

In an interview with BOLI investigators, Sen. Sara Gelsler, D-Corvallis, described feeling marginalized by how some of the state's most powerful Democrats and key legislative leaders reacted after she accused a fellow lawmaker.

Gelsler accused then-Sen. Jeff Kruse of touching her

breast and placing his hand on her thigh under a dais.

Gelsler told BOLI that Senate Majority Leader Ginny Burdick, D-Portland, suggested she was "grandstanding" by speaking out against Kruse. House Speaker Tina Kotek, D-Portland, reportedly told Gelsler it was hard to move forward with her complaint because people in the Capitol consider Gelsler unlikable and that Gelsler had made the sexual harassment complaint all about her. Gelsler told state investigators that Senate President Peter Courtney yelled at her in a cafe when the two were discussing harassment.

Sen. Jackie Winters, R-Salem, who at the time was the Senate Republican Leader, allegedly told Gelsler she needed to "learn how to deal" with working with Kruse.

Kotek disagreed with the report's characterization of her conversation with Gelsler. Kotek said she has always been personally supportive of Gelsler, who she said showed "tremendous courage" in coming forward to report Kruse's behavior.

"The fact that she came forward is going to make the Capitol a better place to work, and we're going to make improvements," Kotek said.

The report echoes Labor Commissioner Brad Avakian's initial complaint that top lawmakers haven't done enough to curb harassment they knew or should have known was occurring.

As the complainant in the case, Avakian didn't participate in the investigation. The investigation dates back to Aug. 1, when Avakian took the extraordinary step of filing a complaint with his own agency alleging that Courtney and Kotek knew or should have known about complaints about Kruse and the "broader sexually hostile environment in the Capitol." Avakian's

complaint also named seven other individuals including the Legislature's human resources chief and top lawyer, plus the entire Legislature and Department of Administrative Services, which handles human resources for much of the state government.

Typically, findings like those in the new report would open the Legislature up to penalties under BOLI's regulatory process, which has seen record-

setting settlements during Avakian's decade-long tenure atop the bureau. But Avakian, a Democrat like those he has accused of letting harassment fester, is about to leave office. On Monday, Labor Commissioner-elect Val Hoyle, a former state House Democrat who is to be sworn in Monday, will take control of the department and will likely dictate whether the bureau seeks consequences for the Legislature.

### Weekly Specials January 7-13

Monday	Meatloaf.....	\$8.95
Tuesday	Lasagna.....	\$8.95
Wednesday	Liver & Onions.....	\$8.95
Thursday	Chicken Fried Steak.....	\$9.95
Friday	All You Can Eat Mini Shrimp.....	\$9.95
	Steak & Shrimp.....	\$10.95
	Pan Fried Oysters.....	\$10.50
	Prime Rib.....	\$13.95
Saturday	NY Steak.....	\$13.95
	Prime Rib.....	\$13.95
Sunday	Baked Chicken.....	\$9.50/8.95 sr

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Sunday Buffet includes Chocolate Fountain

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