Less expansive bill backed by House speaker remains

BY NICOLE HAYDEN

The Oregonian

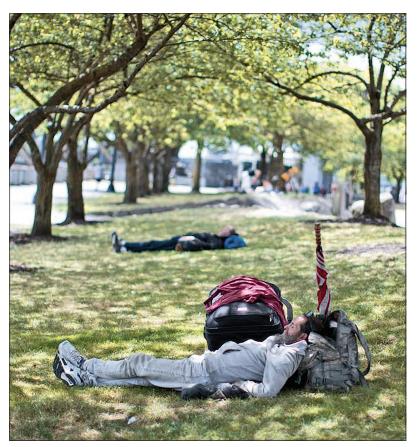
A bill that would have prohibited Oregon cities from forcing people experiencing homelessness to stop sitting, sleeping or standing almost anywhere on public property died in committee Tuesday.

House Bill 2367, sponsored by four Democratic freshman lawmakers, had overwhelming support from homeless agencies and advocacy groups across the state including the ACLU of Oregon, the White Bird Clinic in Eugene and the Stop the Sweeps Coalition in Portland. A handful of individuals experiencing homelessness had also signed up to testify in support of the bill.

It would have required government officials to leave alone people on sidewalks, public plazas, parks and elsewhere unless they were blocking pedestrian or vehicle traffic.

However, committee Chair Janelle Bynum, D-Happy Valley, allowed for only three people to speak during a brief public hearing Tuesday before time ran out without a vote being called. That meant the bill died, as Tuesday was the deadline for bills to get voted out of a committee in the House or Senate.

But a similar, less expansive plan to allow people experiencing homelessness to occupy many public spaces remains in play with 2½ months left in lawmakers' session. That bill is backed by House Speaker Tina Kotek, a powerful Portland Democrat, giving it strong odds of passage. House Bill 3115 reaffirms that Oregonians can sit, lie, sleep and keep warm and dry on public property in most circumstances. The Judiciary Committee approved it 6-3, and it is sched-



Beth Nakamura/The Oregonian

Legislation that would have stopped cities from enacting bans against sitting, standing or sleeping on public property has failed to move out of a committee in the Legislature. However, a similar bill is still alive.

uled for a vote by the full House.

Bill to allow homeless broad use

That bill was a direct response to a 2018 homelessness case decided by the 9th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals. The appeals court said governments cannot criminalize conduct that is unavoidable as a result of experiencing homelessness if there isn't enough safe indoor sleeping spaces for anyone without such accommodations.

While the court ruling could be overturned by the U.S. Supreme Court, the bill Kotek is championing would protect homeless rights by changing state law. The bill would also force Oregon cities to update their sit/lie and camping ordinances.

Both bills drew support from similar advocacy groups. But advocates argued that House Bill 2367 was broader and more accommodating. It would have outlawed harassment directed at individuals experiencing homelessness and allowed people subjected to such conduct to recoup civil fines from their harassers. It also would have protected a broader range of conduct, including praying and eating or sharing food, in public

MENTAL HEALTH LEGISLATION

Providers would be required to tell parents about teens considering suicide

BY CHRIS LEHMAN

The Oregonian

Mental health professionals would be required to inform parents or guardians if they become aware a teen is considering suicide under a bill passed Tuesday in the Oregon House.

Providers are already permitted to share this information with parents and many do, said Rep. Ron Noble, R-McMinnville. "However, there are also many behavioral health providers who choose not to involve a parent or guardian, even when it may be clinically appropriate," he said.

The House approved the bill 57 to 1. It now heads to the Oregon Senate. The only vote in opposition came from Rep. Marty Wilde, D-Eugene. "In my opinion, the Legislature should not seek to override a medical

House Bill 3139 does allow mental health providers to withhold the information if they "reasonably believe" the teen is at risk of abuse, or if they otherwise believe the disclosure "is not in the minor's best interest."

practitioner's judgment," he said.

That exception is meant to allay the concerns of groups like the Oregon Psychiatric Physicians Association, which said that in some cases, teens receiving a suicide risk assessment "would have been harmed by their parents or other family members if they knew their child sought help." The organization said this is especially true for LGBTQ teens. In Oregon, teens 15 and older can seek and receive medical care, including mental health care, without their parents' knowledge.

The potential for a teen to be harmed by a parent after getting information from their mental health provider can be tough to discern, said Rep. Jack Zika, R-Redmond. "I think it's very important the provider knows what kind of home life (the teen) has when they go home, and not make the situation worse."

In 2019, suicide was the second leading cause of death among Oregonians age 15-24, according to the Oregon Health Authority, trailing only deaths from unintended injuries.

Oregon bill aims to preserve teacher diversity during layoffs

The House Education Committee voted unanimously Tuesday to have school districts prioritize the demographic makeup of their teaching corps when conducting layoffs.

The committee sent House Bill 2001 to the House Rules Committee, a move that allows the bill to be modified, killed or given a thumbs up to proceed to the full House as is.

Roughly 10% of Oregon teachers are white, while 40% of Oregon students are not, according to state figures.

The proposed legislation takes aim at "first in, last out" layoff policies common among public districts.

– The Oregonian

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tion may be obtained from the court records, the Personal Representative or the following-named attorney for the Personal Representative. DATE OF FIRST PUB-LICATION: April 8,

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rie G. Fielder Karrie G. Fielder, Per-Represensonal tative c/o Sean M. Neary Attorney at Neary Attorney at Law Fitch & Neary, PC 210 SW 5th Street, Suite 2 Redmond OR 97756

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April 15, 2021. KARIL A. MALLORY Personal Representative c/o Steven D. Bryant

Attorney at Law Bryant Emerson, LLP PO Box 457 Redmond OR 97756

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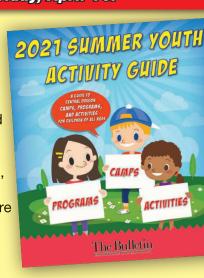
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