



The Blue Mountain EAGLE

Grant County's newspaper since 1868



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Wednesday, June 2, 2021

153rd Year • No. 22 • 22 Pages • \$1.50

MyEagleNews.com



Brogan McKrola

McKrola indicted on 20 new sex crimes

Charges against at least nine alleged victims carry mandatory minimum sentence of 120 years

By Sean Hart
Blue Mountain Eagle

A Mt. Vernon man who was on pretrial release for sex crime charges is back in jail, facing 20 new sex-related charges from 2015-2020.

Brogan C. McKrola, 22, is accused of six counts of first-degree rape, one count of first-degree kidnapping, one count of first-degree sodomy, one count of first-degree unlawful sexual penetration, one count of attempted first-degree sodomy, four counts of first-degree sexual abuse, one count of second-degree sexual abuse, three counts of third-degree sexual abuse, one count of luring a minor and one count of harassment, along with two counts of first-degree aggravated animal abuse, committed between June 1, 2015, and Dec. 4, 2020, according to a secret indictment filed May 25 in Grant County Circuit Court by Special Deputy District Attorney Tobias Tingleaf, a senior assistant attorney general with the Oregon Department of Justice.

The new indictment lists at least nine different alleged victims, six for whom the related charges were by "forcible compulsion," two who were "incapable of consent by reason of mental incapacitation" and two who were minors at the time of the alleged offenses.

Thirteen of the charges are Measure 11 offenses, which carry mandatory minimum sentences of at least six years with no possibility for any sentence reduction. If convicted on all of the new Measure 11 charges, McKrola faces more than 99 years in prison.

The animal abuse charges allegedly occurred between July 1, 2020, and Sept. 30, 2020, and involved the unlawful and malicious killing and torturing of a porcupine, according to the indictment.

Bail was set at \$870,000 — \$50,000 for each class A and B felony

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Passport pushback



OPPONENTS SLAM BROWN'S PLAN TO REQUIRE SHOWING VACCINATION CARDS

By Gary A. Warner
Oregon Capital Bureau

Gov. Kate Brown is getting blowback from political opponents who are leveraging the actions of her allies in an attempt to derail a new state policy requiring Oregon residents to show proof of vaccination at some venues and businesses with more relaxed COVID-19 rules.

Brown had announced the new policy earlier this month as a new way to build confidence in when and where someone might be exposed to COVID-19, which has killed over 591,000 Americans since last year.

"This disease remains dangerous for those in communities with high rates of unvaccinated individuals," Brown said. "That's why I'm encouraging all Oregonians to roll up your sleeves, take your shot, and get a chance to change your life."

While Brown has framed the issue as one of public health, opponents say it's about privacy and personal choice.

The 23-member House Republican Caucus wrote to Brown on Thursday calling on her to reverse plans for what they called a "vac-

cination passport" — a term popular among conservatives to describe the COVID-19 inoculation certificates approved by the Centers for Disease Control.

House Minority Leader Christine Drazan, R-Canby, and the rest of the caucus invoked recent decisions by two Brown allies: Washington Gov. Jay Inslee and California Gov. Gavin Newsom.

Inslee and Newsom administration officials have said they will not require residents of their states to produce proof of inoculation in circumstances where entry to a venue or building requires the person be vaccinated against COVID-19.

The House Republican letter said Oregon should be in step with its neighbors as it has been on many — though not all — COVID-19 policies.

"Oregon's response to COVID-19 should not be an outlier on the West Coast," the Republicans wrote. "We are reaching the end of the pandemic and should be lifting mandates, not adding new ones. It is time to place our trust in Oregonians again. They have earned it."

Brown has said showing certification is a small inconvenience to ensure that someone who might spread a disease doesn't get close to

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Eagle file photo

The Moderna COVID-19 vaccine at the Grant County Health Department.

"OREGON'S RESPONSE TO COVID-19 SHOULD NOT BE AN OUTLIER ON THE WEST COAST. WE ARE REACHING THE END OF THE PANDEMIC AND SHOULD BE LIFTING MANDATES, NOT ADDING NEW ONES. IT IS TIME TO PLACE OUR TRUST IN OREGONIANS AGAIN. THEY HAVE EARNED IT."

—A letter from Oregon House Republicans

LOBBYING FOR LOGGING

Senator pushing for \$1 billion more per year for more aggressive forest management to reduce wildfire risk



Contributed photo

Firefighters from a Umatilla National Forest Type 6 engine dig up and extinguish remaining hot spots along the line of the Matlock Fire in 2020.

By Jayson Jacoby
EO Media Group

U.S. Sen. Jeff Merkley said this week that he will lobby the Biden administration to spend at least \$1 billion more per year for logging, prescribed burning and other work designed to make federal forests in Oregon and elsewhere less vulnerable to wildfires during a future when climate change is likely to heighten that threat.

"Forests are the heart of Oregon's identity," Merkley, a Democrat, said during an online press conference on Thursday, May

27. "We have got to do a lot to restore our forests, to make much more substantial investments in forest management."

Merkley said he hopes to push his campaign for more aggressive forest management from his position as chairman of the Senate Interior, Environment and Related Agencies Subcommittee, which he has held since February 2021.

Merkley convened an appropriations hearing on May 26 where he advocated for the federal government to boost spending on forest management.

Vicki Christiansen, chief of

the U.S. Forest Service, the federal agency that manages much of the public forests in Northeast Oregon, testified before the subcommittee.

Merkley said one of his chief goals is to double federal spending, from \$40 million to \$80 million, for "collaborative" projects on national forests.

Those are projects that Merkley said are designed to bring together traditional "rivals," such as environmental groups and timber industry representatives, to work together to promote work

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