

May 5, 2021



81st Legislative Assembly 2021

State of emergency extended + political backlash

On April 29, Governor Brown [extended the state of emergency](#) due to the ongoing pandemic, however her tone was notably different from previous iterations of this renewal. The executive order will be in place through June 28, however Brown notes, "the day is approaching when my emergency orders can eventually be lifted."

As was the case after the last redeclaration, there was again political backlash within the Oregon Legislature. Senate Republicans [issued a statement](#) during the floor session on Wednesday. Citing the governor "flex[ing] her unchecked power by reimposing draconian, undemocratic lockdowns," the caucus required bills be read in their entirety and to not meet for floor sessions after 5pm. It is not clear how long this tactic will persist, but as of now, the Senate was able to get through all the bills on the docket without calling for additional floor sessions.

Local Community Investments

Legislative leadership has announced that state legislators will be allowed to submit up to four (4) projects for one-time funding. Do you have an idea for a project? Contact Marty at OPCA (mcarty@orpca.org) if you'd like help contacting your state lawmaker.

Redistricting

The once-a-decade process of redistricting – the redrawing of state legislative and congressional districts must be completed by the Oregon Legislature by September 27. If the process is not completed by then, the Secretary of State then takes charge.

Members of the House and Senate committees on redistricting received notice on April 26 from the U.S. Census Bureau that Oregon is one of six states (Texas will add two) that will add a congressional seat. There are seven states that are losing one seat. According to the new data, our state population is 4,237,256, which is almost 400,000 more residents than in 2010. The data does not get more granular than total state population, so we do not know which parts of the state are most impacted by this population growth. The Census Bureau will release more data by August 15

Legislative leadership has given notice to the legislature of a special session during the week of September 20. That session will culminate in either the approval of new lines, or a passing of the buck to the Secretary of State.

Policy committees face looming deadline

Friday, May 28 marks the deadline for committees to hold work sessions on second chamber measures. This is the last day for policy committees to move measures introduced in the other chamber (i.e. Senate bills in the House, House bills in the Senate) out of committee. The deadline does not apply to Ways & Means, Revenue, Rules, and other joint committees. Many of the bills OPCA supports are now in Senate committees. The unprecedented volume of bills introduced and the complexities of a largely remote legislative session are two factors that have contributed to the backlog.

White House

President Biden announced American Families Plan

President Biden [announced](#) his \$1.8 trillion American Families Plan focusing on expanding education and childcare and will be partially funded by tax increases on wealthy Americans. The Plan omits major health care reforms championed by Biden and Congressional Democrats, including Medicare and drug pricing reform. The plan would extend the ACA premiums tax credits from the American Rescue Plan.

Capitol Hill

Senate earmarks

As of last week, the U.S. Senate will consider requests for Congressionally directed spending through the Appropriations Committee. This means qualified organizations can make requests for Congress to fund specific projects, something that had been banned since 2011 (aka earmarks). This takes effect immediately and funding awards will be made in the FY 2022 budget, which hopefully is signed into law toward the end of this year. The Senate is already well into the appropriations process for FY'22, so we find ourselves on a tight timeline.

Senator Merkley and Senator Wyden are asking for your ideas for priority projects that would benefit from federal funding. They are looking for projects with a big impact and wide community support. They don't yet have guidance on the amounts that will be awarded, but best guess is most awards will be in the \$50,000 - \$500,000 range, with maybe a couple projects awarded upwards of \$1-2 million. They expect funding requests for things like transportation projects, buildings/facilities, broadband buildout, utility infrastructure, but are not limited to those.

If your health center would like to submit a project for consideration, please contact Marty at OPCA (mcarty@orpca.org).

Deadline to submit projects is May 14.