



## BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

1300 NW Wall Street, Bend, Oregon  
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FOR RECORDING STAMP ONLY

# DESCHUTES COUNTY LEGISLATIVE UPDATE

7:00 AM

FRIDAY, MAY 9, 2025

ZOOM MEETING

A legislative work session was held on Friday, May 9, 2025 at 7:00 a.m. via Zoom Virtual Meeting Platform.

### Deschutes County Attendance:

x	Commissioner Anthony DeBone, Chair	x	Nick Lelack, County Administrator
x	Commissioner Patti Adair, Vice Chair		Erik Kropp, Deputy County Administrator
x	Commissioner Phil Chang	x	Whitney Hale, Deputy County Administrator
	Kristie Bollinger, Property Manager		Tim Brownell, Director Solid Waste
	Sara Crosswhite, Director 9-1-1		Steve Dennison, County Clerk
x	Chris Doty, Director Road Department	x	David Doyle, Legal Counsel
	Charles Fadeley, Justice of the Peace	x	Janice Garceau, Director Health Services
x	Stephen Gunnels, District Attorney		Peter Gutowsky, Director Community Development
x	Holly Harris, Director Behavioral Health		Geoff Hinds, Director Fair & Expo
	Deevy Holcomb, Director Community Justice		Heather Kaisner, Director Public Health
	Sean Kirk, Manager Veteran's Services		Bill Kuhn, Treasurer
x	Tom Kuhn, Public Health Program Manager		Scot Langton, Assessor
	Tania Mahood, Director Information Technology		Kevin Moriarty, Forester
	Elizabeth Pape, Internal Auditor	x	Jen Patterson, Strategic Initiatives Manager
x	Brenda Fritsvold, BOCC Executive Assistant		Lee Randall, Director Facilities

	Kim Riley, Senior Assistant Legal Counsel	x	Robert Tintle, Chief Financial Officer
	Kent van der Kamp, Sheriff		Aaron Wells, Undersheriff
	Heather Herauf, Procurement Manager		Daniel Kieffer, Budget & Financial Planning Analyst
	Paul Partridge, Manager Behavioral Health IDD Program		
<b>Others Present:</b>			
x	Doug Riggs, Director NW Policy Advocates		Corey Barber, Outreach Director NW Policy Advocates
	Emma Innes, Associate NW Policy Advocates		

### 1. Welcome

Chair DeBone called the meeting to order at 7:01 a.m.

### 2. Commissioner Updates

Commissioner DeBone was in Salem on Tuesday and Wednesday of this week, where he met with Doug Riggs and attended an Oregon public safety radio conference.

### 3. Updates from NW Policy Advocates

Doug Riggs provided a brief update. We are 7 weeks out from the end of the session. The revenue forecast is scheduled to be released on May 14, and there is much speculation surrounding it. Following its release, allocations to Ways and Means subcommittees will be determined.

The Capital Construction subcommittee meets today on lottery bonding. CORE3 representatives will testify. Commissioner DeBone noted that Holly Harris is registered to testify related to a regional child psychiatric facility, but she noted it is unlikely that time will allow for remote testimony, and so she will submit written testimony.

Riggs reported that today is the second chamber deadline. The transportation package has not yet been released, but he has been told that it will include some accountability measures. A reason for the delay is that there is no supermajority in the House, and transportation tax increases will require a supermajority vote.

Commissioner Chang said there is an alternative framework put forth by House Republicans that calls for substantial cuts, including but not limited to, eliminating

state funding for public transit, Connect Oregon grants, and funding for EV charging infrastructure. Partisan drama surrounds the transportation package.

Riggs reported that the behavioral health bill, **SB 610**, moved out of committee this week. The pace in Ways and Means will accelerate moving forward.

#### **4. Review Bill Tracker Report by Department**

Jen Patterson highlighted **HB 3962** for Board consideration. This is the replacement bill for the Transient Lodging Tax (TLT) bill, **HB 3556**. Riggs noted that **HB 3962** had a hearing yesterday, with persuasive testimony from smaller cities struggling with tourism related impacts.

**HB 3962** requires the Legislative Revenue Officer to study issues of local taxation, submit a report and include recommendations for legislation. Robert Tintle noted there is a Dash 2 amendment which pulls in some language from **HB 3556** and expands allowable uses to include public safety and local infrastructure. He noted that the City of Bend Mayor Keebler testified in favor of the bill at yesterday's hearing, and most cities and counties were in favor of the bill. Notably, the mayor of Coos Bay spoke in opposition.

Responding to Commissioner Chang, Tintle said the bill expands the definition of "tourism facilities" and enables the use of TLT dollars for public safety or infrastructure-related projects that would have otherwise gone exclusively towards tourism marketing. Riggs said it gives local jurisdictions options for flexibility and is not a mandate. Patterson noted the Dash 2 amendment applies to taxes from 2023 onward.

Commissioner Chang wishes to take a position that mirrored the Board's position on **HB 3556**, one of support with amendments, to apply only to future taxation. Riggs highlighted the flexibility offered to local jurisdictions in implementing this bill. Board position: priority 2/support.

Commissioner Adair reported that Economic Development for Central Oregon (EDCO) and Association of Oregon Counties (AOC) are both in opposition to **SB 916**. This bill would allow all striking workers, both public and private, to seek unemployment benefits. She suggested to Rep. Kropf that we let Washington state be the pilot project for this bill and wait to see how it plays out.

Responding to Commissioner Chang, since the inception of the unemployment benefits fund, public employees have not paid into it but should the bill pass, they would be required to do so. Riggs said this bill passed out of the Senate several weeks ago and is now in the House, noting there is much opposition.

Commissioner DeBone directed staff to draft a letter of opposition for Board signature. Whitney Hale noted that Cam Sparks drafted a budget analysis on the fiscal impact of this bill, equating to \$458,000 per week for Deschutes County. Board position: priority 2/oppose.

Patterson said that a letter related to **HB 3069** was sent to our legislative delegation following Monday's Board meeting. Today at 8:30 a.m. there will be a call with Rep. Kropf to discuss **HB 3069** and amendments. Among others, in attendance will be DA Gunnels, Holly Harris, Nick Lelack, Deevy Holcomb and herself.

Yesterday, Patterson routed a letter related to the Board's preferred route for Pacific Power's Blueprint South project. Commissioner Adair noted this letter is due today. Patterson asked for Board feedback on the letter. Once signed, she will get this out today.

Responding to Commissioner Chang, Riggs said a package of wildfire funding bills is in the process of moving out of Ways and Means while appropriate funding mechanisms are determined.

Tom Kuhn was pleased to report that **HB 2954**, the substance use and abuse prevention funding bill, has a work session scheduled for May 14 and credited their advocacy efforts.

DA Gunnels said that **SB 277** has advanced through the legislature and is important for prosecutors as it allows them to extradite foreign nationals back to the U.S. to face prosecution for serious crimes. It will now go to the governor's desk to be signed into law. This is a big win, as current Oregon laws make this a difficult process.

**Next Meeting:** The next virtual legislative update meeting is scheduled for Friday, May 16 at 8:00 a.m., immediately preceded by a virtual legislative delegation meeting at 7:30 a.m.

**Adjourn:** Chair DeBone adjourned the meeting at 7:52 a.m.

*Respectfully Submitted by:*

  
**Angie Powers, Administrative Assistant**