

Summer Magazine 2021

Oregon Original by OFA President Gabe Zirkle

SUMMER is Coming!

After the Easter Holiday, many Oregon counties went backwards, and the Governor saw fit to crush small business owners once again with restrictions. It is a “have no mercy” heavy hand on the restaurant, gym, and other sectors but the banner producing companies are making a killing to create messaging for those brave enough to navigate this yoyo business world.

The gasoline sector and convenience stores are picking up volumes and sales. We anticipate a surge in growth with people getting out and DRIVING! We are feeding families with our fresh and not so healthy options and navigating the new Administration's approach to our Industry at large. The two biggest issues at hand: Getting employees to return to the work force at mini serve locations paying near minimum wage (lucky for them we have a mandatory increase coming in July of nearly \$1), and the dwindling fuel transportation driver pool that has been a monumental catastrophe headed our way for years. Driver shortages and increased traffic could prove to hurt us in the short and long run. A perfect storm, while the sun starts to shine a little longer!

Legislature

The Oregon Legislature is nearly three quarters of the way through its Legislative Session. The Legislature is set to adjourn (sine die) on June 27th. After the May Revenue Forecast, legislative budget writers will be in a race with the clock to finalize the state's biennial budget. Fortunately, Revenue estimates have been very good and balancing the budget should be a relatively straight forward exercise without needing new revenue and increased taxes.

Governor Announces Economic Recovery Efforts

According to the Governor's Press Release from March 23rd, the 10-Point Plan, which was developed with input from the Governor's Council of Economic Advisors and Racial Justice Council (RJC), builds on the work of local economic development districts across the state to help Oregon families and businesses. The Governor applies these principles for equitable and rapid economic recovery in her 10-Point Plan:

- Action #1: Investing in Oregon's hardest hit workers (those currently unemployed or underemployed)
- Action #2: Reinvesting in innovative housing
- Action #3: Supporting resilient rural communities
- Action #4: Supporting Oregon's workforce (those currently employed but struggling)
- Action #5: Creating opportunities for Oregonians (workforce development)
- Action #6: Getting small business back on its feet
- Action #7: Investing in Oregon's infrastructure
- Action #8: Oregonians investing in Oregon
- Action #9: Safely reopening Oregon's economy
- Action #10: Innovation in manufacturing

DEQ's Climate Protection Program

OFA has been serving on the DEQ's Climate Protection Program Rules Advisory Committee (RAC) over the last several months. DEQ is expected to produce a draft rule in June and a proposed rule sometime this fall. The rule will undoubtedly impact Oregon's fuel businesses and consumers. This will make Oregon the third west coast state to cap greenhouse gas emissions following California and now Washington.

Redistricting

In other news, the U.S. Census Bureau announced this week that Oregon will receive a sixth Congressional seat. The last time Oregon qualified for a new Congressional district was 1980. Since 2010 (the last US Census), Oregon has grown over 10%. This also means Oregon needs to redraw boundaries for Congressional Districts, as well as Legislative Districts.

Stay Safe and Drive Often, Gabriel Zirkle, President, OFA