



# The Capitol Granger

*Weekly news from your Grange lobbyist*

## Legislature sprints toward session's final day with whirlwind of activity

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The legislature now is in a race to pop out as many bills as possible before being required by law to close on July 10. Some senators even went so far as to work over the Independence Day holiday.

Both the full Senate and the Senate Committee on Rules were scheduled for meetings July 4. The rules committee meeting was for members to consider three bills for potential referral to the full Senate.

Legislators from both chambers were back to working feverishly the next day. The House passed a basket-load of new taxes on a 39 to 20 vote July 5. The taxes are in a transportation plan that's part of House Bill 2017. That bill was to go to the Senate on Thursday, where it needed approval by at least 18 senators.

The bill would raise more than \$5 billion for road and mass transit projects, but includes plans for taxes not seen in modern Oregon history. Among them are a

plan to impose tolls on I-5 and I-205 in Portland's tri-county region. The plan also creates a sales tax on cars and some bicycles, as well as hikes in state gas tax and vehicle registration fees, among various other taxes.

In other actions this week:

- The Joint Committee on Ways and Means sent House Bill 2038 to the House floor for a vote. The bill would set aside \$4.5 million for "farm-to-school" grants to help schools buy food grown or processed in Oregon. A vote on the bill is expected this week.
- The House of Representatives has so far failed to act on Senate Bill 181, which would impose new filing requirements for charities to keep property tax exemptions. The state Grange has joined other nonprofits across Oregon to fight for reasonable changes to this bill. Grangers at the state convention in Florence last week sent emails to legislators along with about 80 postcards that asked legislators to oppose the bill.
- The House Committee on Rules asked for passage of Senate Bill 719. That bill allows police to take and retain a knife, gun or other deadly weapon from a person judged to be a danger based on criteria including prior use of illegal drugs, driving under the influence, or whether the person tried to acquire a weapon in the last 180 days. The bill allows judges to hear from complainants outside the presence of the accused or their attorneys. The Senate approved the bill May 1 on a vote of 17 to 11.

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