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CAPITOL COMMENTS

January 12, 2021

2021 Oregon Legislature Gavels In

On Monday, the Oregon Legislature gavels in to organize for the 2021 legislative session, estimated to last six months. Legislators met at the Capitol in Salem to elect officers, adopt rules and first read bills. In a reminder of the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic, only a skeletal staff was present in the building, legislators were masked and socially distanced from one another, and the general public was not permitted into the building. Suffice it to say, it was a unique beginning to the legislative session, one being repeated in states across the nation.

Democrats, who continue to hold supermajorities in both the House (37 to 23) and Senate (18 to 12), reelected Representative **Tina Kotek** (D-Portland) and **Senator Peter Courtney** (D-Salem) to serve as their chambers' presiding officers. In addition to elections of presiding officers and adoption of procedural rules, approximately 1,800 bills were first read and will be assigned to House and Senate Committees for vetting. OBA is reviewing all the bills introduced this week and will track and engage on the banking industry's behalf with those proposals impacting our industry. When all is said and done, we anticipate that more than 3,000 bills will be introduced this session. Legislative hearings to vet bills may start in the latter part of January. [Click here](#) to access the bills introduced so far this session.

Given COVID-19, the legislature will be doing much of its work remotely during the first few months of the session. Committee work, in particular, will be done remotely with testimony being taken by video or telephone. Periodic floor sessions will take place during which members will vote. Attendance in the building is going to be extremely limited; legislative staff is encouraged to work from home as much as possible. The general public, including the lobby, will not be permitted in the building, at least for the first couple of months. The legislature will periodically review how things are going and will make changes as needed. While a largely "remote" legislature presents challenges, the OBA government relations team is prepared to for these unprecedented circumstances. We will be releasing *Capitol Comments* approximately every two weeks to keep bankers apprised of the latest during the session.

If you have any questions about the 2021 Oregon Legislative Session, please contact OBA Vice President and Government Affairs Director Kevin Christiansen at (503) 576-4123 or kchristiansen@oregonbankers.com.

Mark Your Calendar for OBA's Bankers Day at the Capitol

We encourage all bankers to mark their calendar for February 19, 2021, OBA's biennial Bankers Day at the Capitol. In light of the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic, we are holding this year's Bankers Day virtually. We will begin the day from 9 to 11 am meeting with legislative leaders to learn about the 2021 session and the issues that are up for consideration. This is a great opportunity for you and your bank to take the pulse of the legislature as they do their work.

Following the morning session, we will continue to celebrate Bankers Day with coordinated outreach to legislators.

There is no cost to join Bankers Day, but we do need you to register. You can sign up by [clicking here](#). If you have any questions about Bankers Day, please contact OBA's Vice President and Government Affairs Director Kevin Christiansen at (503) 576-4123 or kchristiansen@oregonbankers.com.



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