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CAPITOL COMMENTS

February 1, 2022

2022 “Short” Legislative Session Gavels In With New Leadership

The 2022 Oregon Legislature kicked off its 35-day session today with the swearing-in of legislators, selection of leadership, adoption of rules and introduction of more than 260 bills. The even-year short session is known for its extremely fast pace, quick deadlines and politically-charged atmosphere. Both houses of the legislature continue to be controlled by Democrat supermajorities, 37 to 23 in the House and 18 to 12 in the Senate. These supermajorities can advance legislation, including tax measures that require a three-fifths majority vote, without any Republican support.

Perhaps the most noticeable change this session is the election of new leadership in several caucuses. In the House, Representative **Dan Rayfield** (D-Corvallis) was chosen to serve as speaker of the House, taking the place of long-time Speaker **Tina Kotek** (D-Portland) who resigned to run for governor in the Democrat primary. Rayfield will be working with a new majority leader, Representative **Julie Fahey** (D-Eugene), who replaced Representative **Barbara Smith Warner** (D-Portland). Republicans in the House also selected a new leader, Representative **Vikki Breese-Iverson** (R-Prineville), who takes the reins after Representative **Christine Drazan** (R-Canby) resigned to run for governor in the Republican primary.

The Senate is also experiencing a change in leadership. While Senator **Peter**



Oswego) will continue as the majority leader in the Senate. Republicans elected Senator **Tim Knopp** (R-Bend) to replace Senator **Fred Girod** (R-Stayton) who stepped aside as Republican leader last fall. Rarely is there this much leadership change taking place at one time in the legislature. That said, OBA has good working relationships with the new leaders in both chambers.

While banking issues aren't topping the agenda this session, we are keeping a close eye on a variety of bills with consequences for the broader business community. Additionally, for the banking industry, two substantive issues relate to the registration of data brokers and data privacy ([House Bill 4017](#)) and a referendum on amending the Oregon Constitution to allow the state to create a state-owned bank ([House Joint Resolution 205](#)). OBA is also tracking bills related to the pandemic, housing and employment matters, to name a few. Other bills related to mental health, tax policy and forest management will get their share of attention from lawmakers. Many of the ideas proposed this session are complex and have long-term ramifications for the state. As you can imagine, the brisk tempo of the session leaves little time to thoroughly vet legislation, which is why many believe Oregon's short session should be focused on budgets and emergency policy rather than concepts that can wait for the longer even-year sessions.

That said, not every bill introduced in this session will receive serious consideration by the legislature. In the meantime, OBA is reviewing all bills and tracking those that could have an impact, direct or indirect, on the Oregon banking industry and the customers we serve.

OBA's Top 10

We understand that bankers do not have time to review all the bills that OBA is tracking. To help out, we have created a Top 10 list. This is a list of the bills that we feel are the most impactful or politically important bills facing the industry this session. [Click here](#) or in the upper right hand of this email to review our first installment of the Top 10. Please understand that this list is fluid and will change throughout the session. Bills will be introduced, amended or will die, which will impact the Top 10. Note that the bills in the Top 10 are not ranked in any particular order.

What's on Tap

Here are a couple of legislative deadlines we're paying close attention to in the next two weeks:

- Hearings and floor sessions will pick up in the coming days as bills move out of committee in advance of the February session's quick deadlines. The first major deadline, what some refer to as cross-over, occurs on Monday, February 14. Bills in their house of origin must move out of committee – or to the Joint Committee on Ways and Means, a Rules Committee or a Revenue Committee –

- Legislative committees will begin shutting down on February 24. Bills that do not receive a work session in their second chamber by the end of that day – or move to the Joint Ways and Means Committee, a Rules Committee or a Revenue Committee – also die.

Not to get ahead of ourselves, but the session must adjourn by 11:59 pm on March 7. The next day, March 8, is the deadline for candidates to file to run for office in the May Primary Election in Oregon.

If you have questions about the session or particular legislation, please contact OBA's Senior Vice President and Government Affairs Director Kevin Christiansen at (503) 576-4123 or kchristiansen@oregonbankers.com. If you have an interest in particular bills, you can [click here](#) to review any bill text.

What Needs Fixing in Oregon Law?

OBA is gathering legislative concepts for possible introduction during the 2023 Oregon Legislative Session. Yes, we are already thinking ahead to 2023. If you have a change to the Oregon Revised Statutes that you would like to propose, please forward that change with a brief description to OBA Senior Vice President and Government Affairs Director Kevin Christiansen at kchristiansen@oregonbankers.com so that we can begin the vetting process. You are also welcome to contact Kevin to discuss the issue at (503) 576-4123. We're happy to work with you to refine the concept.

Political Odds and Ends

- Changes to the legislative leadership are not the only thing that is different this session. Since the gavel dropped to open the 2021 session last January, more than 10% of the legislature has changed. Whether due to retirement, expulsion, taking on a new job or running for governor, a surprising number of legislators that started the 2021 session are no longer in office – and we aren't even to the elections yet! To see whether your legislator is still in office, click [here](#).
- In election news, while several high-profile candidates have thrown their hat in the ring to run for Oregon governor this year, we're watching for the Oregon Supreme Court's ruling on the candidacy of former *New York Times* writer **Nicolas Kristoff**. [As reported in The Oregonian](#), Secretary of State **Shemia Fagan** ruled that Kristoff did not satisfy residency requirements to run for governor in Oregon. That ruling is now subject to a challenge in the state's highest court. The outcome will impact the Democrat Primary Election in May.
- Oregon will celebrate its 163rd birthday on Valentine's Day. Oregon joined the Union as a state on February 14, 1859. Happy Birthday, Oregon!

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