

CALL TO ACTION! Stop OSHA Overreach

Amidst the chaos of the global pandemic, OR-OSHA is moving forward with proposed changes to two administrative rules that would stack the deck against our local employers:

OR-OSHA's Proposed Amendments in General Administrative Rules to Clarify Employer's Responsibilities and

OR-OSHA's Proposed Increase of Certain Minimum and Maximum Penalties for Alleged Violations

These rule changes are about agency convenience in contested cases, NOT about employee safety. Oregon law says that for an employer to be liable for a serious violation, OR-OSHA must prove that the employer knew, or with the "exercise of reasonable diligence" *could have known*, of the violation. Recently, the Oregon Supreme Court made clear that the burden is on OR-OSHA to prove what is "reasonable" and what is "diligence" under the circumstances of each case. But these new rules will change that Supreme Court ruling.

1. OR-OSHA's proposed rule redefines "reasonable diligence" to make employers strictly liable, so that the agency can easily win a contested case.
2. It also makes the "unpreventable employee conduct" defense entirely useless.
3. In a different rulemaking, OR-OSHA's Administrator is given unlimited discretion to impose huge penalties: \$13,538 for any "serious" violation and up to \$135,382 for any "willful" violation. These enormous fines could be assessed for just two paperwork violations.

Without strong opposition, OR-OSHA will adopt these rule changes at the end of October! Oregon's businesses are already under immense pressure from OR-OSHA and are struggling to stay afloat during the COVID-19 pandemic. Without immediate action, employers could be subject to strict liability and sweeping fines!

Please join your chamber and **submit your comments today** to **OPPOSE** these proposed rule changes. **Comments are due by October 30th.**

New Mask/Face Covering Requirements Expanded

With the number of COVID-19 cases continuing to rise, the Oregon Health Authority has expanded face mask requirements. The expanded requirements now include all private and public workplaces, including classrooms, offices, meeting rooms, work spaces, outdoor markets, street fairs, private career schools and public and private colleges and universities. Check out Oregon's updated **MASK REQUIREMENTS**.

Douglas County State of Business—Still Time to Take the Survey

Thank you, to the businesses that have completed the brief, but important "Douglas County State of Business" survey! We need more input and there's still time to respond. In order to continue to serve our business community, we need to better understand our businesses specific and current circumstances due to the COVID-19 pandemic, and how we can best assist. Please take a few minutes to complete the survey and, please feel free to share the survey link with other Douglas County businesses. The more information we have about the needs of our local businesses will only help us to better support and assist our businesses.

TAKE THE SURVEY

Thank you!

The Reason Your Chamber Continues to Advocate In Defense of Business

Stunning Report from Oregon Business & Industry (OBI) Shows 41% Increase in Statewide Business Taxes in Oregon by 2022

Due to recently-passed state tax changes, Oregon businesses will see a 41% increase in state taxes by 2022, according to a new report from the nonprofit State Tax Research Institute (STRI). The OBI Foundation worked with STRI to commission the analysis, which was completed by the national accounting firm Ernst & Young. STRI says that, in just a couple of years, Oregon will jump from 40th in the nation, to 19th in its annual rankings of state tax burden.

"In our 18 years of producing an annual analysis of state and local business tax burdens across the country, we've never seen a state jump so far and so fast in our rankings," said Doug Lindholm of the State Tax Research Institute. "Unprecedented state and local tax increases have shifted Oregon from a modest business tax burden state to a high business tax state above the national average and higher than Idaho, Washington and California."

In addition to the state tax burden increase, the study showed that the Portland-metro region could face a business tax increase of as much as 42% if all of the measures on the November ballot pass.

"Oregon and Portland-metro compete with states and metro regions across the country for new job development, and especially with our fellow western states," said OBI President and CEO Sandra McDonough. "Cost matters. This increase in business tax burden is significant and has the potential of making it harder for our state to grow new jobs – and recover from this recession – if we don't put the brakes on new taxes."

The OBI Education and Research Foundation commissioned the research. The analysis looked at the increase in the statewide business tax burden since the 2019 legislative session, as well as the cumulative impact of tax increases in the Portland-metro region that have already been enacted or that are going before voters on Nov. 3.

[READ THE REPORT](#)

DEADLINE to Apply is November 6 for Project Leadership

Roseburg

November 6 Application Deadline. As most of you know, due to safety guidelines and restrictions currently in place, the chamber moved the start of the 32nd year of its distinguished professional development leadership program to January 2021.

The changes to the program (other than starting in January) include ending in June (rather than May) and having two workshops in the month of April (second and fourth Thursdays). More detailed information regarding workshop schedules for 2021 will be available in by mid-November.

The new deadline for submitting a Project Leadership participant application is Friday, November 6, 2020. Check out more information about our leadership program and the application at **PROJECT LEADERSHIP**.

Economic Forecast 2021 Reservations Open Now!

The chamber's Economic Forecast 2021 virtual program on November 12 will explore significant economic issues affecting Douglas County businesses. Our virtual panel of presenters will recap the doozy of year 2020 has been, how business has been impacted and forecast what might be expected in 2021. This year's program will look at the economic impacts resulting from the COVID-19 pandemic, social unrest, catastrophic wildfires and state/national elections. Discussion will look at the economic effects from Douglas County to the global economy. The November 12 virtual program is scheduled from 9:00 to 11:15 a.m. **MAKE RESERVATIONS NOW!**

Thank you to our generous member-sponsors for Economic Forecast 2021: **Addcox Heating Center, Bowers Industrial, Gordon Wood Insurance & Financial Services, Inc., Lone Rock Resources, Roseburg Forest Products and Umpqua Bank.** Sponsors need not register; program link will be emailed to you in advance of November 12!

Simpler Process for PPP Loan Forgiveness

Late Thursday, the US Treasury and Small Business Administration released a new application and simplified process for small business owners who took out Paycheck Protection Program (PPP) loans (of \$50,000 or less), to seek loan forgiveness. For more information and to see if your business qualifies for the new loan forgiveness process:

[Simpler PPP Loan Forgiveness Application](#)

[PPP Application Instructions](#)

Corporate Activity Tax (CAT) Updates

CAT Rules Hearing Scheduled for October 27. In accordance with social distancing measures necessary during the COVID-19 pandemic, the Department of Revenue (DOR) will host a public hearing for eight permanent administrative rules for the Corporate Activity Tax and five other rules via conference call from 9 to 11 a.m. Tuesday, October 27.

To participate in the hearing, interested parties should call 541-465-2805 and enter conference PIN 234470 when prompted. Those wishing to testify at the hearing will need to register beginning at 8:45 a.m. on the conference call line. Those needing to make alternate arrangements for registration should contact the DOR rules coordinator before 8:45 a.m. Tuesday, October 27. **[LEARN MORE](#)**

Corporate Activity Tax (CAT) FAQ Updated. The Corporate Activity Tax policy staff has recently updated information found on the **[CAT page](#)** of the agency's website under the headings Frequently asked questions and Beyond the FAQ.

Updates to **[Frequently asked questions](#)** include the answers for:

- What is the CAT?
- What is commercial activity?
- Who is not subject to the CAT?

Updates to the **[Beyond the FAQ](#)** include the answers and supporting materials for:

- When will the department impose interest and penalties?
- Can I exclude receipts from the sale of groceries?
- Are receipts from sales to Oregon wholesalers excludable?

November Membership Program “Expectations & Insights into 2021 Oregon Legislature & US Congress”

Online reservations are open for the chamber's virtual November membership program for discuss expectations and provide insights into the 2021 Oregon Legislative session and the United States Congress in 2021, presented by JL Wilson, Public Affairs Counsel and Oregon State Chamber of Commerce and Chris Eyler, Executive Director for Congressional & Public Affairs, U.S. Chamber of Commerce.

Season pass holders need to do nothing. You are registered for the November 16 program. Access links to the virtual event will be made available to you prior to the program date. Our November program is sponsored by Pacific Power.

For those without season passes, advanced registration is required and the deadline to register is by 5:00 p.m. on November 11. A one-time access code/link will be forwarded per registration prior to the November 16 program. **[MAKE MY RESERVATION](#)**

Wildfire Recovery Assistance Information—UPDATED**** **INFORMATION ONLINE**

For those impacted by the recent wildfires, the Roseburg Area Chamber of Commerce continues to update daily a detailed list of resources and information on our website to assist our local businesses and residents during recovery. Please check back often, as the resource information from FEMA, US Small Business Administration, the state of Oregon and the chamber's economic-growth/sustainability partners, is relayed to the chamber almost daily. The wildfire disaster assistance information is under the chamber's "Current News" page, "**[Resource Information for Recovery Related to 2020 Wildfires](#)**" section. FYI, it's the section past all the COVID-19 pandemic resource information ... just keep scrolling like you're spinning the wheel on *The Price is Right* or looking for your birth year in the 1960s.

Chamber Programs, Notes & Updates

Business Perspectives Newsletter. Be sure and check out the chamber's September/October 2020 issue of [Business Perspectives](#).

November Membership Meeting Program and Economic Forecast 2021!

Reservations Open for November 16 virtual [Membership Meeting](#) program "COVID-19: Eight Weeks and Counting" and the chamber's November 12 [Economic Forecast 2021](#) program.

Project Leadership Roseburg Accepting Applications! As you know, due to safety guidelines and restrictions currently in place and the uncertainty of potential future changes, the chamber moved the start of the 32nd year of its distinguished leadership program to January 2021.

The changes to the program (other than starting in January) include ending in June (rather than May) and having two workshops in the month of April (second and fourth Thursdays). More detailed information regarding workshop schedules for 2021 will be available in by mid-November.

The new deadline for submitting a Project Leadership participant application is Friday, November 6, 2020. Go to pages 8-11 of the chamber's September/October issue of *Business Perspectives*...just ignore the current workshop dates! [PROJECT LEADERSHIP](#)

Information and Resources for Businesses Related to the COVID-19 Pandemic: <https://roseburgchamber.com/news/current-news/>

Please continue to check back, as the chamber updates its resource information almost daily. And, please share this link with friends and colleagues. The more our local businesses are armed with information and access to resources, the stronger our recovery.

Debbie

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