

# Call to Action! Stop Surprise Tax Increase on Oregon Businesses...Hearing TODAY

[SB 137-2](#) would require forgiven PPP loan amounts in excess of \$100,000 be **added back as “taxable income”** for Oregon businesses that used the program exactly the way it was intended. It is an unfair, retroactive tax increase on Oregon businesses at time when Oregon is already projected to bring in more revenue than ever before. The Legislative Revenue Office estimates this **unnecessary tax increase will cost Oregon businesses \$450-\$600 million.**

**Oregon does not need the money.** The May Revenue Forecast was incredibly strong, projecting a \$2.8 billion positive ending balance. This amounts to a **\$1.1 billion increase** from the March Revenue Forecast and a \$2.3 billion increase from the 2019 Close of Session Forecast. The state has also been allocated \$2.6 billion in direct financial aid from the Biden Administration’s American Rescue Plan Act of 2021, in addition to ARPA funds for local jurisdictions. Given this, there is no budgetary justification for tax increases of any sort, including taxation of forgiven PPP loans.

**Weigh in to make your voice heard at TODAY'S hearing:**

[Senate Committee On Finance and Revenue](#)

Tuesday, May 25th, 3:15pm

[STOP the Surprise Tax Increase](#)

## How to Submit Testimony

1. Provide your letter of testimony on your Chamber letterhead. Please provide specific, local examples where possible. **You will want to create a PDF of your letter to upload.**
2. Submit your letter through the [Testimony Portal on the Oregon Legislative Information System \(OLIS\)](#). **You will find this link at the bottom of the committee page on the "[Click to Submit Testimony](#)" link.**
3. When submitting testimony, you will need to:
  - **Select the committee hearing the bill:** *Senate Committee On Finance and Revenue*
  - **Select the hearing date:** *May 25, 2021 at 3:15 PM*
  - **Select the bill you are submitting testimony on:** *SB 137-2*

[You can also register to testify remotely.](#) **You MUST register in order to testify.** Registration closes at the time the meeting begins.

## Grant to Help Oregon Small Businesses Cover Costs Opens May 26—Act Fast!

On Wednesday, May 26, Business Oregon will open the final portion of a program to provide grants for small businesses to help with commercial rent and operational costs in the face of the COVID-19 pandemic.

The Oregon Legislative Emergency Board allocated approximately \$100 million for the program to help small businesses impacted by the pandemic and the restrictions it necessitated. Following two rounds of distribution of Commercial Rent Relief assistance grants, approximately \$28 million remains to be distributed in this final round through the Operational Cost Assistance Grant.

The Operational Cost Assistance Grant is designed for businesses with 100 or fewer employees in industries that were particularly affected by the pandemic, including those that:

- offer the consumption of food and or drink on premise;
- provide specified indoor physical exercise, recreational or family entertainment; **OR**
- provide specified personal services.

Restaurants, bars, gyms, brewpubs, theaters, bowling centers, and salons are some of the more common examples of eligible businesses. Full details of the program, including eligible industries, are available on [Business Oregon’s website](#) and in application materials. Applicants must have faced financial hardship due to the COVID-19 pandemic in Oregon.

**Applications for the Operational Cost Assistance Grant will be accepted beginning May 26, and continue through June 6.**

The application process is NOT first-come, first-served. Awards will be selected after a random lottery process of all complete and eligible applications received. Applicants are encouraged to take time with the application form to make sure all information is correct. Missing or incorrect information, particularly simple contact information such as email and phone numbers delays processing significantly. Businesses that previously received assistance grants through the State of Oregon Commercial Rent Relief Program for the same location are eligible to receive this new grant, as long as the award amount through the Commercial Rent Relief Program was less than \$100,000. Total combined awards from either program will not exceed \$100,000 for a single applicant.

More program information and eligibility details are available on [Business Oregon's website](#), along with the application link beginning May 26.

## **Oregon OSHA Updates COVID-19 Workplace Mandates**

Today, May 19, Oregon Occupational Safety & Health Administration (OSHA) updated its COVID-19 workplace rules with new mask guidance issued by Oregon Health Authority (OHA) on May 18. Oregon OSHA released [a statement](#) clarifying how the [updated mask guidance](#) from the Oregon Health Authority impacts their workplace rules related to COVID.

From OSHA's statement: "As outlined in the OHA document, if the employer chooses to allow either employees or visitors to the workplace to make use of the vaccine exemption, the employer does not need to enforce the physical distancing and facial covering requirements in relation to those individuals provided that the employer verifies the vaccination status of such individuals. An employer who requests and reviews verification of vaccination may permit fully vaccinated individuals with such proof of vaccination to go without a mask, face covering or face shield, and does not need to enforce physical distancing requirements for such individuals. If an individual who claims to be vaccinated but refuses to provide verification of vaccination status, the employer need take no further action but must enforce the physical distancing and facial covering requirements without regard to the exemption."

## **Updated Mask Guidance for Business from OHA**

The Oregon Health Authority (OHA) released updated business guidance that reflects the [CDC's announcement](#) last week that masks would not be required indoors or outdoors for fully vaccinated individuals. [Read the full OHA guidance here.](#)

The OHA noted that businesses may still require masks be worn on their premises and employers/businesses may ask employees and customers to verify their vaccination status before they are allowed to take their masks off. In addition to exempting people who are fully vaccinated from mask requirements in most indoor settings, OHA health experts announced that mask requirements no longer apply to anyone who is outdoors. However, OHA recommends that individuals continue to wear a mask or face covering in crowded areas and large gatherings (such as sporting events), and to maintain physical distance as much as possible. OHA urges unvaccinated individuals and those at risk for complications to wear masks in these settings. [Learn more here.](#)

Regardless of vaccination status, Americans still need to wear masks when traveling on public transportation, hospitals, visiting nursing homes and long-term care facilities, prisons, and other higher risk places.

**SOME DETAILS . . .** The new Oregon guidance says:

- Individuals in Oregon are no longer required to wear a face mask or physically distance, whether indoors or outdoors, two weeks after their final COVID-19 vaccination dose. A "fully vaccinated individual" is a person who has received both doses of a two-dose COVID-19 vaccine or one dose of a single-dose vaccine and at least 14 days have passed since the individual's final dose of COVID-19 vaccine.
- However, fully vaccinated individuals are required to continue wearing a mask and observe physical distancing on public transportation and in schools, hospitals and clinics, homeless shelters, youth and adult correctional facilities and long-term care facilities.
- Businesses, employers and faith institutions can choose to no longer require masks and physical distancing for fully vaccinated individuals or continue to require masks and physical distancing in their locations for all individuals, regardless of vaccination status.
- If a business, employer or faith institution chooses to no longer require masks and physical distancing, the business, employer or faith institution must require visitors to show proof of

vaccination and review the proof of vaccination. In that case, a business would need to have a policy for checking the vaccination status of customers and employees if they are not wearing masks. Fully vaccinated individuals would need to provide proof they'd been vaccinated if they want to remove face coverings and not observe physical distancing guidelines.

Again, state health experts announced that face coverings are no longer required outdoors (regardless of vaccination status). OHA strongly recommends that people who are not vaccinated and people who are at high risk of severe COVID-19 disease continue to wear face coverings and physically distance in outdoor crowded areas and large gatherings. The OHA's [Interim Guidance for Fully Vaccinated Individuals](#), makes clear the onus falls on the employer to check/verify vaccination status. More information about vaccinations in Oregon is available at [covidvaccine.oregon.gov](https://covidvaccine.oregon.gov).

## **Chamber Membership Luncheon Season Passes on Sale Now!**

The Roseburg Area Chamber of Commerce's 2021-22 membership meeting lunch schedule is set and season passes are on sale. The chamber's in-person membership meeting lunches are set to resume on Monday, September 20, 2021. NEVER RSVP for a chamber luncheon again! Attend membership meeting lunches with the purchase of a season pass and not only save money due to the discounted price, but even better, never worry about forgetting to make a reservation. With your season pass, it's all taken care of! Individual season passes for RACC members are \$175. A full table of eight for the entire season is \$1,400. Season passes for 2021-22 may be purchased [ONLINE HERE](#). RACC members interested in paying in advance for a full table for the whole 2021-22 season may purchase online or contact the chamber at [roseburg@roseburgareachamber.org](mailto:roseburg@roseburgareachamber.org) to be billed.

### **Mark the Calendar / 2021-22 Membership Meeting Luncheons**

Monday, September 20, 2021  
Monday, October 18, 2021  
Monday, November 15, 2021  
Monday, January 10, 2022  
Monday, February 14, 2022  
Monday, March 14, 2022  
Monday, April 11, 2022  
Monday, May 16, 2022

## **Chamber's Most Requested/Distributed Publication Opens Ad Sales**

The Roseburg Area Chamber of Commerce's 2021-22 *InUmpqua*—a business directory, community profile and visitor magazine—is now accepting reservations for ad placement. Thousands of copies of the *InUmpqua* have and will be distributed to residents, businesses, visitors and folks relocating to our area. Not to mention the thousands of views and downloads of the online edition of the publication each year.

The *InUmpqua* remains one of the best advertising mediums available to market our members' goods and services. It also provides an opportunity to support the chamber and local business community, as a portion of these "non-dues" revenue helps underwrite the work the chamber does each year on behalf of businesses.

Check out the online edition of the [2020-21 InUmpqua](#) and the [2021-22 InUmpqua advertising rate sheet](#).

## **Save These Dates**

As chamber programs, activities and events return, in addition to the membership meeting lunch dates, above, be sure and save these dates, too!

**September 9, 2021** 2021-22 Project Leadership Commences / Applications Forms Coming in June

**September 23, 2021** Annual Awards Dinner (w/Breakfast & Lunch Events, too) / Details Soon

**November 15, 2021** Economic Forecast 2021

More news and details coming soon!

## Chamber Positions and Testimony on Bills in the Oregon Legislature

For the most up-to-date information and details about the bills the chamber is watching, has taken positions and links to actual testimony submitted as well as positions on matters before the US Congress, please check out our [CURRENT NEWS](#) page on the chamber website.

## Chamber News, Programs & Updates

Check out the chamber's [May/June 2021 Business Perspectives newsletter](#) online.

The Roseburg Area Chamber's 2021 "Shop Chamber & Save" exclusive member-to-member discount program flyer is [online](#).

The chamber's annual celebration of business and awards event tentatively planned for March 18 has been rescheduled for Thursday, September 23, 2021. SAVE THE DATE!

Missed a past issue of *Business Perspectives* or one of those "oh-so-informative" membership email blasts? No worries. They are posted on the chamber website on the [Monthly Newsletter page](#) . . . just scroll.

## Business Recovery Resource Center Library

Please continue to check the chamber's online ["Business Recovery Resource Center Library Re: COVID-19 Pandemic,"](#) as the chamber updates its resource information at least weekly. 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*

Debra L. Fromdahl, IOM  
President & CEO  
Roseburg Area Chamber of Commerce

