



**Oregon State Chamber of Commerce
Legislative Update
February 5, 2024
“2024 Legislative Update”**

Dear OSCC Members & Colleagues –

Today marks the first day of the 2024 legislative session. The session will run through March 10 for a maximum of 35-days. If legislators complete their work in a timely fashion, they could wrap up before the 35-day limit.

All of the bills were made public this past week. As of now, it looks like the legislature will consider between 280 - 290 bills.

As we stand today, both sides of the political aisle are saying and doing all the right things: they're pledging a common focus and a high degree of bipartisanship.

As a backdrop, the Oregon Supreme Court rendered their decision on Measure 113 last week, effectively barring 10 Senate Republicans from running for re-election. And although the Court has effectively removed all the risk from Senate Republicans boycotting the 2024 session, it appears that Republicans are satisfied enough that the session will be bipartisan and productive that they do intend to ensure that the Senate will have a quorum and can conduct business.

Housing is Primary Focus

The main focus of 2024 will be seen primarily in two areas. First, legislators will work to address the housing crisis. Governor Kotek is introducing only one bill this session ([SB 1537](#)) – as a clear signal of her priorities – which aims to fund and remove barriers to boosting housing production by her stated goal of 36,000 units per year.

The state is short by more than 140,000 units to meet the needs of Oregonians, and to provide affordable housing close to where people work. It is also anticipated that the legislature will spend a significant amount of the state budget on housing related issues. In addition to investments that boost housing production, the legislature is expected to provide significant resources for shelters in the state, for continued rent assistance and funding for other programs that help individuals find a place to live or programs that help home buyers purchase a first home.

Measure 110 Reforms

Legislators are also expected to address the drug, behavioral health, and public safety challenges the state is faced with. The legislature has appointed the Joint Addiction and Community Safety Response Committee to focus on these issues. That committee is expected to provide changes that would reform Measure 110 and make drug possession a crime again – although the argument still remains about the classification of the crime (Class A misdemeanor vs Class C misdemeanor). Investments to improve Oregon's behavioral health system and workforce are also anticipated in 2024.

Budget

The state is expected to have significant resources to spend in 2024 – much more than in a typical short session. How much the state spends, and how much will be saved for an anticipated economic downturn for 2025-27, will be a key discussion between the Governor, budget writers, and legislative leadership. The state of Oregon has seen roughly \$655 million in increased General Fund revenue since the 2023 session adjourned. State agencies are also expected to have around \$400 million in unexpended funds from the previous biennium. After 1% of money is set aside for the State Rainy Day Fund, legislators are expected to have just over \$1 billion in available resource and a small increase in lottery revenue as well.

After funding all of the agency caseload increases, the Governor's housing priorities, and the Measure 110 investments, we are hearing the legislature will have about \$150 million to spend on various member priorities. With respect to additional bonding capacity, the number we are anticipating for 2024 is expected to be around \$20-\$30 million.

Business Legislation that OSCC is Watching

HB 4005 appears to be a bill that is aimed at disallowing Professional Employer Organizations (PEO). **OSCC would oppose.**

HB 4050 would allow employers to offer hiring and retention bonuses without running afoul of Oregon’s “pay equity” laws. **OSCC supports.**

HB 4106 directs the State Forester to establish harvest levels for cutting timber on state forest lands. **OSCC would support.**

HB 4126 authorizes local governments to establish their own rent control policies. **OSCC would oppose.**

SBs 1513, 1514, and **1515** are all bills that could be used as vehicles to prevent the “stacking” of paid family leave and Oregon Family Leave Act leaves.

SB 1537 is the Governor’s bill to increase housing supply.

HB 4055 and **SB 1542** raise the exemption for small business on the Corporate Activity Tax. **This is a key OSCC priority.**

SB 1559 would make Oregon’s greenhouse gas reduction goals more stringent by requiring levels to be 95% below 1990 levels by the year 2050.

As the session matures, OSCC will keep members updated on key bills as they play and new bills as they emerge. There are no bills yet that warrant an ACTION ALERT, but please stay vigilant as bills move very fast and action could be needed very quickly.

[Download OSCC Bills of Interest](#)