



## **Joint Legislative Committee on Coronavirus Response Update March 26, 2020**

The Joint Legislative Committee on Coronavirus Response has met four times for a total of 18 hours over the past week. The Committee has focused on the immediate needs of Oregonians: Stability for Individuals and Families (90-day plan); Health Care System Needs; and Short-Term Employer Support.

The Committee heard testimony from the Governor's office, The Oregon Health Authority, Oregon Health Science and University staff, Medical Professionals, the Business and Labor Community and received written testimony from over 350 individual Oregonians.

Based on the information shared in the Hearings and input from other legislators the Committee initially drafted a list of 47 potential issues and/or recommendations (listed below) to be considered. The Committee Co-Chairs (Sen. Roblan and Rep. Holvey) and the ranking minority members on the committee (Sen. Boquist and Rep. Stark) are drafting statutory, policy and budget recommendations for the full committee to consider presenting to the Legislature. It is anticipated the Co-Chair's proposal will be available this week.

The Co-Chairs have emphasized the proposals are designed to help Oregonians get through the next 90 days and longer-term recommendations will need to be identified by the committee as their work continues.

In the end the work of the committee, the Legislature and the Governor's office will be adjusted to maximize the impact of the Federal Government actions.

### **JOINT SPECIAL COMMITTEE ON CORONA VIRUS RESPONSE POTENTIAL ISSUES/RECOMMENDATIONS**

#### **1. Housing:**

- Moratorium on all for-cause residential evictions, except ones for violence,
- Moratorium on commercial evictions related to inability to pay rent due to financial impact of the COVID-19 pandemic.
- Must show an objective loss of income due to the COVID-19 pandemic.
- Include payment plan requirements for those able to pay a portion of their rent.
- Prohibition on late fees for inability to pay entire rent.
- Must have objective demonstration of inability to pay due to COVID-19 response.
- Validation that rental assistance is used for rental payment.

## 2. Housing:

- Increase access to residential rental assistance through Emergency Housing Assistance (EHA) through CAPs. \$XX million
- Increase access to mortgage assistance through Hardest Hit program. \$XX million.

## 3. Food:

- Provide additional support and flexibility to DHS to expedite SNAP benefits, TANF and WIC.
- Waive interviews where possible.
- Expand certification periods.

## 4. Food:

- Support the state's food bank network to purchase food. Allocate \$X Million.

## 5. Utilities:

- Increase financial assistance directly to private and consumer-owned utilities to help low-income households and small businesses. Require PUC oversight of private utility. \$X million.

## 6. Health Insurance Premiums:

- Establish a grace period provision for non-payment of insurance premiums for the duration of the emergency declaration (retroactive if possible). Require the acceptance of payment plans for those unable to pay their full commercial premium without fee or penalty.
- Establish baseline 30-day grace period outside of declaration pursuant to HB 4110 (2020).

## 7. Dropped

## 8. Temporarily improve access to UI benefits:

- Waive work search requirements.
- Waive one-week waiting period.
- Clarify existing "good cause" provision to account for COVID-19 related actions.
- Permit use of UI for quarantined workers.
- Allow UI for those taking care of family members affected by COVID-19 or primary mode of dependency has been altered by compliance with public health declarations.

## 9. OFLA:

- Amend definition to cover leave for parents during statewide public health emergencies.

## 10. High-Risk Households:

- Increasing ability of community partners to Do outreach and respond to basic needs of self-quarantined individuals. \$X million.

11. Establish any willing provider provision.
  - Concept: Give Insurance Commissioner the power to amend network standards to establish any willing provider networks; time limited; all claim initiation periods w/in declaration apply. Inpatient acute services only (not limited to Covid-19 and not more than hospital-level care).
12. Direct money to OHSU for the purpose of statewide bed coordination for the duration of the declaration. Allocate \$X Million.
13. Establish Good Samaritan liability protections for the first-responder workforce.
14. Workforce requirements to increase available staffing throughout the declaration:
  - Privilege by proxy and credentialing across hospitals.
  - Maximize retired NPs and active National Provider Identifiers (NPI). Waive statutory barriers to reentry.
  - Open the workforce to out-of-state licensees. Waive statutory barriers to practice. Ensure all practitioners who have a role in COVID-19 response are maximizing their licensure.
15. Increase child care specifically for first responders and essential personnel while schools are closed.
16. Establish a 90-day pause on workers' comp payments for businesses paying for coverage through SAIF.
17. Waive UI charges to employers during the emergency.
18. Require all state-chartered banks/lenders to:
  - Accept interest-only payments for duration of the emergency declaration and 30-days after.
  - Prohibit defaults during declaration and mandate payment plans to cover principal unpaid during the emergency period.
  - Offer 0% interest loans for the period of the declaration and 30-days after.
19. Repurpose flexible funds within Business Oregon to provide direct relief to certain impacted sectors. Allocate \$XX million.
20. Improve access to child care:
  - Streamline regulatory requirements on substitute and family, friends, and neighbors (FFN) providers to cover provider shortages. Ease background checks and training requirements for an emergency pool of FFN child care providers.
  - Authority to reduce licensure requirements to set up childcare in ad hoc facilities.
21. Cover businesses for non-continuity of operations through insurance policies:

- Most property & casualty insurance policies only cover loss of property or loss of sales, but loss of sales is not covered by civil authorities closing establishments.

22. Permit liquor sales for takeout food orders to aide restaurant sales during dining room closures.

23. Permit businesses to suspend liquor liability insurance if not selling liquor due to adherence to public health declaration.

- Permit a business to retain an active liquor license while liability insurance is suspended.

24. Regulatory Relief

- Encourage the executive branch to pause all non-essential rulemaking and workgroups not related to the COVID-19 response.

25. Empower the small business advocate within the Secretary of State's office to serve as the point person (a clearinghouse) for disseminating information and fielding concerns.

26. CAT implementation:

- Redraft HB 4009 (2020) to provide certainty to calculations and ag/farms.
- Delay Implementation of the CAT tax for at least the first quarter to protect cash flow for all businesses subject to the tax.

27. Fund for those who are ineligible for UI. Allocate \$XX million.

28. Homelessness response:

- Provide assistance for homeless to self-quarantine in hotels. Allocate \$X million.

29. Physician Assistant Supervision:

- Permit PAs to practice within their scope without supervision requirements throughout duration of the declaration.

30. Mortgages:

- Forbearing mortgage payments for 90 days from their due dates –or –offering mortgagors an additional 90-day grace period to complete trial loan modifications and ensuring that late payments during the pandemic do not affect their ability to obtain permanent loan modifications.
- Require low-interest, no penalty repayment period.

31. Homeless Shelters:

- Time limited super siting as listed in HB 4001, including amendment regarding church parking lots and car camping.

32. Dropped.

33. Prohibit commercial and residential foreclosures for duration of the declaration.

34. Transient Lodging Tax. Some counties have discretion as to how to use their TLT funds:

- Permit all recipients to use funds flexibly to support businesses affected the pandemic.

35. Dropped.

36. High school diplomas

- If the public health pandemic extends into May or June, ODE should consider permitting seniors to graduate with current credits if they are under the credit minimum.

37. Align state income tax deadline with federal deadline of July 15.

38. Permit Payments, other Renewal Fees:

- Encourage the executive branch to carry over deadlines for permit payments and renewal fees until after the pandemic.
- Encourage clear guidance for agency payment plans for renewals or permits due throughout the declaration.

39: Dropped.

40. Prohibition on new “bed taxes” for Hospitals:

- Emergency beds added during the time of the executive order do not constitute an expansion or change of hospital status type for the duration of the declaration.
- OHA may only leverage taxes or fees based on the number of permanent beds.

41. Dropped.

42. Training requirements, extensions on licensing, prohibitions on self-service gasoline service and various other policies should be suspended.

43. Maximize Workforce:

- Relax predictive scheduling and enact a moratorium on penalties during the declaration.
- Lift maximum hours restrictions on manufacturing.

44. Financial relief:

- Relieve financial burden on industry sectors including delaying potential new local taxes, suspending payroll taxes, and suspending weight-mile taxes.

45. Consider additional incentives for businesses:

- Consider tax credits, loans, and other incentives that encourage businesses to invest in their business and their employees during this challenging economic time.

46. Rent Relief for Small Commercial Businesses:

- Consider providing rent relief for small commercial businesses. Allocate \$XX Million.

47. Identify strategies to ensure the stability of the unemployment insurance fund.