

Oregon Gov. signs more than 50 pieces of legislation

by Bend_Weekly_News_Sources

Bills help protect consumers, expand care for children, enhance public safety and implement the Governor's Clean Car Initiative

This week Governor Ted Kulongoski signed more than 50 pieces of legislation, including bills designed to strengthen consumer protections, enhance public safety, expand access to dental care for children, codify new tailpipe emissions standards, and provide more assistance to veterans and their families. Highlights of legislation signed by the Governor this week include:

Strengthening Consumer Protection: HB 2220: This legislation revises pawnbrokers licenses to require pawnbrokers to keep electronic or written records and allows out-of-state pawnbrokers to acquire an Oregon pawnbroker license. HB 2941: This expands Oregon's "Lemon Law," which requires an authorized car dealer to correct any problems a consumer may discover, to include cars purchased in another state. The legislation also establishes a 14-day deadline for a vehicle dealer to finalize or reject a transaction when a vehicle is purchased through financing. SB 195: Under this legislation, unemployed Oregonians can re-qualify for unemployment insurance only if the job they held in the interim qualified for unemployment insurance, either in Oregon or in another state.

Enhancing Public Safety: HB 2334: This legislation changes requirements for persons qualified to receive a concealed handgun license. The bill prohibits persons who have been required to register as a sex offender in any state, have received a dishonorable discharge from the Armed Forces or have been convicted of an offense involving controlled substances or participated in a drug diversion program for obtaining such a license. HB 2765: This bill requires the Department of Public Safety Standards and Training to require peace officers to receive at least 24 hours of mental illness recognition training using a crisis intervention training model. SB 892: This creates a youth hunter mentoring program, in which a person between the age of nine and 14 can hunt when in the presence of a supervisory hunter who is at least 21 years of age. The supervisory hunter must hold all appropriate licenses, tags and permits and only one lawful hunting weapon that must be carried by the adult.

Expanding Access to Dental Care for Children: HB 2867: This legislation provides easier access to dental services for patients enrolled in the Women, Infants and Children (WIC) program, the Oregon pre-kindergarten program and Head Start by allowing dental hygienists to apply sealants and fluoride without the supervision of a dentist.

Enacting Clean Cars Initiative: HB 2272: This legislation requires that new vehicles, beginning with the model year 2009, must comply with low emission standards consistent with the Environmental Quality Commission in order to register the vehicle. In addition, the bill authorizes the Oregon Department of Transportation to deny registration to 2009 or later model year vehicles that do not comply with the new standards. This bill codifies the tailpipe emissions rules that the Oregon's Environmental Quality Commission (EQC) adopted in June 2006 requiring that new vehicles meet California auto emission standards.

Providing More Assistance for Oregon's Veterans: HB 2162: Under this legislation, outreach services provided by the county veterans' service officers must be extended to include the survivors of veterans. HB 2937: This bill requires the Department of Veterans' Affairs to provide veterans with educational materials on diagnosis, treatment and prevention of Hepatitis C.

Other highlights of legislation signed by the Governor include: SB 73: This bill prohibits a person collecting voter registration cards or collecting signatures for the purpose of nominating a candidate for public office from receiving money based on the number of signed voter registration cards or signatures collected. SB 198: This legislation helps regulate higher education institutions, also called "diploma mills" that operate without the supervision of a state or professional agency, or issue fake diplomas. This excludes schools that offer degrees in theology or religious occupations and schools making reasonable progress toward accreditation. SB 341: This bill requires tissue and eye banks to be regulated by the Food and Drug Administration, and it requires health care facilities to obtain tissue or corneas from registered and regulated tissue or eye banks. SB 490: This legislation bans virtual hunting, or remotely controlling a weapon for the purpose of hunting game, bird, wildlife or mammals through the World Wide Web or other Internet protocols.

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