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## Oregon House District 60 Newsletter

Issue #13

District News and Coronavirus Updates

Friends,

I'm sorry to share today that we've had our first COVID-related death in House District 60, an older gentleman from Malheur County who died from an unrelated issue and was later found to have had COVID. My thoughts and prayers are with his friends and family as they process this loss.

Hopefully all businesses in HD 60 have seen an uptick in business as we have entered into Phase 2. Hopefully, church services were back last weekend. We continue to advocate for the new measures in Phase 2, which would allow for larger gathering sizes and hopefully allow us to plan for rodeos, fairs, and other outside activities this summer and fall. If you have ideas or suggestions that should be incorporated into our discussions, please share them with me.

Yesterday, the Governor and the Oregon Department of Education rolled out their [guidance](#) and recommendations for school reopening. We are still digesting all the information. We are thankful the school districts will be enabled to design their own reopening plans, this is a win for us as we advocated for flexibility for school districts and not a one-size-fits-all approach. I will continue to advocate for a normal school year, as our children cannot be left behind.

We are still awaiting an official call for a Special Session, but the dates are still unknown. I have personally spoken with the Speaker of the House (Tina Kotek) and Republican Leadership to discuss several issues in our district that might be able to be solved in the

Special Session if they were included. These issues include a policy tweak for the Eastern Oregon Border Board, foreign exchange students, PACE insurance for school districts, local option marijuana taxes, a state-run meat processing plant inspection program, and other topics. I will continue to work on these issues, although some will likely not have any traction during the Special Session and will have to wait until next year.

### House District 60 Coronavirus Update

House District 60's current stats are as follows:

COUNTY	POSITIVE	DEATHS	NEGATIVE
Oregon Statewide	5,060	169	151,698
Baker	1	0	310
Grant	1	0	122
Harney	1	0	264
Lake	2	0	177
Malheur	33	1	847

SOURCE: <https://govstatus.egov.com/OR-OHA-COVID-19>  
OHA Last Updated 6/10/2020 @ 12:01am

### Emergency Board

Last week, the Emergency Board (E-Board) met and disbursed \$247 million from Oregon's share of the federal CARES Act funds. The funds will go to the following causes:

- \$75 million for rental assistance
- \$10 million for the Oregon Worker Relief Fund
- \$15 million for utility bill assistance
- \$3.5 million for broadband projects in low-income areas
- \$4 million for Domestic Violence survivors
- \$25.6 million for behavioral health
- \$30 million to support child care providers
- \$20 million for expanding rural broadband, including projects in Ontario and Burns
- \$50 million for rural hospitals, including the Blue Mountain Hospital in John Day, Saint Alphonsus in Baker City and Ontario, and the Harney District Hospital in Burns.
- \$10 million for PPE for small businesses
- \$3 million for technical assistant to minority and women-owned businesses
- \$1 million for 211 referral services during COVID

### High School Athletics

On Tuesday, Senator Findley and I sent a letter to Governor Brown in support of the "Let Them Play" initiative expressing the concerns our constituents have shared with us regarding the restrictions on high school athletics in Phase 2 of Oregon's reopening plan. The restrictions prohibit any sport that involves participants coming into bodily contact.

Make no mistake, these restrictions will affect our student athletes' physical and mental health, and social development. These rules are onerous and not equitable, as the Governor plans to exempt professional and college athletes.

A copy of the letter and petition to the Governor can be found [here](#). I encourage you to sign the petition and send a message to our Governor to let our kids play.

### Virtual Town Hall

I also wanted to remind you that Sen. Findley, Rep. Bonham, and I will be holding our fifth virtual legislative town hall meeting, which will take place next week, Thursday, June 18th at 5:00-6:00pm (PDT). The event is open to the public and media participation is invited.

at 5:30-6:30pm (PDT). The event is open to the public and media; registration is required in order to provide virtual login information. Please [register](#) early in order to participate.

I hope to see you all there.

Stay safe.



**Representative Mark Owens**  
**House District 60**  
***Frontier Oregon—The Best Part of the State***

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