

Oregon News

[Tentative opinion suggests Oregon's new congressional map could be upheld](#)

OPB

New congressional districts passed by Oregon Democrats meet all legal criteria, with little evidence they amount to blatant partisan gerrymandering, a judge has found.

That tentative opinion, released Monday by retired state Judge Henry Breithaupt, is not the final word in an ongoing lawsuit, in which Republicans are seeking to have the new six-district congressional map redrawn. Instead, Breithaupt is acting as a “special master” in the case, tasked with making findings of fact for a five-judge panel that will decide the outcome.

But the findings by Breithaupt suggest Republicans have failed to prove their insistence that Democrats purposefully stacked the congressional maps in their own favor. A lawsuit filed on behalf of former Secretary of State Bev Clarno and three other former Republican elected officials called the map “a clear, egregious partisan gerrymander, as has been widely acknowledged both in Oregon and across the country.”

After nearly 15 hours of hearings last week, Breithaupt was not convinced. His opinion relies heavily on a proposed set of facts suggested by the Oregon Department of Justice, which is representing the Legislature in defending the map.

Breithaupt agreed with the state’s contention that the new maps meet statutory criteria requiring them to be of roughly equal populations and contiguous, and to use existing transportation, political and geographic boundaries. The judge also agreed that an additional factor that must be considered — that lawmakers cannot unduly split communities of common interest — was difficult to determine.

Most damaging to the Republican case, Breithaupt was skeptical of the lone expert the petitioners brought in to testify the new congressional maps were baldly partisan. He found three experts brought in by the state and a national Democratic group helping defend the maps more credible.

[Law that limits mugshot releases goes into effect in Oregon this week](#)

OPB

Booking photos will no longer be released to the public in Oregon, in an effort to protect the privacy and safety of people who have not been convicted of a crime.

The law prohibits the release of mugshots except in specific circumstances, such as to other law enforcement agencies and to the public in the case of an emergency.

Proponents of the law said that releasing mugshots before a conviction can have serious safety issues. After the 2020 protests in Portland, many people who were arrested were doxed, which means they were publicly identified or had private information about them published, and harassed when their photos were released, according to state Representative Janelle Bynum (D-Happy Valley).

Bynum sponsored the measure. She said that after working on a bill about doxing, she realized how dangerous the release of booking photos could be to people’s safety.

[Poll: Idaho voters would move border to protect rural Oregon 'from Portland politicians'](#)

KCBY

A recent poll of 1,100 Idaho voters found a majority in support of adding parts of rural Oregon to the Gem State.

The most popular reason? To protect rural Oregon counties "from Portland politicians," according to the poll.

The group Move Oregon's Borders for a Great Idaho said the poll by the Trafalgar Group found 51% of respondents were in favor of expanding the state's borders to incorporate parts of Oregon.

Of those polled, 35% were opposed; another 14% were undecided.

Those numbers jumped if voters participated in the most recent Republican primary. Of those, 59% were in favor, 26% opposed, and 15% undecided.

"Republican primary elections are important in Idaho, where 80% of the state legislators are Republican," according to the Greater Idaho organization.

[Oregon reports 2,569 new COVID-19 cases, 5 deaths](#)

KGW

The Oregon Health Authority (OHA) reported 2,569 new COVID-19 cases and five additional deaths from the virus Monday. The data was for Friday, Oct. 29 through Sunday, Oct. 31.

The state has reported a total of 367,610 cases during the pandemic, including 4,377 deaths.

Vaccinations

As of Monday, 2,820,379 Oregonians have had at least one dose of a COVID-19 vaccine and 2,615,092 have completed a vaccine series.

[\\$422M in fed grants support 2020 Oregon wildfire recovery](#)

KOIN

Oregon is receiving more than \$422 million from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development to assist with ongoing recovery efforts after the 2020 wind storm and wildfires.

HUD announced Monday it had divided more than \$2 billion in community development block grant disaster recovery and mitigation funds among nine states and Puerto Rico.

Oregon is receiving \$422,286,000.

"This CDBG-DR appropriation will help with the unmet needs of Oregonians in impacted areas. We look forward to working with the state and continuing to support the recovery efforts from the devastating 2020 wildfires," said HUD Portland Field Office Director Tony Ramirez.

HUD said the funds will go to help communities recover from and build resilience to natural disasters, including climate disasters. The investment will focus on low- and moderate-income populations.

[Oregon leaders dedicate millions of dollars to tackle homelessness](#)

KTVZ

After discovering an unexpected surplus in both their budgets, both the city and county said combined, they're investing more than \$38 million dollars to the issue. The money will go to adding 400 additional beds at shelters, expanding services for the unhoused, adding more hygiene stations, and providing urban rest stops. The city and county will provide

about half of the \$38 million lump sum.

“We all agree that carrying for our neighbors who are surviving outside right now remained as one of our highest priorities,” Multnomah County Chair, Deborah Kafoury, said. Portland Mayor Ted Wheeler said the housing crisis shouldn’t just be a local issue, it should be a national issue. He called on Congress to recognize the problem as a national humanitarian disaster.

“Congress needs to provide the basic right to federal housing for our poor, disabled, and senior Americans who cannot work,” Wheeler said.

He also acknowledged the homeless crisis is impacting every part of Portland, from the cleanliness of the streets to economic revenue from tourism.

“The impact from these unsanctioned encampments is most felt by housed Portlanders and businesses owners who are closest to these campsites,” Wheeler said.

Both city and county leaders said it all boils down to if the unhoused want to use these services to determine the success of the investment. So the question remains, will it work?

[Best high schools in Oregon](#)

KTVZ

Best high schools in Oregon

As filmmaker and writer Nora Ephron said during a '96 commencement address at Wellesley College, “Your education is a dress rehearsal for a life that is yours to lead.” If that’s the case, high school may be one of the greatest dress rehearsals of all.

It’s a place where students explore their interests, dive into extracurricular activities, finally get the freedom to choose their own classes, and prepare for college or the workplace. For many of these students and their families, public education is key: 48.1 million students enrolled in public elementary and secondary schools in 2020; and there are almost 24,000 public high schools in the U.S., according to the National Center for Education Statistics.

[Oregon lawmakers urge Biden administration to reconsider free community college](#)

OPB

Democrats in the Oregon Legislature sent letters to the state’s U.S. congressional delegation Monday, urging them and the Biden administration to revisit a plan for free community college.

President Joe Biden originally included two years of free community college in his “Build Back Better Plan,” but removed it from the spending framework last week. Democratic leaders on Capitol Hill worked to scale back what had previously been a \$3.5 trillion package last week to satisfy concerns from moderates in their party, particularly Sen. Joe Manchin, D-W.Va., and Sen. Kyrsten Sinema, D-Ariz.

The state lawmakers in Oregon are hoping Biden and other Democratic leaders will reconsider the policy in the near future.

“By not investing in two years of free community college, this threatens Oregon’s and the United States’ ability to develop and retain a workforce that meets today’s evolving industry needs,” the state Democrats who authored the letter wrote.

[Oregon city sues to keep Google’s water use secret](#)

Columbian

The city of The Dalles, Oregon, has filed suit in an effort to keep Google’s water use a

secret.

The move comes ahead of a key City Council vote on a \$28.5 million water pact between the city and the tech giant.

The Oregonian/OregonLive reports the city is seeking to overturn a ruling earlier from Wasco County's district attorney, who found Google's water use is a public record and ordered The Dalles to provide that information to the news organization.

The city sued Friday, asking a judge to intervene.

Google is contemplating two new server farms on the site of a former aluminum smelter in The Dalles, where it already has an enormous campus of data centers on its property along the Columbia River.

Google says it needs more water to cool its data centers, but neither the company nor the city will say how much more – only that The Dalles can't meet Google's needs without expanding its water system. The deal calls for Google to pay for the upgrade.

[Another Oregon House member resigns before term ends](#)

Albany Democrat-Herald

State Rep. Brian Clem is the latest member to announce he will leave the Oregon Legislature before the end of his elected term.

Clem, 49, is a Democrat from House District 21 in Salem. He unseated Republican incumbent Billy Dalto in 2006 and has been re-elected seven times since. He announced during the Legislature's special session on Sept. 27 that he would not seek another term, but on Oct. 29, he said he would leave before the official end of his term Jan. 9, 2023.

His mother, who has Alzheimer's disease, is living with him, his wife Carol Suzuki — who works in the Senate Majority Office — and their daughter. He is a small-business owner. His interim successor will be chosen by Marion County commissioners from three to five candidates nominated by Democratic precinct persons within his current district — not the district that will be redrawn for the 2022 elections.

In a statement released by the House Majority Office, Clem did not specify a date, but said his replacement should be chosen in time to serve in the 35-day session in 2022, which is scheduled to start Feb. 1.

From the statement:

"At this time, I have decided it is in the best interest of my constituents that I step down and focus on some immediate needs for my mother in her journey as an Oregonian living with Alzheimer's disease.

Andrew Fromm

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*Please note that all emails sent to and from this email may be subject to disclosure under public records law.

