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Governor Kate Brown Calls Special Session to Consider $800 Million in Relief for Oregonians

December 15, 2020

Governor calls on legislature to help Oregon communities impacted by COVID-19 and wildfires

Salem, OR—Governor Kate Brown will convene a Special Session of the Oregon Legislature at 8:00 a.m. Monday, Dec. 21, 2020, to address Oregonians' most pressing needs given the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic, which have only been compounded by Oregon's horrific wildfires. The Governor is asking the legislature to consider both critical policies and $800 million in relief to support Oregonians during a one-day special session on COVID-19 and wildfires.

"Oregonians are making tremendous sacrifices to prevent the spread of COVID-19," said Governor Brown. "While the risk reduction measures we have put in place are working to slow the spread, many Oregon families are struggling with unemployment, housing, food insecurity, and paying their bills — and those most impacted are the same people who are often left behind, including rural, Black, Indigenous, Latino/Latina/Latinx, Asian, Pacific Islander, and Tribal communities.

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"I continue to call on Congress to pass another robust coronavirus relief bill to bring support to the American people. But these calls have not yet been heeded. It is clear that states must act on their own to provide a bridge until federal help arrives. This is why I am calling on legislators from both sides of the aisle to come together in the best interests of the state.

"We must protect Oregonians now, as we face some of our hardest days, whether by getting critical resources into the hands of those most in need, keeping a roof over people's heads, or recognizing the incredible toll of this virus on our small businesses and restaurants. Oregon must act to bridge the gap as we continue to wait to see federal relief. I thank legislators for their work in addressing these critical issues next week, and I look forward to our progress."

Included in the Governor's budget priorities is aid for tenants and landlords, funding for vaccine distribution and contact tracing, wildfire prevention and community preparedness, and support for reopening schools.

To help ensure a healthy and safe environment for conducting session, legislative officials are consulting the state epidemiologist, Dr. Dean Sidelinger.

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