



Agenda/Notes
Office of Governor Kotek — Racial Justice Council (RJC)
February 27, 2025 – Zoom Webinar
3:00-4:00 p.m.

CHAIR

X	Governor Tina Kotek
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MEMBERS

X	Ana Molina	X	Jimmy Howard		Mark Jackson
X	Angela Uherbelau	X	Josie Silverman-Mendez	X	Paul Solomon
X	Annie Valtierra-Sanchez	X	Kim McCarty	X	Reyna Lopez
X	Cynthia Richardson		Latiffe Amado		Shay Huber
X	James Cador		Marcus C Mundy	X	Tristen Edwards
X	Janice Mason	X	Maria Elena Guerra “Meg”		Tiffany Monroe
X	James Alan Parker	X	Marin Arreola		
	Jenny Pool Radway	X	Marisa Zapata		

OTHER ATTENDEES

X	Andre Bealer		Johnna Timmes	X	Shana McConville
X	Ami Goswami		Johnna Papaefthimiou	X	Svetha Ambati
	Bob Livingston		Karin Power		Taylor Smiley Wolfe
X	Bryan Longoria		Kelly Brooks	X	Valerie Colas
X	Chris Warner		Kristina Narayan	X	Vince Porter
	Doug Grafe	X	Matthew Tschabold	X	Yasmin Solorio
X	Danny Moran		Maya Crawford Peacock		
X	Javier Cervantes	X	Morgan Gratz-Weiser		
X	Jesse Hyatt		Rachael Moser		

Topic/Lead	Notes/Main Points	Decisions/ Action Items
Governor’s Welcome	Governor: Yesterday was the March revenue forecast. One of the forecasts that guides work for session. Another one will be coming in May. It went up a little bit, economic forecast is solid. My GRB is still fundable under current structure. Morgan will give an update on things we are tracking, then we can take questions and open it to the floor for items that relate to session.	
Update on Legislature and Governor’s Priorities <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Q&A 	Morgan: We are 5-6 weeks into legislative session. Getting close to first round of deadlines. This year we have the most introduced bills out of any session. Gov Office has a three-person legislative team. We portion things out by initiative area and policy areas. We just passed legislative deadlines. New things might be popping up but we know most of what we’re working with. Bills need to be scheduled for a work session by March 21 st and voted out by April 9 th . Certain committees have later deadlines. Bills that have a fiscal implication will go to Ways and Means subcommittee process.	Morgan to gather BIPOC Caucus priority list to share out.

Governor priorities:

- **Housing bills:**

- HB 3644 - Establish state shelter program
- HB 2139-2 - Establish Tribal housing grant program
- SB 814 - Expand access to long-term rent assistance for youth
- HB 2138 - Middle Housing Bill
- HB 3031 - Establish a Infrastructure for Housing program

- **Education bills:** Increasing school funding and K-12 accountability

- **HB 2140:** Updating CSL Projections for the State School Fund
- SB 141 (HB 2009): K-12 Accountability

- **Behavioral Health:**

- **SB 142** is the Governor's priority bill on **behavioral health workforce**.

Other key issues:

- **Transportation package** - By way of brief background, the state relies on gas tax receipts combined with fees on vehicles and freight haulers to form the State Highway Fund, which then distributes money to transportation agencies across the state.
- **Provider tax (HB 2010)** Oregon last passed a provider tax in 2019 to protect the state's Medicaid expansion – including 400,000 children, as well as seniors and people with disabilities – who otherwise could not afford a doctor's visit and are often forced to go to the emergency room when they are sick.
- **Wildfire funding** There was legislative direction in 2024 for a workgroup to convene to determine funding solutions for wildfire seasons.

GRB invests \$90 million for new mental health treatment, and other items for stable bed space. It takes time with permitting and construction to really get that bed capacity to be available. We still have a shortage, especially with some substance use residential and withdrawal management. Partnering closely with Rep. Nosse on that work. Another area in behavioral health that I will note is on civil commitment. Governor is supportive of the legislature's efforts on civil commitment. NAMI Oregon has three bills that they are working on that will help open up pathways to treatment and reduce the over reliance on the criminal justice system to help people access treatment. There's been a work group convened by Rep. Jason Kropf. OHA and our office have been engaging in that to identify some solutions to both the civil commitment and aid and assist process, which has created some of the inappropriate use of the state hospital and lack of access for individuals who need to be there. That is our three big bucket areas.

Governor: Thanks, Morgan. Some of my bills are companions to the asks

– not every budget issue has an intended bill. We can get a list of bills Morgan shared - these are bills we are specifically following. Lots going on. Before we get into other areas, do we have any questions for Morgan?

Paul: Is the LIFT funding part of the OHCS agency budget?

Governor: It is as part of a bonding ask. What's the amount?

Matt: \$780 million for LIFT. \$80 million is for the tiered housing development program.

Governor: Thanks, Matt.

Jan: SB 142 on behavioral health workforce, does it include \$20 million in HECC? Is it including wrap around services or is that not part of that bill?

Morgan: Going to pull up more detailed notes, going to say yes. Looking at how to help folks achieve and succeed. Some of the certifications don't actually need either community college or university. Can dig in a little bit or on specifics.

Jan: Just reminder we have a Future Ready work group.

Morgan: Huge shoutout to Sarah Foster, we did poach her from HECC working on Future Ready.

Angela: I saw that the BIPOC caucus recently released a list of its priorities. Are some of those the same bills as those just mentioned? And can RJC get a list of the ones and also the BIPOC caucus priority bills?

Governor: Trying to set that up for next month. Don't have their priority list handy.

Morgan: Can get that list and share it. We just got it.

Governor: Thanks, Morgan.

Marin: I'm assuming is it part of the bill, emphasized to make sure that we get more diversity within behavioral health. As you know we need more bilingual bicultural therapists throughout the state. Is that part of the emphasis of the bill? How is that being addressed in terms of the bill?

Morgan: Yes, we are trying to walk the line of what we can put into statute and stay within the legal bounds. Where we can prioritize funding but definitely with the emphasis of not only encouraging students but encouraging providers, culturally specific providers, to be able to access resources to help diverse students and diverse provider groups be able to access the needed funds.

Governor: We have a much more targeted number this year. Even \$50 million is still a lot but the numbers in the previous biennium's we're finishing up is actually larger but you we have a little more constrained budget. For me there's two possible pathways that we have to converge.

One is making sure the population providers looks more like the population they're serving. Getting more diversity and cultural competency in that pipeline is really important. Making sure when we are making investments to achieve that and strengthen the workforce. We're focusing on the workforce who does serve the Medicaid population.

Marisa: what's being put into place to support people particularly for SMI. It's a gap everywhere. We also known it can be a hard sell to work with people with dual diagnoses. What's being done specifically for that work and long-term retention.

Governor: This might be a good suggestion for our next meeting to dig into the behavioral health workforce piece. Some dollars might be going into the employers. People are just leaving the field; we have to retain plus get more folks in. Let's dig in deeper for next meeting. Opening to floor for questions.

Marin: How is the federal level Impacting your current session in terms of planning budgets bills? For example, in terms of discussion of Medicaid.

Governor: My general message has been and continues to be we have to just deal with our own issues, deal with the resources we have, and try not to get distracted only because we do not know how this is going to impact. At the district session next year when we're into a next fiscal, federal fiscal, year we'll have seen what Congress is doing. Congress just passed their budgetary framework in mind. They could potentially impact Medicaid. When I was in DC last week, I did a press conference with other democratic governors to talk about why cut cutting Medicaid is a bad thing and how it has impact it is been driven mostly at this point by the desire to find money for tax breaks. Although the president has said he's not going to cut Medicaid. We're just going to keep doing what we're doing. We're in the process of inventorying all of our federal funding streams outside of Medicaid. We get small, medium, even large grants throughout all of our agencies it's in the billions of dollars - very unclear which of those will be impacted. We're just monitoring, analyzing, listening and trying to figure out. I anticipate we won't know by the end of the session if we should do anything differently. I think we should just set the budget as best we can and then continue to modify over the course of the biennium if we have to.

Jimmy: I was curious particularly given some of the more recent guidance from the Department of Education has a deeply impactful and chilling effect on campus particularly around DI initiatives. Even something so minor as graduate celebrations. I'm curious to know if there is any particular like floating around to bills that could be proposed that might help protect some of those pieces or anything in your legislative agenda that might be impacted by some of the more recent education focused efforts from this current administration.

Governor: Nothing being proposed that I'm aware of but not from our office. That doesn't mean there's not legislator's looking for some kind of stopgap measure there. We are questioning everything that has already been allocated by Congress and trying to keep anything from being cut

back until we know for sure that executive orders are not law and so there's a lot of confusion right now about what is actually happening.

Kim: These are just some observations. While we don't know what's going to be happening with the federal budget, this comment is less about the budget and more about what observations that I'm having with local leadership. What I'm experiencing is a chill as it relates to DI programs use of the words black or indigenous. I'm already being asked to reconsider whether or not I'm going to be serving immigrant and refugee communities, to modify language that's based on identity. Curious about what you feel can be done to shape the messaging to allow communities to local leaders to not feel that they need to back away from diversity and inclusion initiatives.

Governor: As it relates to state government and state agencies, I've been clear and will continue to communicate that our diversity equity inclusion and belonging work is part of everything we do. We certainly have some folks who have dedicated tasks around that but that it is embedded in all of our work. I do also believe that everything that we have done it's constitutional both in the US and Oregon constitution. We have nondiscrimination laws in our state. It's difficult for folks in the immigrant refugee space for service providers; they're literally having their dollars cut. Unfortunately, there's not much we can do about that as a state per se and in that area particularly it's been heavily federally funded. That is significant when those dollars are getting pulled back. We're trying to send the message that we believe in the work we're doing here, we do not believe it's illegal, we don't believe it's discriminatory, it gets a little grayer when you're talking about specific funding streams for the federal government but from our from our standpoint we're not changing any practice at this point we're just doing what we've always done.

Angela: There's so much gratitude around both trying to increase the amount of money that goes into our schools coupled with accountability. There have been stories recently that show that we are spending 80% more over the last decade with the same outcomes. I worry that districts and sometimes others are really resistant to change and resistant to directives and I know the accountability legislation is being crafted right now it's not set but thank you for continuing to look at that. We're behind you as we might have to really push like other states have done towards standards and directives and that might be different.

Tristen: HB 2641 had a hearing yesterday. Relates to the use of prior convictions as impeachment evidence against witnesses. As a public defender I can just say this is an incredibly important bill and I think in particular as it relates to racial justice. This is a really important bill for our committee. We did draft a template written testimony and allowed individual members of our committee to submit that template because we're still waiting on a process for getting approval to be an RJC endorsement. I think that there's going to be additional hearings even in the house on that bill. We're hoping that we can we can put in an efficient RJC endorsement at some point once that process has been identified. The other bill that we are tracking is SB-938 that is the restorative justice bill. The primary goal for restorative justice is to get within the current service level budget of the CJC and receive funding which is already

contemplated in your budget. I'm happy to announce that that bill as of 5 minutes ago was voted out of the Senate Judiciary Committee. Still unclear if it's going to go through ways and means or if it'll pass on for a vote on the senate floor - just wanted to provide that update.

Marisa: Multnomah County has a significant gap in their budget for homelessness.

And think productively and proactively about what happens there. Appreciate all your comments that you've made to the press and the comments that other elected officials made it a metro meeting earlier this week. What are we going to do here? This might be more political strategy that's not appropriate for here but it's weighing on me quite a bit.

Governor: The highest, the largest, population of unsheltered folks is in Multnomah County and the city of Portland. Need to prioritize to maintain current services. With the bill we have, we are fighting for addiction prevention and housing dollars. Our goal is to dig in numbers with county and need to know what other choices you're making at the county budget. Going to be difficult to have a lot of new, we need to maintain and prioritize. Ask right now is not feasible for current environment. We want to make sure they can maintain services.

Marisa: Definitely believe in "your failure to plan is not my emergency", but again, it is complicated.

Governor: We are working on that.

Javier: Reminder March 20th is the next RJC meeting. More traditional report backs from each committee. Will send reminders for everyone. Presiding Officers are confirmed, will tighten up agenda and send out.

Paul: Want to put plug in for Criminal Justice Commission on March 6th and 7th. Centering voices on impacted people in the system on this year's conference. Kudos on your support on CJC programs to reduce disparities in BIPOC members. JREP you supported, restorative justice which was one of our committee bills, JRI program to decrease dependence on jail and recidivism. Thanks for your sport.

Governor: Good luck on summit next week. We are able to go back to CJC since they are so good with noting what they are using money for.

Paul: HB 4002 - we got dollars out the door in 60 days to start the programs.

Governor: They are in the process for giving us first report. Starting to see numbers and positive trends. Will adjust as we go along. CJC does a great job.

Adjourn

Governor: We'll see you March 20th. Don't wait until then, session moves quickly. If you have questions, direct them to the team.

Materials



BIPOC Caucus 2025
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