



The 2019 legislative session officially began this week, and OBI is engaging with legislators on a wide variety of significant policy issues. Mike Stober and OBI leadership are deeply involved in conversations around tax and fiscal policy including the proposals for significant tax increases to fund education. Our partners at Legislative Advocates are representing us in carbon policy and employment discussions, Megan Chuinard is communicating the business perspective on health, education and workforce policy, and Paloma Sparks is working with a wide variety of stakeholders to educate legislators about how legislation may impact employers and retailers. [Click here](#) for bios.

Workplace Harassment

The Senate Committee on Workforce started the session in full gear with a hearing on a bill relating to workplace harassment. The bill has not been formally introduced, but the draft we have seen would be a significant change from current law: it would increase the time an employee would have to file a lawsuit from one year to seven years; it would change provisions around non-disclosure and severance agreements, and it would provide for personal liability for owners, presidents, partners or corporate officers. OBI is communicating our concerns that, while we all agree that we want workplaces to be harassment-free zones, this is an overreach and could expose employers to costly and time-consuming litigation. [Click here](#) to read the draft bill.

Cap and Trade

As you are all aware, cap and trade legislation is coming. To date, a bill has not been introduced, but we expect to see one next week. We continue to communicate our concerns for business and the economic well-being of Oregon under such legislation. When the bill is introduced, we will share it with you promptly.

Healthcare

Megan Chuinard, our government affairs director who manages policies related to education, workforce and healthcare, has identified bills that will impact healthcare policies, including some impacting business. [Click here](#) to read Megan's analysis of the major policy proposals we expect in healthcare.



Education

The Joint Committee on Student Success released its final report this week. This report will guide the Legislature's discussions about education investment and, potentially, tax increases. Read the full report [here](#).



In the News

[Portland Tribune: Growing costs of public employee benefits](#)

[Oregonian: Rising costs for PERS](#)

[Bend Bulletin: Where are Governor Brown's PERS solutions?](#)

[Oregonian Editorial: Medicaid tax deserves robust debate](#)

Do you have questions about pending legislation? Feel free to contact our team.

Tax and fiscal policies: [Mike Stober](#)

Education and health care policies: [Megan Chuinard](#)

Employment and retail policies: [Paloma Sparks](#)

Environment and energy policies: Position to be filled soon. For now, send questions to [Katie Koenig](#).

OBI HealthChoice
Big Business Options on
a Small Business Budget

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Businesses Choose
OBI CompSAFE**

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Calendar of Events

February 28, 2019

OBI Lobby Day - SAVE THE DATE

Mark your calendars for OBI Lobby Day. More information to follow.

May 7, 2019

Annual Meeting & Legislative Reception - SAVE THE DATE

Mark your calendars for OBI's Annual Meeting at the Salem Convention Center. We invite all our members to join us as we bring together business and civic leaders to discuss issues important to business and industry in our state. Watch for registration and more details soon.

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