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81st LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY
HOUSE SPECIAL COMMITTEE ON MODERNIZING THE PEOPLE'S LEGISLATURE

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June 2, 2021

Honorable Tina Kotek
Speaker of the House
State Capitol, Room 269
Salem, Oregon 97310

Dear Speaker Kotek:

Given the demands placed on the Oregon Legislative Assembly, and on both partisan and nonpartisan legislative staff since January 2020, the House Special Committee on Modernizing the Peoples' Legislature (HMPL) urges the House of Representatives to encourage members and both partisan and nonpartisan staff to either take a break or return to a more normal pace of work in July of 2021. We also recommend that the House not schedule committee or task force meetings and encourage members to minimize requests to both partisan and nonpartisan office staff during July.

This action would allow Oregon's part-time, citizen legislators and the staff that support their work to take time to spend with family and loved ones, to enjoy Oregon's great outdoors, and to reconnect with their communities after 18 months of consistent and pertinent work. For example, since January 2020, the Legislative Assembly has held two regular sessions, three special sessions, and many task force, work group, and committee meetings that have addressed both regular business and the crises that Oregonians have faced, including the COVID-19 pandemic, devastating wildfires, housing crisis, and ice storm.

We appreciate your consideration of this recommendation and look forward to working with you on its implementation. The HMPL recognizes that not all members, committees, and staff will be able to take a break in July, but the goal is to allow members and staff the greatest opportunity for a well-earned break or a return to a more normal pace of work. We also encourage you to coordinate with Senate President Courtney to implement the same for the Senate.

Best,

Co-Chair Mark Meek

Co-Chair Kim Wallan

Rep. Rep. Vikki Breese-Iverson

Rep. Janelle Bynum