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QuickPoint! – Kate Brown’s Attention Deficit Disorder

By John A. Charles, Jr.

The most serious problem facing Oregon right now is the exploding costs of the Public Employee Retirement System (PERS). The PERS crisis is so severe that the Oregon Legislature should make it the only issue addressed in the February 2018 legislative session.

But Governor Brown isn’t interested in reducing the PERS liability. That would take too much work and might offend her public employee union campaign contributors. So instead she has signed two Executive Orders purporting to address “climate change,” ahead of her jaunt to Bonn, Germany next week to attend a United Nations conference on global warming.

Her Executive Orders impose a blizzard of costly requirements on new buildings, including requirements for new homes to meet energy efficiency guidelines by 2023, and mandates for new homes to be solar-panel-ready by 2020. New buildings will also have to accommodate electric vehicles, regardless of whether the owners ever intend to own such vehicles.

The Governor is also setting a fantasy policy goal that Oregonians own 50,000 electric vehicles by 2020, more than three times the current ownership level.

Oregon desperately needs political leadership to avoid a PERS-induced death spiral. Unfortunately, all we’re getting is a Governor flying halfway around the world to escape reality.

John A. Charles, Jr. is President and CEO of Cascade Policy Institute, Oregon’s free market public policy research organization.

