The Oregon Whole Plant Act

Implementation Path

How to read this

The Whole Plant Act is the destination, not a demand that the whole thing pass in one session. That distinction matters, because the first reaction to a comprehensive bill is often to freeze: it looks like too big a bite, so nothing moves. This document is the answer to that reaction. It shows the incremental route, what can be done now, what the interim year is for, and what lands last, so a legislator, a stakeholder, or a work group can see that the Act is achievable in stages rather than all at once.

The shape is simple. There are near-term wins that can go into the ordinary omnibus process right away, discrete fixes that stand on their own and that stakeholders already want. There is an interim year in which the reconstituted Commission works out how the full framework phases in. And there is the vote-ready package that follows. The near-term wins are not separate from the framework; they are its first sections, landing early, which means every incremental step is also a step toward the whole.

The forcing function

The timing is not arbitrary. The rewritten federal definition of hemp begins closing the intoxicating-hemp market on November 12, 2026 and completes that closure on December 11, 2026, when the cannabinoids the plant can make but that were synthesized outside it, and the 0.4 milligram per container cap on finished products, come into force under Section 781 of Public Law 119-37 as staged by Section 2019 of Public Law 119-103. A medical-only Schedule III has been in effect since April 2026. Oregon does not control those dates, but it can decide whether it meets them with a rational one-plant framework or scrambles after them. The path below is built to have the framework established in the 2027 session and enacted in 2028, so Oregon stands up the licensed lane classified by intoxicating potential right as the federal changes reshape the market around it. See the federal-move matrix for how the Act answers each federal scenario.

Track one: near-term omnibus wins

These are the pieces that can move now, in the 2027 session, as ordinary omnibus sections, the "fix this, change that" a cannabis omnibus is expected to carry. Each stands on its own, each is something stakeholders across the RIC have already asked for, and each is a section of the Act landing early.

- Authorization by clinical assessment, with no static condition list. A provider may authorize the medical use of cannabis for any condition they believe it may benefit. This is a discrete, popular fix that ends the gatekeeping and does not require the rest of the framework to function.
- Fee-free patient registration. Remove the registration fee so no patient is priced out of the program. Small, clean, and immediate.
- The civil protections. Employment, housing, healthcare and transplant, custody, licensing, public benefits, and the impairment-first common rule. These can land as their own sections, and several already have Oregon anchors to build on, including Senate Bill 176 (2025).
- The criminal-justice fixes. The two-charge fix that bars charging one course of conduct as multiple offenses, automatic no-fee expungement of now-lawful convictions, and an end to metabolite-based sanctions in community supervision. Discrete, and overdue.
- The Ryan's Law education hook. The Rules Advisory Committee on House Bill 4142 is already convening, which is the near-term vehicle to get provider and facility cannabis education moving in the interim, ahead of and in support of the full framework.
- Retail-staff and provider education. The baseline cannabis education requirement can be set in motion now.

None of these require the coordinating structure to be in place first. They are the wins that show the room the Act is real and achievable, and they lower the height of the remaining climb.

Track two: the framework, phased

The larger structural moves, one coordinating authority, classification by intoxicating potential across the whole market, the public-domain moat, the two-tier tax, the industrial exit line, do not land as scattered omnibus edits. They land as the framework, on a two-session clock.

2027, establish and assign. The 2027 session establishes the framework and reconstitutes the Oregon Cannabis Commission as the coordinating body, and its first charge is to convene the interim work group and deliver the implementation plan. The members already seated on the Commission stay seated and start that work on the effective date, rather than waiting for the remaining appointments, because the interim is short and the federal

clocks do not wait. The split is deliberate: 2027 is for the Commission and the work group to figure out implementation, so that 2028 is for signing. The interim work answers the questions that must be settled before enactment: who phases in where, and how fast. The clearest example is cultivation. Moving all cultivation to the Department of Agriculture is the right end state, but it needs a phase-in period, the way the medical-grower transition into track-and-trace needed one, and that sequencing is exactly what the interim year is for.

2028, enact. The 2028 session enacts the vote-ready package: the standards, the licensing portal, the agency roles, and the conforming amendments, presented together rather than piecemeal. By then the near-term wins from Track one are already law and folded in, and the Commission has delivered the implementation plan, so the 2028 vote is on a worked, sequenced package, not a leap.

The omnibus structure, for the room and for counsel

When this is presented as an omnibus bill, it reads as a flowchart, which is how legislators and legislative counsel expect an omnibus to be built. At the top sits the Oregon Cannabis Commission and the anchor amendment: ORS 475C is amended to read. Everything else filters down from there. The Commission shall, then it directs OHA, it directs OLCC, it directs the Department of Agriculture, each in its lane. There is a part for OLCC, a part for OMMP, a part for patent and public-domain protection, and so on, all hanging off the one coordinating instruction at the top. Legislative counsel writes the operative ORS language from that structure; the bill gives them the intent and the blueprint, and they enumerate it into the "shall, including but not limited to" form the code uses.

The point of doing it this way

Phasing is not retreat. The near-term wins deliver real relief immediately and build the credibility that carries the framework. The interim year turns the hardest questions, sequencing, cultivation transition, agency roles, into worked answers instead of open fears. And the two-session clock lines the whole thing up with the federal calendar, so Oregon is building the net before the ball lands rather than reacting after it. A stakeholder who worries the Act is too much at once can see, here, exactly how it arrives in stages, and that every stage is worth having on its own.