



## Oregon School Employees Association

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House Education Committee  
Rep. Courtney Neron, Chair

Chair Neron and members of the committee:

As you know, the Oregon School Employees Association (OSEA) represents more than 24,000 workers who support all levels of public education in Oregon's 36 counties, including Head Start programs, K-12 school districts, education service districts (ESD), parks and community colleges. Classified employees are a key group of frontline professional educators who support Oregon's students every day, including some of the most economically and medically fragile.

OSEA respects and generally agrees with the goal of Senate Bill (SB) 1502 A. Increasing board meeting accessibility is decidedly valuable to our members in 138 local chapters throughout Oregon. We have unfortunately seen examples of school district boards – even those clearly possessing the resources – being less than forthcoming with records of their formal deliberations. Particularly for school districts covering significant distances, accessibility of board meetings needs to not only be noted as a priority but consistently acted upon as a very high priority. We are keenly aware that school board members are volunteers, donating time to help districts function. However, local community leaders, staff and parents are also generally donating their time to monitor or participate in these meetings, and they should not have to bear additional expense or face delays in accessing public information about the board's decisions.

We appreciate that a requirement to stream board meetings further aids public accessibility and would support pursuing that in the future. We recognize that broadband accessibility remains an ongoing concern in many school districts and hope that making audio recordings quickly and easily accessible will help move Oregon toward a higher standard of accessibility.

Unfortunately, OSEA must stop short of supporting SB 1502 A. Increasing accessibility of meeting recordings also, unfortunately, empowers individuals whose goals are disruptive and potentially harmful to the educational process. Since the onslaught of the pandemic, we have seen a significant increase in the frequency and severity of meeting disruptions, doxxing and threats of violence toward educators who are simply trying to do their jobs supporting Oregon students. It takes little effort on the part of bad actors to turn clips from school board recordings into social media misinformation about school district activities. While elected school board members may be prepared for this risk, district staff giving reports certainly should not have to bear this responsibility. It is concerning that SB 1502 A lacks any articulated security standards for these recordings. The bill even allows posting recordings on any form of social media to meet the bill's requirement, which forgoes even the modest amount of security associated with district-owned and controlled websites.

OSEA is respectfully neutral yet concerned about SB 1502 A.

Sincerely,  
Bob Estabrook  
OSEA Government Relations Specialist

