

February 22, 2013

House Business and Labor Committee
Oregon State Capitol
Salem, OR 97301

Chair Doherty and Members of the Committee,

The Association of Oregon Counties has reviewed **HB 2448** and has taken a position in **opposition**. HB 2448 would require binding interest arbitration following mid-term bargaining in strike-permitted units. Currently there is no interest arbitration for these bargaining units. At a minimum, HB 2448 would result in an increase in the number of interest arbitrations and a limitation on a public employer's ability to implement mid-term changes. In a worst case scenario, HB 2448 may force public employers into a constant state of bargaining or require public employers to surrender the ability to make necessary operational changes to a third-party arbitrator.

Included among the problems created by this legislation:

- Increased number of interest arbitration and a resulting substantial cost associated with the increased number of interest arbitrations.
- Significant reduction in the ability of a county to make necessary operational changes during the term of a labor contract.
- Shorter labor contracts and much more frequent bargaining, necessitating increased resources to meet the increased bargaining frequency. This almost assuredly leads to more contentious labor relations.
- While this might shorten the actual bargaining time for interim bargaining, in essence it will lengthen the period before an employer can implement any changes. The time for selecting an arbitrator, scheduling a hearing, followed by the time waiting for a decision, will vastly exceed ninety days.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment and the **Association of Oregon Counties urges a NO on HB 2448.**