



Human Resources

February 13, 2015

Honorable Paul Holvey, Chair  
House Committee on Business and Labor  
900 Court Street NE  
Salem, OR 97301

RE: HB 2544 related to binding arbitration

Chair Holvey and members of the committee:

Thank you for accepting my testimony on HB 2544, which would require binding arbitration for unresolved mid-term collective bargaining issues in strike permitted units.

HB 2544 would significantly change the Public Employee Collective Bargaining Act, and could result in increased cost and workload to the City of Eugene or to other Public Sector organizations. It could also negatively impact the ability for bargaining units and jurisdictions to come to a mutually agreeable solution in contract negotiations.

Currently, interim bargaining allows the employer to negotiate in good faith with our unions over issues that arise that are important to them. Following the specified process, we can implement the proposed change after the bargaining process is complete.

HB 2544 would require that we enter into binding arbitration if we do not reach agreement in interim bargaining. The process would be lengthy and costly, and potentially adversely impact our relationship with our workforce. We strive to maintain a positive relationship with our employees, and HB 2544 would put that at risk unnecessarily, as we believe the current process for mid-term negotiations is working well.

The City of Eugene urges a NO vote on HB 2544. Thank you for your consideration.

Best regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Becky DeWitt", is written over a horizontal line.

Becky DeWitt, SPHR  
Human Resources Manager  
City of Eugene