

February 24, 2015

Representative Shamia Fagan  
Chair, House Business & Labor Committee  
Oregon State Capitol  
900 Court Street NE  
Salem, OR 97301

Chair Fagan & Members of the Committee:

The Special Districts Association of Oregon (SDAO) has approximately 950 single service local government district members that provide a variety of services including municipal drinking water, sanitary sewer and storm water treatment, libraries, rural fire districts, parks and recreation districts, to name a few. Our association would like to express its concerns with HB 2976, which we believe is overly broad and could result in some unfortunate and unintended consequences.

At the outset, SDAO is aware that there have been a few notable instances where former public employees have raised the public's collective eyebrow by becoming a consultant to their former public employer. Nevertheless, recent economic forces resulted in several public employers across the state being forced to lay-off professional, dedicated, knowledgeable and experienced employees. This measure, as presently written provides no consideration for those individuals who become involuntarily separated from their employment, thereby potentially severely undermining that person's ability to make a living wage and remain in their chosen community.

Furthermore, the measure could potentially inhibit an individual's career should they choose to change jobs from a public sector profession to one which provides services to the public sector. It appears that someone would not be able to be employed by a contractor that did work with the contracting agency, even if that individual wouldn't be working on any projects with that contracting agency. This fact, unto itself, makes it less likely that a contractor would consider hiring a qualified individual if that potential employee had worked for a contracting agency during the previous two years.

The measure would also appear to prevent a private employer having hired a former public employee from bidding or contracting with a public entity despite the fact that the employer had not anticipated or considered contracting with that public entity. Section 2(B) would appear to prohibit a receptionist, for example, from answering a call from his/her former public employer contracting with the receptionist's present employer because the measure is not clear.

SDAO appreciates and applauds all efforts to ensure that the public's trust is maintained and enhanced with our governmental bodies. However, HB 2976 is imprecise, overly simplistic and casts a broad net that could result in unnecessary and harmful impacts to innocent Oregonians.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Mark Landauer', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Mark Landauer  
Government Affairs  
Special Districts Association of Oregon