

To: House Committee on Business and Labor
Date: February 24th, 2015
Re: HB 2544

Chair Holvey, members of the committee,

As a labor union representing over 12,000 members in Oregon, the American Federation of Teachers-Oregon urges you to pass House Bill 2544 in support of increased workers' rights in Oregon.

While the collective bargaining process allows management and workers to meet as equals and mutually negotiate an agreement that works for both parties, other processes like interim or expedited bargaining unfairly disadvantages workers. It is not in the spirit of fair labor law to allow employers the right to implement a change in working conditions after only 90 days of negotiations.

For AFT-Oregon members, a change in working conditions could mean a change in learning conditions for Oregon's elementary through university students. Without the proper check that HB 2544 would provide, it puts too much power in the hands of employers. By allowing workers the right to go through mediation and an arbitration process before implementation, it evens the playing field for frontline workers to have a fair chance to negotiate.

AFT-Oregon members urge you to support HB 2544.

Sincerely,

Jaime Rodriguez
AFT-Oregon Vice President for Political Action