

Dear Members of the House Education Committee:

I write in opposition to HB 3339.

As a former commission member (1995-2000) and commission chair (1999 & 2000) I would like to urge you not to move a bill forward that would end the commission's standing as an autonomous licensing board.

Since the creation of the Oregon Teacher Standards and Practices Commission (TSPC) it has been a model for many states nation-wide that have decided to implement a meaningful and effective licensing board. TSPC's independence has been the primary reason for its effectiveness as an organization. The commission members have been able, for decades now, to operate on the cutting edge of licensure and program development unfettered by other political and bureaucratic necessities.

During my time on the commission and with my knowledge of the commission historically, I do not believe there was ever a time that TSPC has not worked cooperatively and effectively with other government agencies. However, I can personally attest to times that they have moved ahead more quickly as an independent board.

For something that has worked so well for so long, one must ask the question "why change it?" As an "other funded" agency the commission operates within its budget year-in and year-out. As serving legislators I would think this would be something to celebrate. I am certain you can all imagine what might happen if TSPC were consumed by a larger government agency? What would be the changes to its operating budget and revenue stream? How soon would it be before the licensure fee paid by so many young struggling teachers and administrators begins to go up?

I urge you to leave TSPC as an independent licensing board. Sit back and be proud of the commissions leading role both within Oregon and throughout the nation, and doing it all without asking you for a penny of general fund money.

Thank you,

Robert Goerke

Retired Principal
Former TSPC Commissioner

Past COSA President