

MEASURE: HB 2565
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Oregon AFSCME Testimony in support of HB 2565

When workers choose to organize to collectively bargain over wages, hours and working conditions, they do so under the rules set by the PECBA or the NLRA. The former is for public employees, and the latter for the private sector.

The Oregon State Bar is a public corporation. It is subject to several laws also applicable to public employers, including public records law and public meetings law, and employees can participate in PERS. Currently, the employees of the State Bar are not subject to the PECBA and therefore cannot organize to collectively bargain as employees of other public corporations can. One example of such a corporation would be OHSU.

In addition, these employees are not private sector employees, and cannot organize under the rules set by the NLRA. Therefore, these employees are caught in a grey area where they cannot organize under either act. This bill will allow these employees to have the same rights in regards to collective bargaining granted to public employees of other public corporations by covering them under the PECBA.

Employees of the State Bar include lawyers, yet their mission is carried out with the help of several job classifications, including accountants, administrative professionals and IT workers. As a union we believe workers deserve the right to organize and collectively bargain over wages, hours and working conditions, and while the State Bar is unique in their standing as an employer, the employees deserve the same opportunities as shared by workers in the public sector.

Oregon AFSCME supports the rights for workers to organize and recommends passage of this bill.

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