



April 23, 2015

**Clackamas County Board of Commissioners  
Policy Position**

**HB 2544: Relating to matters subject to collective bargaining during term of collective bargaining agreement**

**Clackamas County opposes HB 2544:** The Board of County Commissioners strongly opposes HB 2544, which requires binding interest arbitration following mid-term bargaining in strike-permitted units.

HB 2544 would result in an increase in the number of interest arbitrations, and a limitation on a public employer's ability to implement mid-term changes. This bill also forces public employers to choose between a constant state of bargaining or surrendering the ability to make necessary operational changes to a third-party arbitrator. While HB 2544 might shorten the actual bargaining time for interim bargaining, it would simultaneously lengthen the period before an employer can implement any changes to represented employees' terms and conditions of employment, including wages, hours, and working conditions. The combined time in selecting an arbitrator, scheduling a hearing, and then waiting for a decision will vastly exceed ninety days, as required by ORS 243.698.

Clackamas County employs 2,013 represented employees. We strive to ensure fairness and compliance with our employment practices while also engendering goodwill with the public through positive employment experiences and conservative budget management. HB 2544 will most assuredly lead to more contentious labor negotiations and result in a substantial increase in costs to provide the additional interest arbitrations. HB 2544 also would significantly reduce a county's ability to make necessary operational changes during the term of a labor contract.

We urge a "no" vote on HB 2544.

Please contact Chris Lyons at [clyons@clackamas.us](mailto:clyons@clackamas.us) for more information.