



April 12, 2017

Rep. Paul Holvey and Members of the House Committee on Business and Labor  
Oregon State Capitol  
Salem, OR 97301

Dear Chair Holvey and Committee Members:

OLCV leads the fight to protect the environment in the state legislature by coordinating the Oregon Conservation Network, a statewide coalition of environmental groups that promotes environmental protection in the Legislature.

The Sierra Club's Oregon Chapter represents the organization's more than 20,000 members in Oregon and has worked to protect Oregon's environment and natural resources since 1978.

We are writing in support of House Bill 3170, which would provide a voice for research faculty in Oregon's public universities.

Now, more than ever, our environment needs cutting-edge research on issues like climate change, clean energy, forestry practices, and other environmental sciences. Much of that research is taking place at Oregon's public universities, but often, the researchers lack the same rights that many of their colleagues already possess.

In a time of increasing pressures on science and scientists (in particular those studying climate and the environment), access to collective bargaining is especially critical as it lends not only legal protections but a unified voice to defend researchers' findings. Collective bargaining is the only mechanism that gives faculty an enforceable legal protection to defend academic freedom in both teaching and research. As it stands, many researchers are excluded from this protection due to their exclusion from collective bargaining.

Research faculty are critical to a healthy environment. Oregon's public university research faculty should be working collaboratively with universities to shape the direction and priorities of the institution and prioritize and protect research. This bill will help that process and provide vital protections to environmental research. That's why we urge your support on House Bill 3170.

Sincerely,

Paige Spence, Oregon League of Conservation Voters

Rhett Lawrence, Oregon Chapter Sierra Club