



THE NONPROFIT
ASSOCIATION OF
OREGON

Testimony of James White Executive Director, Nonprofit Association of Oregon
HB 2609
February 21, 2017
House Committee on Judiciary

The Nonprofit Association of Oregon (NAO) supports the passage of HB 2609.

NAO is a registered 501(c) (3) nonprofit organization representing over 1,450 Oregon nonprofit organizations and affiliate members which provide assistance to the nonprofit sector. Our members are located throughout the state and come from all areas that serve our communities, including education, health and human services, the arts, and environmental stewardship. NAO's mission is to strengthen the collective voice, leadership and capacity of Oregon nonprofits to enrich the lives of all Oregonians.

HB2609 is the result of a nearly three-year long process to update and modernize ORS Chapter 65 – Oregon's Nonprofit Corporation Code. Under the leadership of the Nonprofit Organizations Law Section of the Oregon State Bar, the Work Group engaged in an open public process that involved input from a wide range of stakeholders. I was invited in my role as Executive Director of NAO – the state-wide association of charitable nonprofits – to be a participant on the work group and provide input. I found the process to be thoughtful and thorough, ensuring various positions were heard and debated, and suitable language was found to ensure the best possible outcomes. HB2609 is the result of many, many hours of careful discussions, drafting and re-drafting of the statute.

ORS 65 is in need of the kind of updating that is proposed in HB2609. NAO, as part of our work, answers more than a thousand calls, e-mails and direct inquiries from Oregon's charitable nonprofits and the general public. I can say that a good number of those questions relate to confusion created by the current language in ORS 65. The bill before you does not propose any major policy shifts in the way nonprofit organizations are governed, which I can assure you, NAO would take exception to if they were proposed. What HB2609 does is to clarify ambiguous and confusing language in the current statutes and modernizes provisions regarding notice and meetings, taking into account advances in technology and providing opportunities for electronic options.

NAO strongly supports the passage of HB2609 to improve the effectiveness and efficiency of nonprofit organizations operating in Oregon.