



March 12, 2019

Chair Barker and Members of the House Business and Labor Committee,

The Confederation of Oregon School Administrators would like to register our concerns about House Bill 2489 in its current form. We believe it would have significant unintended consequences for Oregon's public education system.

First, we are concerned that the bill, as written, may make all school districts employment contracts with unrepresented employees "unenforceable." The bill lays out a series of criteria that must be met for a contract to be enforceable, one of which is: "the employer who is party to the employment contract or agreement is a business registered with the Secretary of State for the entire duration of the employment contract or agreement." Because school districts are neither businesses nor registered with the Secretary of State, we are concerned that many of our contracts may become null.

Additionally, we have concerns about requiring that employment contracts not exceed two years. School districts have many unrepresented employees, from superintendents to business managers to principals to food service managers. Many of these employees have contracts that last longer than two years – and for good reasons.

For example, superintendents will tell you that it takes more than a year or two to make significant systems-level change in a school district that will boost student outcomes. Some of Oregon's most effective superintendents have been in their jobs for five years, ten years, or even longer. Strong, consistent leadership at the district level drives student success, and it's important that school districts have the ability to craft contracts that incentivize steady, long-term leadership.

Additionally, limiting the length of contracts puts Oregon school districts at a competitive disadvantage for hiring school and district leaders, as three-year contracts for superintendents are the norm around the country. In many cases, superintendents, principals, or cabinet-level administrators will sell their homes and move to a new town when they are hired to serve in a new role. Their children will be enrolled in new schools and their spouses will need to find new jobs. Short-term contracts make such moves far riskier, especially for initial contracts where new administrators will not have sufficient time to implement their initiatives.

Thank you for your consideration and we are happy to answer any questions you may have.

Best,

The Confederation of Oregon School Administrators