



June 3, 2019

TO: Senate Rules Committee
FR: Morgan Allen, COSA
RE: COSA Support for HB 3310

Chair Burdick and members of the Senate Rules Committee,

The Confederation of Oregon School Administrators (COSA) represents 2500 school district superintendents and administrators all across Oregon. COSA supports House Bill 3310 - the Oregon Voting Rights Act - to ensure that every voter has an equal opportunity to elect candidates that represent their community.

The bill reinforces, in state statute, the federal prohibition on school districts, education service districts, and community college districts from conducting their elections in a manner that impairs the ability of a protected class in the district from electing the candidate of their choice. The boards that govern our education districts operate best when members of the community have a meaningful voice in local elections and our students benefit when school boards are representative of the students they serve.

House Bill 3310 gives locally elected boards the tools to engage with their community and proactively review their local board election process, and if necessary, make adjustments in collaboration with members of their community. This will help ensure that if there are structural barriers in the local election process, they can be solved proactively without the need for costly litigation.

COSA is also grateful that the Secretary of State Elections Division will make information about this new law available in their manuals and materials regarding Oregon state election law - this important provision is found in Section 3 of the bill. This will prove an invaluable resource for local districts that are not experts on the laws and rules governing local elections, but wish to review their own systems to ensure they are in compliance with the law.

COSA appreciates the collaborative approach that the sponsors of House Bill 3310 have taken to address this important public policy issue. Our democracy works best when our local elected officials are representative of the communities they serve. We urge your support for House Bill 3310 - the Oregon Voting Rights Act.