



Oregon School Employees Association

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From the desk of Jeff Barker

Oregon school employees urge a no vote on Senate Bill 1567A

The Oregon School Employees Association (OSEA) represents more than 22,000 education workers in nearly all levels of public education, including Head Start programs, K-12 school districts, ESDs and community colleges.

OSEA strongly urges opposition to Senate Bill 1567A, which would both interfere in an active collective bargaining process and undercut the important role of impartial arbitration in public employment. Although SB 1567 specifically applies to law enforcement officers, it would establish deeply troubling precedents that affect all public employees in Oregon.

The Legislature must resist the temptation to interfere in individual collective bargaining processes. Collective bargaining relies upon both unions and employers to come to the table in good faith and negotiate according to established and understood rules. Legislative changes – **especially while negotiations are in progress** – should not grant more power to one side than the other, because when the Legislature puts its thumb on the scale in favor of one side, the fundamental foundation of collective bargaining is undermined.

Arbitrator neutrality must be preserved. Arbitrators run an impartial, third-party process to ensure that contract requirements have been followed correctly. Requiring arbitrators to only validate certain outcomes is clearly not in the interest of impartial enforcement. Instead, it undermines the collective bargaining process and gives disproportionate power to those who already hold it: the public employers themselves. Arbitrators must be free to enforce the contract that a public employer agreed to.

OSEA strongly urges a no vote on SB 1567A.

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