

Dear Senate Majority Leader, Rob Wagner, Senate Republican Leader, Fred Girod and Senate Committee Members on Rules:

As a retired public high school English teacher and department head, I was evidently held to a higher standard than members of our Oregon legislature. Unless I had a legitimate excuse such as an illness or a personal or professional day, I was expected to fulfill my duties to the taxpayers who employed me. Regardless of how I felt about the revolving door of administrators in my district, I showed up.

Unlike most of my fellow teachers who, on the first day of school, handed out the "rules for the classroom," I took the time to have my students develop their own rules and, thereby, "buy in" to the classroom environment we had created together. Students never disappointed me in developing reasonable and humane rules for conduct. In the twenty-six years I did this, the one rule that the majority easily embraced was this: "Treat others as you would like to be treated." That's right, "the Golden Rule."

I would ask our legislators who have made a routine of "taking their baseball bat and going home" from the game to consider if that is how they would like to be treated if the proverbial shoe were on the other foot. I would ask if they truly believe, in their heart of hearts, that they are truly representing their constituents or abdicating a responsibility that any one of my sixteen year old students could easily declare in supporting "the social contract."

Having said all of this, I am sad that I must add my voice to those who support the SJR 3 Amendment. The current unwillingness of legislators who refuse to participate in the democratic process required of a democratic republic is a stain upon public service and requires this measure to get the people's work done. I look forward to the day when mutual respect and working for the common good are once again the norm in the public sphere.

Sincerely,
Andrew Seles
Ashland, Oregon