

Chair Wagner, Vice-Chair Girod, Members of the Committee:

For the record, my name is Dana Barbar, my pronouns are she/her, I'm with Planned Parenthood Advocates of Oregon, and I live in Lake Oswego, Oregon.

As an advocate for reproductive justice, it is my duty to draw attention to the ways in which many social factors affect a person's right to have or not have children, AND to parent their children in safe and sustainable communities. Those factors, among many others, include education, a strong economy, and healthcare. And one of the most effective ways we can ensure that our complex needs are being met is to elect lawmakers that represent and work to advance the issues that will directly affect the resources we have for ourselves and our children. And when we elect them, we expect them to do their jobs.

When lawmakers take the oath of office, they swear to uphold the constitution and do the people's work that we elected them to do. There are many duties that lawmakers must adhere to, and the first duty is simple: show up for work. And now more than ever, we need our lawmakers to do the work. Oregonians are struggling during the COVID-19 pandemic. When politicians walk out, they not only waste taxpayer money - they slow down our economic recovery, and block bills that help schools, small businesses, Oregonians who are unemployed, as well as preparation for the next wildfire season. These are all issues that directly pertain to reproductive justice; how much money we make directly affects how we parent, and environmental disasters do not make for the most safe and sustainable communities, and, they disproportionately affect Oregonians of color and low-income Oregonians.

According to recent polling, an overwhelming bipartisan majority of Oregonians support holding lawmakers accountable for failing to show up to work – up to 84%, in fact. We collectively do not accept lawmakers who try to shut down the legislature. There is already too much extremism and division in America, and we need to get back to basics. We need lawmakers to show up, do their job, and work with the other side on issues that directly affect our livelihoods and our families. We stand united for consequences for lawmakers who violate their most basic oath. Such as: There should be fines to hold them accountable when they walk out. They shouldn't be allowed to use political contributions to pay their salaries and fines. If they miss 10 days of work unexcused they shouldn't be allowed to run for office again.

You have the opportunity to change things so that a few lawmakers can't just shut down our state government. That is why I urge you to vote YES on SB 261, SB 262, SJR 3, and SJR 4. Thank you.