

March 18, 2021

Submitted Testimony in favor of SB 261, SB 262, SJR 3, and SJR 4

To: Chair Wagner, Vice Chair Girod, members of the Senate Rules Committee

From: No More Costly Walkouts Coalition

The No More Costly Walkouts coalition - a diverse group of organizations that have come together to call for accountability for Legislators that violate their oath of office - supports the four bills before you today, and voters agree. Based on research done by GBAO Strategies in February of this year, which was coincidentally the last time Republican Senators failed to show up for work on the floor of the Senate, Oregonians showed strong opposition for these tactics.

- 84% say they support policy with the provisions of SJR 3, which would ban a lawmaker from running for re-election if they have 10 unexcused absences in a session. After going through the 35-day shutdown in 2020 and repeated dysfunction in the legislature, Oregonians have had enough.
- 82% say lawmakers should lose compensation if they don't show up to work and the session should be extended if a small number of lawmakers shut things down.
- 78% say lawmakers who don't show up to work should have to pay fines as well as lose salary and other compensation.
- 78% say lawmakers shouldn't be allowed to fundraise from political donors to pay those fines or make up lost salary.

We strongly urge you to join Oregonians in holding lawmakers accountable for violating their oath of office.

Oregonians from all walks of life across our state go to work every day in order to provide for their families and keep the promises they make to their job, their friends and their families. Legislators need to fulfill their duty, keep their promises and do their jobs. When lawmakers take the oath of office, they swear to uphold the constitution and do the people's work.

The legislators who have walked out over the last few years were collecting a taxpayer-funded paycheck even when they weren't showing up for work. Regular people don't get paid when we don't go to work, and politicians shouldn't get paid for skipping work either.

Even worse of course is the fact that Oregonians are facing historic crises. During this period where our government has struggled with these walkouts shutting government down, Oregonians have faced overlapping once-in-a-lifetime challenges: A deadly global pandemic, some of the worst wildfires in state history, and some Oregonians going days without power because of awful ice storms.

Past walkouts have slowed or stopped legislation that would have helped thousands of Oregonians, and at a time when the Federal government has allocated billions of dollars of widely supported emergency aid for Oregon, we should not be endangering that by slowing down or shuttering our government.

Enough is enough. These walkouts must be stopped. Thank you.

### No More Costly Walkouts Coalition

