



March 18, 2021

Senator Wagner, Chair  
Senator Girod, Vice-Chair  
Members of the Senate Committee on Rules  
Oregon State Capitol  
Salem, OR 97301

Chair Wagner and Members of the Committee,

We support Senate Bill 261 to prohibit members of the Legislative Assembly from soliciting or using contributions to pay fines or legal expenses, replace salary, defray expenses or otherwise compensate members for monetary losses incurred as result of unexcused absences from sessions of Legislative Assembly.

Oregonians are enduring crisis on top of crisis -- from the Labor Day wildfires to the Valentine's Day ice storms; the COVID-19 pandemic and the economic fallout to a reckoning with historic and ongoing racial injustice. Now more than ever, we need our elected government to work quickly, boldly, and decisively to help Oregonians through emergencies and make policies to shape a future where we're less vulnerable to all of these crises.

Over the past three years, a small group of legislators elected by a minority of voters has too frequently stopped the peoples' business by refusing to show up and do the job they were elected to do. All the while continuing to collect paychecks funded by our tax dollars. As a result, our state has been less prepared for crisis, stalled from helping communities, businesses, schools, and individuals prepare for health, economic, and climate change-fueled disasters or make progress toward a better future.

There must be serious repercussions for an elected official who refuses to do the job they were elected to do by Oregonians. Anti-democratic behavior must not be tolerated because we've seen it cascade dangerously from rhetoric to walkouts to outright violence at the Oregon and U.S. Capitols recently.

Oregonians elect legislators to show up, debate, make bills better, and then take a vote. That's the expectation and the oath lawmakers swear to upon taking their seats. Refusing to take part in the fairly elected legislature is a violation of that oath and failure to represent their own constituents as well as taking away representation for Oregonians who voted for lawmakers who do show up.

Sincerely,

Brad Reed, Campaign Manager  
Renew Oregon

[Renew Oregon](#) is a clean energy advocacy [coalition](#) of businesses and workers, healthcare professionals and parents, farmers and ranchers, faith and community organizations, and individuals coming together to move our state away from polluting energy to a clean energy economy. We are working to create good-paying jobs for all Oregonians, protect air and water from pollution, and help families stay healthy.