



To: Senator Wagner, Chair  
Senator Girod, Vice-Chair  
Members of the Senate Committee on Rules

From: Lindsey Scholten, Oregon League of Conservation Voters

Date: March 18, 2021

For the record my name is Lindsey Scholten and I am the deputy director for the Oregon League of Conservation Voters. Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony in support of Senate Bill 261, Senate Bill 262, Senate Joint Resolution 3, and Senate Joint Resolution 4.

The Oregon League of Conservation Voters or “OLCV” is a nonpartisan organization with over 20,000 members across the state. For almost 50 years, OLCV has worked to ensure our elected leaders and our state’s environmental policies represent and reflect the strong environmental values held by the people of Oregon.

But representation only happens when our state legislators show up to do their jobs. Legislators swear an oath to uphold the constitution and do the people's work. Walking out and shutting down the legislative process not only defies the will of the voters, but also causes real harm at a time when we need leadership more than ever.

We all know the last year has been tough in many ways. We are still grappling with a pandemic, which has taken the lives of over 2,300 people in Oregon. It has also led to more Oregonians struggling to make ends meet, and upended daily life for all of us.

In the last year we also saw the climate crisis hit home with the most destructive wildfire season in our state’s history. At least nine people were killed, more than 4,000 homes were destroyed, and toxic air quality soared above measurable levels. Families and entire communities are still recovering and need help now. We can’t afford to wait when it comes to preparation and prevention measures for the next wildfire season or for the ongoing climate crisis.

2021 hasn’t been a huge improvement. A huge ice storm hit and we saw more power outages than we have in 60 years.

Within all of these crisis and more, we know impacts are felt hardest by low-income Oregonians, and Black, Indigenous, and people of color. Racial justice can’t wait.

The challenges facing Oregon right now are real. The heroes of today are showing up to do their jobs even when facing unprecedented danger and hardship to do so.

Meanwhile, some of our state legislators won't show up to their jobs if they don't get their way. It's unacceptable. Walking out violates their oath of office and the public's trust.

There's too much on line, and the people of Oregon deserve better.

OLCV strongly supports Senate Bills 261 and 262 and Senate Joint Resolutions 3 and 4 because we need real accountability and consequences for any legislator who refuses to do the job they were elected to do.

Thank you for your consideration and the opportunity to submit testimony on this critical issue.