

Discussion Draft for the House Special Committee on Modernizing the People's Legislature

May 24, 2021

Whereas the House Special Committee on Modernizing the People's Legislature held informational and public hearings during the 2021 session on the following topics:

- a) 2005-2006 Public Commission on the Legislature;
- b) Public Access through Language and Translation Services and Virtual Testimony;
- c) the Capitol Building Experience as a Workplace and a Place to Visit and Learn about Oregon;
- d) Black, Indigenous, and People of Color (BIPOC) Inclusion;
- e) Serving in the Legislature and Legislative Pay;
- f) Technology's Role in the Legislative Process;
- g) School Tours and Civics Education;
- h) the Challenges of Being a Legislator and Navigating other Employment;
- i) Remote Participation in Committees;
- j) Reforming Oregon's Legislative Democracy;
- k) Professional Ethics Standards for Legislative Nonpartisan Offices; and

Whereas the House of Representatives passed House Concurrent Resolution 24 in 2017; and

Whereas in accordance with HCR 24, Information Services and the Legislative Policy and Research Office have created the necessary infrastructure to accommodate remote participation in House of Representatives and Senate Committees; and

Whereas the COVID-19 pandemic response in Oregon necessitated that members of the 81st Legislative Assembly participate in committees remotely; and

Whereas the Office of the Chief Clerk is responsible for guided tours and civics education in the state; and

Whereas the Covid-19 pandemic led to the closure of the Oregon State Capitol Building to the public; and

Whereas Visitor Services and the Office of the Chief Clerk are able and willing to provide more inclusive access to the Capitol, the People's Legislature, and Oregon Civics Education; and

Whereas the members of Legislative nonpartisan offices must meet the ethical standards of their respective licensing boards;

Be it resolved by the Legislative Assembly of the State of Oregon:

- (1) This concurrent resolution constitutes a rule of proceeding of the House of Representatives of the Eighty-First Legislative Assembly.
- (2) Committees and subcommittees of the Senate and House of Representatives and joint committees and subcommittees of the Legislative Assembly shall accept remote testimony and Member participation via videoconferencing.
- (3) The Sergeant at Arms, as an employee of the Office of the Chief Clerk, shall create a digital guided tour and make it widely available to Oregonians who are unable to travel to the Capitol.

- (4) The Sergeant at Arms shall create a civics education unit in compliance with the Oregon Department of Education's curriculum standards for students in primary and secondary grades that provides instruction in Oregon's form of government. This civics education unit shall be made available to all Oregon school districts for use in classroom settings and to fulfill civics education requirements.
- (5) Visitor Services shall make use of the education resources created by the Sergeant at Arms to facilitate inclusive access to the Capitol.
- (6) Visitor Services and the Legislative Policy and Research Office shall continue to improve language translation and interpretation services to ensure the public has better access to the legislative process.
- (7) This Committee recommends that ORS 173.111 be amended to provide that, for purposes of the Attorney-Client relationship as defined by the Oregon State Bar and existing between the Office of Legislative Counsel and the Legislative Assembly, the Joint Committee on Legislative Counsel is the Client.
- (8) This Committee recommends that ORS 173.130 (2) be amended to provide that Legislative Counsel may not prepare or assist in preparation of legislative measures requested by state agencies and may act only as a scrivener to ensure that proposed legislation is in the proper form to be presented as a bill.
- (9) The Joint Committee on Legislative Counsel shall meet regularly during regular and special sessions.
- (10) The Office of Legislative Counsel shall report to the Joint Committee on Legislative Counsel, advising the Client of the constitutionality of all proposed measures and amendments during the Committee's regular meetings.