

Submitter: Lisa Barnes
On Behalf Of:
Committee: House Committee On Rules
Measure: HB4140

I am strongly in support of expanding the duties of OGEC to conduct investigations, make findings and impose penalties for violations of public meeting laws. As it stands right now, local government positions (Commissioners, School Boards, etc) in Oregon are much like the wild west. There are no firm rules or standards, and people with little knowledge of how to run a public meeting or the proper way to do things are in a powerful position to cause harm. There is an open door for the lack of transparency and possible use of illegal activities/decisions in an effort for those running public meetings to drive personal political agendas and exclude minorities or marginalized people from having input and equitable representation. There needs to be a standard for fair and transparent policy making at all levels of government. Broken public meeting laws and subsequent damage can happen anywhere in Oregon until OGEC gains the ability to enforce the law. Thank you.