

**COURTNEY NERON**  
**STATE REPRESENTATIVE**  
DISTRICT 26



**Testimony in Support of HB 4114**

February 10, 2022

Chair Smith Warner, Vice-Chairs Breese-Iverson and Fahey, and members of the House Rules Committee,

For the record, my name is Courtney Neron and I am the State Representative of House District 26. Thank you for the opportunity to present HB 4114 before the committee today.

I want to begin this conversation with an acknowledgement of the hard work that our school board members do and how especially difficult this volunteer work has been in recent years. The pandemic exacerbated challenges and to those who have served during this time, I thank you.

HB 4114 is a simple but practical bill that would require that school board members submit statements of economic interest with the Oregon Government Ethics Commission. All elected officials, including those who serve as a school board member have a responsibility to operate government with public interests in mind.

This bill is responsive to the Secretary of State Audit that suggests it is time to add School Board members to the long list of public officials who already file this declaration of assets and financial interests. It ensures fairness and transparency, especially when gifts, budgets and contract negotiations are on the line.

Elected school board members have the great responsibility of managing billions of Oregon's dollars (collectively), yet are one of few positions where statements of economic interest are not required. Statements of economic interest (SEI) forms give community members information about potential conflicts of interest. The Secretary of State audit noted that while information in an SEI *"does not preclude individuals from serving on a school board, it is important to provide the public with adequate information about these potential conflicts to maintain accountability and fairness."*

OSBA and I have worked on a recent amendment that I hope the committee will consider. It will protect a school board member's phone number and address from public records. This is in light of intimidation tactics and harassment of school board officials that we are seeing in communities across the state.

It is my goal to support a high level of ethics within our institutions, build integrity, transparency and public trust.

Thank you for your consideration of HB 4114, I urge your "yes" vote and support in passage of this bill out of committee.

State Representative Courtney Neron