

Senate Bill 929

Sponsored by Senators BOQUIST, ROBINSON

SUMMARY

The following summary is not prepared by the sponsors of the measure and is not a part of the body thereof subject to consideration by the Legislative Assembly. It is an editor's brief statement of the essential features of the measure **as introduced**.

Dissolves Oregon Government Ethics Commission as of July 2, 2025.

Requires Chief Justice of Supreme Court, Governor, Secretary of State, State Treasurer, Commissioner of Bureau of Labor and Industries and Attorney General to conduct studies and report to Legislative Assembly on how each entity would supervise identified public officials and ensure that public officials comply with all legal requirements currently overseen by Oregon Government Ethics Commission.

Requires Oregon Government Ethics Commission to develop plan and report to Legislative Assembly on most efficient manner of making each local government and local service district responsible for ensuring that public officials affiliated with local government or local service district comply with all legal requirements currently overseen by Oregon Government Ethics Commission.

A BILL FOR AN ACT

1
2 Relating to duties of Oregon Government Ethics Commission; creating new provisions; and repealing
3 ORS 244.250.

4 **Be It Enacted by the People of the State of Oregon:**

5 **SECTION 1. ORS 244.250 is repealed.**

6 **SECTION 2. The repeal of ORS 244.250 by section 1 of this 2023 Act becomes operative**
7 **on July 2, 2025.**

8 **SECTION 3. (1) The Chief Justice of the Supreme Court shall conduct a study and, sub-**
9 **ject to subsection (8) of this section, determine how the judicial department can be made**
10 **solely responsible for ensuring that public officials in the judicial department, or public offi-**
11 **cial for whom a public official in the judicial department serves as the appointing authority,**
12 **comply with all legal requirements currently enforced by the Oregon Government Ethics**
13 **Commission, including but not limited to governmental ethics set forth in ORS chapter 244,**
14 **executive session provisions of the Oregon public meetings law set forth in ORS 192.610 to**
15 **192.690 and the regulation of lobbying set forth in ORS 171.725 to 171.785 and 171.992. The**
16 **Chief Justice shall submit a report in the manner provided by ORS 192.245, and must include**
17 **recommendations for legislation, to the interim committees of the Legislative Assembly re-**
18 **lated to government ethics no later than September 15, 2024.**

19 **(2) The Governor shall conduct a study and, subject to subsection (8) of this section, de-**
20 **termine how the Governor or the Governor's designee can be made solely responsible for**
21 **ensuring that public officials in the office of the Governor, public officials in the executive**
22 **department who are not described in subsections (3) to (7) of this section or public officials**
23 **for whom the Governor serves as the appointing authority, comply with all legal require-**
24 **ments currently enforced by the Oregon Government Ethics Commission, including but not**
25 **limited to governmental ethics set forth in ORS chapter 244, executive session provisions of**
26 **the Oregon public meetings law set forth in ORS 192.610 to 192.690 and the regulation of**
27 **lobbying set forth in ORS 171.725 to 171.785 and 171.992. The Governor shall submit a report**

NOTE: Matter in **boldfaced** type in an amended section is new; matter *[italic and bracketed]* is existing law to be omitted. New sections are in **boldfaced** type.

1 in the manner provided by ORS 192.245, and must include recommendations for legislation,
2 to the interim committees of the Legislative Assembly related to government ethics no later
3 than September 15, 2024.

4 (3) The Secretary of State shall conduct a study and, subject to subsection (8) of this
5 section, determine how the secretary or the secretary's designee can be made solely re-
6 sponsible for ensuring that public officials in the office of the Secretary of State, or public
7 officials for whom the Secretary of State serves as the appointing authority, comply with all
8 legal requirements currently enforced by the Oregon Government Ethics Commission, in-
9 cluding but not limited to governmental ethics set forth in ORS chapter 244, executive ses-
10 sion provisions of the Oregon public meetings law set forth in ORS 192.610 to 192.690 and the
11 regulation of lobbying set forth in ORS 171.725 to 171.785 and 171.992. The secretary shall
12 submit a report in the manner provided by ORS 192.245, and must include recommendations
13 for legislation, to the interim committees of the Legislative Assembly related to government
14 ethics no later than September 15, 2024.

15 (4) The State Treasurer shall conduct a study and, subject to subsection (8) of this sec-
16 tion, determine how the State Treasurer or the State Treasurer's designee can be made
17 solely responsible for ensuring that public officials in the office of the State Treasurer, or
18 public officials for whom the State Treasurer serves as the appointing authority, comply with
19 all legal requirements currently enforced by the Oregon Government Ethics Commission,
20 including but not limited to governmental ethics set forth in ORS chapter 244, executive
21 session provisions of the Oregon public meetings law set forth in ORS 192.610 to 192.690 and
22 the regulation of lobbying set forth in ORS 171.725 to 171.785 and 171.992. The State Treasurer
23 shall submit a report in the manner provided by ORS 192.245, and must include recommen-
24 dations for legislation, to the interim committees of the Legislative Assembly related to
25 government ethics no later than September 15, 2024.

26 (5) The Commissioner of the Bureau of Labor and Industries shall conduct a study and,
27 subject to subsection (8) of this section, determine how the commissioner or the
28 commissioner's designee can be made solely responsible for ensuring that public officials in
29 the office of the commissioner, or public officials for whom the commissioner serves as the
30 appointing authority, comply with all legal requirements currently enforced by the Oregon
31 Government Ethics Commission, including but not limited to governmental ethics set forth
32 in ORS chapter 244, executive session provisions of the Oregon public meetings law set forth
33 in ORS 192.610 to 192.690 and the regulation of lobbying set forth in ORS 171.725 to 171.785
34 and 171.992. The commissioner shall submit a report in the manner provided by ORS 192.245,
35 and must include recommendations for legislation, to the interim committees of the Legis-
36 lative Assembly related to government ethics no later than September 15, 2024.

37 (6)(a) The Oregon Government Ethics Commission shall conduct a study and, subject to
38 subsection (8) of this section:

39 (A) Determine the most efficient method for making each local government and local
40 service district solely responsible for ensuring that public officials affiliated with the local
41 government or local service district comply with all legal requirements currently enforced
42 by the Oregon Government Ethics Commission, including but not limited to governmental
43 ethics set forth in ORS chapter 244, executive session provisions of the Oregon public
44 meetings law set forth in ORS 192.610 to 192.690 and the regulation of lobbying set forth in
45 ORS 171.725 to 171.785 and 171.992; and

1 (B) Ensure the orderly dissolution of the Oregon Government Ethics Commission as of
 2 July 2, 2025.

3 (b) The Oregon Government Ethics Commission shall submit a report in the manner
 4 provided by ORS 192.245, and must include recommendations for legislation, to the interim
 5 committees of the Legislative Assembly related to government ethics no later than Septem-
 6 ber 15, 2024.

7 (7) The Attorney General shall conduct a study to determine how the Attorney General
 8 or the Attorney General’s designee can be made solely responsible for ensuring that public
 9 officials in the office of the Attorney General, public officials who are part of a special gov-
 10 ernment body, public officials for whom the Attorney General serves as the appointing au-
 11 thority and any public official who is not described in subsections (1) to (6) of this section
 12 and who is not part of the legislative department, comply with all legal requirements cur-
 13 rently enforced by the Oregon Government Ethics Commission, including but not limited to
 14 governmental ethics set forth in ORS chapter 244, executive session provisions of the Oregon
 15 public meetings law set forth in ORS 192.610 to 192.690 and the regulation of lobbying set
 16 forth in ORS 171.725 to 171.785 and 171.992. The Attorney General shall submit a report in
 17 the manner provided by ORS 192.245, and must include recommendations for legislation, to
 18 the interim committees of the Legislative Assembly related to government ethics no later
 19 than September 15, 2024.

20 (8)(a) Reports submitted under this section must include a method for members of the
 21 general public to bring a claim in circuit court alleging that:

22 (A) A public official has failed to comply with a legal requirement currently enforced by
 23 the Oregon Government Ethics Commission; and

24 (B) The entity responsible for ensuring compliance with the legal requirement has failed
 25 to sanction a public official described in subparagraph (A) of this paragraph in the manner
 26 required by law.

27 (b) Except as provided in subsection (7) of this section, and notwithstanding any other
 28 provision of law, the Attorney General may not provide legal advice or be in any way involved
 29 in:

30 (A) Advising public officials about the responsibility of a public official regarding legal
 31 requirements currently enforced by the Oregon Government Ethics Commission; or

32 (B) Defending a public official in a contested proceeding regarding an allegation that the
 33 public official violated a legal requirement currently enforced by the Oregon Government
 34 Ethics Commission.

35 (9) As used in this section:

36 (a) “Executive department” has the meaning given that term in ORS 174.112.

37 (b) “Judicial department” has the meaning given that term in ORS 174.113.

38 (c) “Legislative department” has the meaning given that term in ORS 174.114.

39 (d) “Local government” and “local service district” have the meanings given those terms
 40 in ORS 174.116.

41 (e) “Public official” has the meaning given that term in ORS 244.020.

42 **SECTION 4.** Section 3 of this 2023 Act is repealed on January 2, 2026.