



TO: House Committee on Emergency Management, General Government and Veterans
FROM: Oregon Recreation & Park Association
DATE: February 27, 2023
RE: HB 2296 - Relating to reemployment of retired members of PERS

On behalf of over 2,200 park and recreation professionals, agencies, and volunteers represented by the Oregon Recreation and Park Association (ORPA), I am writing to encourage the Committee's support and passage of House Bill 2296 to make permanent provisions allowing retired members of Public Employees Retirement System to be reemployed by participating public employers.

Parks and recreation agencies are an important part of our Oregon communities, offering affordable recreational services and beautiful public lands for all. The passage of this bill would greatly impact our ability to continue offering amazing parks and recreation opportunities and, more specifically, **this bill supports our recruitment efforts, operations, and workplace diversity.**

Recruitment Efforts

Like many other industries, we have experienced the recent retirement of many staff, all while experiencing hiring difficulties and finding qualified applicants for our current unfilled positions. This bill would allow us to be competitive in our recruitment efforts. This is especially critical for our park and recreation agencies located in rural areas of the state with a smaller pool of available applicants.

Operations

Hiring retired persons gives us the ability to retain institutional knowledge and experience. We would be able to confidently employ staff with skill sets beneficial to operational efficiencies, planning, and project management.

Workplace Diversity

As we lose older generations to retirement, the age-range of our workforce is narrowing. We value diversity and hope to benefit from having a balanced, multi-generational workforce.

We strongly encourage the passage of HB 2296 to support workforce recruitment.

Thank you for your consideration, and please feel free to contact me or Cindy Robert, ORPA's lobbyist, if we may offer any additional information to the Committee.

Sincerely,

Amanda Parsons

Amanda Parsons
Executive Director
Oregon Recreation and Park Association

c: Cindy Robert, ORPA Lobbyist (503.260.3431)