

Dear committee members,

I strongly support this bill as it is a huge step in the right direction toward creating a readily accessible public comment and engagement process. I work a full time job in Portland and would not have otherwise been able to participate in viewing the committee meetings or engaging in the public comment process if it had not been for the virtual accessibility. The ability to engage virtually in the legislative process is something that I didn't know would be so helpful until the pandemic brought it into existence and I can't imagine having to go back to a world where I'd have to take the time off of work to drive to Salem just to comment on something that matters to me.

By allowing virtual public engagement into the future, the Oregon legislature is ensuring that the members of the public's voices are heard and that the hired corporate lobbyists are not the only voices the legislature are hearing throughout the session. This bill is fundamentally great and moves the needle so much in the direction of transparency and direct democracy that it makes my heart happy to be testifying on behalf of it today.

Our democracy can only grow stronger through the implementation of people-centric bills like this one. Thank you for considering this bill and thank you for your service.