



February 25, 2021

Chair Smith Warner, Vice-Chairs. Drazan and Holvey, and Members of the Committee:

On behalf of the American Association of University Women (AAUW) of Oregon, we express our firm support for House Bill 2992.

This is a bill that will enable many Oregonians to take their rightful place in the process of governance and oversight. For too long the strictures implicit in a lack of financial and other resources have prevented many citizens from serving on state boards and commissions. The disparities between those who can and those cannot afford to take time from work or school are great and growing.

The problems that many state boards and commissions address are often significant and reach all regions in the state. They cover a number of topics, interests and problems. It is also the case that citizens who have experienced or work with these issues will be the ones who are most likely to tackle them effectively. Their advice is well informed and practical and will more appropriately address the needs of Oregonians.

The compensation provided by House Bill 2992 regarding state board and commission service is minimal, but it will serve to encourage a broader base of individuals to join in. The compensation may mean the difference between being able to participate in the public process or being effectively shut out.

This bill may not seem be a "big" bill, but it is in fact "big" -- encouraging more individuals to participate in state boards and commissions will benefit all of Oregon's citizens.

Respectfully Submitted,

*Trish Garner, J.D., M.S.W.*  
*State Public Policy Chair,*  
*American Association of University Women of Oregon*  
*garner37@mac.com*