



**COALITION OF
OREGON SCHOOL
ADMINISTRATORS**

February 9, 2022

TO: House Committee on Rules
FR: Morgan Allen on behalf of COSA
RE: Support for HB 4140 with the -2 amendment

Chair Smith Warner and Members of the House Rules Committee:

I am writing on behalf of our 2700 members who are part of the Coalition of Oregon School Administrators and asking for your support for House Bill 4140 with the -2 amendment.

We believe it is good public policy to allow the Oregon Government and Ethics Commission (OGEC) to investigate potential violations of public meetings law, and add provisions for required training for elected officials and key staff that work with boards and commissions.

The -2 amendment would ensure that elected school board members, superintendents, leaders of charter schools, and assistant superintendents who regularly work with the school board receive training to ensure they are familiar with the unique requirements of Oregon's public meetings laws.

Public meeting laws, and an open and transparent government, are the foundations of a democratic society. In Oregon, the only way to challenge possible violations of these laws and rules is to file a civil lawsuit. While OGEC is charged with reviewing complaints and possible violations of executive session laws and rules, it can come as quite a surprise to many community members when they learn the agency has no authority to respond to complaints or allegations of violations at regular sessions of governmental bodies.

Unfortunately, increasingly polarized politics within local communities and boards have overwhelmed our district and school leaders as they try their best to center the needs of their students, focus on equitable educational outcomes, and implement legally required public health and safety measures.

Passage of HB 4140 with the -2 amendment is a clear reminder to all locally elected officials and employees entrusted with the responsibility to govern that they have a tremendous obligation and responsibility to do their work in a clear and transparent manner. We urge your support for this critical legislation.