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To: House Committee on Judiciary
From: Richard Donovan, Legislative Services Specialist
Re: House Bill 2129
Date: January 26, 2023

Chair Kropf, Vice-Chairs Andersen and Wallan, members of the committee:

On behalf of the OSBA membership, including 197 school districts and 19 Education Service Districts, thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony on House Bill 2129.

Previously, in your public hearing on House Bill 2129, OSBA testified to raise concerns with some potential outcomes that could result from the passage of the bill. After that hearing, and after multiple discussion with bill proponents from the Department of Justice, we no longer believe that this bill is the appropriate venue to address those concerns.

Across Oregon, some school boards have recently been forced to deal with unprecedented partisan politicization. There has been an increase in bad actions towards school boards and school board members. This includes the illegal recording and distribution of school board member dialogue in legal executive session.

With that acknowledged, HB 2129 is likely not the best venue for changes to statute to address these concerns. Bill proponents have provided school boards with guidance around this area of law. And, going forward, we will introduce distinct legislation to maintain the safety of school board members and to guard school board member ability to have the honest, considered conversations in legal executive sessions.

OSBA does not take a position on HB 2129, and thanks the members of the committee for the time and attention spend on this important topic.