SB 207   STAFF MEASURE SUMMARY

Senate Committee On Rules

Prepared By:	Leslie Porter, LPRO Analyst
Meeting Dates:	3/7, 3/14

WHAT THE MEASURE DOES:

Authorizes the Oregon Government Ethics Commission to proceed on its own motion, as though it received a complaint, if it has reason to believe that a violation of the executive session provisions of public meetings law exists.

ISSUES DISCUSSED:

EFFECT OF AMENDMENT:

No amendment.

BACKGROUND:

The Oregon Government Ethics Commission (OGEC) enforces Oregon laws prohibiting public officials from using their office for financial gain and those requiring public disclosure of economic conflicts of interest; enforces laws requiring lobbyists and the entities they represent to register and report their expenditures; and oversees the executive session provisions of public meetings law.

Upon written request, or upon its own motion, the OGEC provides written commission advisory opinions, written staff opinions, and oral and written staff advice on issues, whether actual or hypothetical, related to government ethics laws and executive session provisions of Oregon's public meetings laws. Additionally, the OGEC is prevented from issuing penalties against a person for any good faith action taken on reliance of any such opinions or advice (safe harbor provisions).

Any individual may submit, in writing, a complaint with the OGEC alleging a violation of ethics laws. Additionally, the OGEC has the authority to proceed on its own motion, as though it received a complaint, if it has reason to believe that a violation exists. Complaints of violations of the executive session provisions (ORS 192.660) alleged to have been committed by public officials may be made to the OGEC for review, investigation, and imposition of civil penalties.

Senate Bill 207 authorizes the Oregon Government Ethics Commission to proceed on its own motion, as though it received a complaint, if it has reason to believe that a violation of the executive session provisions of public meetings law exists.