

**DEB PATTERSON
STATE SENATOR/SENADORA ESTATAL
DISTRICT/DISTRITO 10**



OREGON STATE SENATE/SENADO DEL ESTADO DE OREGON

Chair Holvey, Vice Chairs Elmer and Sosa and Members of the Committee,

For the record, my name is Deb Patterson, State Senator from District 10. I am writing to add my support to HB 3028.

This bill seeks to reduce barriers to Oregonians serving on the over 250 boards and commissions that advise our government on policies or serve as rulemaking bodies for our state agencies and programs. Oregon values diversity and listening to voices that reflect every community in our state. One way that we can encourage this type of participation in our government is by making it easier for Oregonians to serve on boards and commissions. Oregon took one step toward making boards and commissions more accessible in 2021 by passing HB 2992 which took steps to ensure that stipends for certain board, commission and committee members who experience financial hardships or barriers would be available. While this was a great step toward ensuring more equal representation, HB 3028 will take another step forward in this regard. Over the years, I have served on the Oregon Nursing Home Administrators Board, the Oregon Disabilities Commission, and the Governor's Commission on Senior Services, among others. Each of these board and commissions met during the weekday, as do most (if not all) of the others, to accommodate the staff who work with these entities. I had the type of work that would allow me time to attend, not all Oregonians do.

HB 3028 would ensure that employees are able to take time away from their jobs to attend meetings for their appointed position. The protections outlined in this bill would mirror that of jury duty: It would prohibit employers from firing, intimidating or disciplining employee's position on the board, prohibit employer from requiring the employee to use accrued paid time off, vacation or sick time to attend meetings related to this position, allows employees to take unpaid leave to attend meetings or events related to their service and gives BOLI authority of complaint-based investigation and enforcement.

Colleagues, we know that lower-wage workers and front-line employees are most likely to be limited in their ability to participate in local and state government, resulting in many of our boards and commissions being predominately white. We can do better, and this bill will be another step toward diversifying the perspectives on our boards and commissions.

I urge an aye vote.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Deb Patterson". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Deb Patterson