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Dear Committee,

I am writing to express my concerns to Senate Bill 1502, which proposes the mandatory live streaming of board meetings in Oregon. While I fully appreciate the importance of transparency and public engagement in the decision-making processes of our school districts, I believe that this particular bill poses significant challenges and burdens on school boards, especially in terms of infrastructure and logistics.

First and foremost, the requirement for live streaming imposes a considerable financial burden on school districts. Many districts already struggle with limited budgets, and the implementation of live streaming technology demands a substantial investment in equipment, software, and personnel training. These resources could be better utilized to address pressing educational needs within the districts, such as classroom resources, teacher salaries, and facility improvements.

Furthermore, the bill fails to consider the unique circumstances faced by school boards that hold meetings at various school sites within their districts. Live streaming from multiple locations would necessitate additional infrastructure, connectivity, and technical support, further straining already limited resources. The logistical challenges of ensuring consistent and reliable live streams across diverse locations could hinder the effectiveness of board meetings and divert attention from crucial educational matters.

It is essential to highlight that voicing concerns about Senate Bill 1502 does not equate to a disregard for transparency or public engagement. Rather, I believe that alternative methods of communication and information dissemination should be explored, ones that are more cost-effective and tailored to the specific needs and capabilities of individual school districts. School Boards are already required to offer electronic means (HB 2560) to the public upon request, which allows access similarly to that of live streaming but with reasonable impact to school districts.

I kindly request that you reconsider the implications of Senate Bill 1502 on the educational landscape of Oregon and explore alternative measures that promote transparency without unduly burdening our school districts. I appreciate your dedication to serving the community and trust that you will carefully consider the concerns raised by constituents like myself.

Thank you for your attention to this matter.

Sincerely,

Walt Davenport
Superintendent