

Date: February 17th, 2025
To: Senate Committee on Education
From: Nick Keough, Political and Legislative Organizer, AFT-Oregon
Re: Oppose SB 310

Chair Frederick, Vice-Chair Weber, and Members of the Committee:

AFT-Oregon is a federation of 27 local unions representing 18,000 education workers across early learning, K-12 classified, community colleges, and public universities. **Today, AFT-Oregon is writing to express our concerns and opposition to SB 310.** If passed, SB 310 would change the Public Employees Collective Bargaining Act (PECBA) to allow fact-finding to occur as long as only one of the involved parties requests it, as opposed to the current system ensures that fact-finding is a mutually agreed-upon tool.

While we appreciate efforts to promote good-faith negotiations and avoid strikes, we believe SB 310 ignores the fundamental principle that the collective bargaining process must be fair and balanced for both workers and employers. By allowing one party to unilaterally request fact-finding during the collective bargaining process, we create an avenue for the employer to use fact-finding as a means to prolong bargaining disputes, stall progress, and reduce workers' leverage at critical moments in negotiations.

Under PECBA, there are already robust mechanisms to facilitate resolution, including a mandatory 150-day bargaining period and required mediation before impasse. These steps exist precisely to encourage meaningful dialogue and to prevent unnecessary delays. We cannot undermine the cooperative nature of the bargaining process and risk tilting negotiations in favor of management. SB 310 could seriously diminish the ability of workers to advocate for fair wages, benefits, and working conditions.

For these reasons, we urge you to oppose SB 310. Thank you for your time and consideration.

Signed,

AFT-Oregon
<https://www.aft-oregon.org/about-aft-oregon>