

TRAVIS NELSON
STATE REPRESENTATIVE
HOUSE DISTRICT 44
NORTH/NORTHEAST PORTLAND



HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Testimony in Support of House Bill 2944

Chair Grayber, Vice-Chair Elmer, Vice-Chair Munoz and members of the House Committee on Labor and Workplace Standards,

My name is Travis Nelson, and I am the State Representative for House District 44 - North and Northeast Portland. I urge your support for House Bill 2944 which is a necessary step to ensure that Oregon's public employers uphold their obligations to workers and unions.

In 2019, a bill passed setting clear timelines for when public employers must share employee information with unions. While the vast majority of public employers follow the law, we now see a developed trend that some routinely delay sending worker-authorized deductions, including dues deductions to their unions, while others fail to provide unions with the quarterly roster of the full bargaining unit, containing key employee information that ensures workers union representation.

HB 2944 addresses these shortfalls. It's not about creating new rules. This is a bill that will help ensure compliance with existing law. This bill increases accountability for the existing deadlines to ensure timely dues transfers. HB 2944 introduces escalating fines for employers who repeatedly fail to comply. This is a bill that holds bad actors responsible without forcing workers and unions to navigate expensive legal hurdles to get their rights upheld.

The dash-one amendments further refine the bill, directing any fines collected to the wage security fund, so that the fees continue to support Oregon's workforce. We've also removed the option for private action, ensuring enforcement happens through the Employee Relations Board (ERB), which is the enforcement arm of the Public Employee Collective Bargaining Act (PECBA). Additionally, we are working closely with the League of Oregon Cities and others to ensure we "right size" the fine structure so that smaller public employers are held accountable.

Once again, I want to assert to the committee, HB 2944 is not about adding new burdens on employers. This is just about making sure the rules we already have, are taken seriously. Oregon workers deserve the confidence that when they agree to contribute to their union, their employer will follow through in a timely and responsible way. We already made this promise in 2019 to protect these rights, let's make sure that promise is kept.

Thank you,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Travis Nelson". The signature is fluid and cursive.

State Representative Travis Nelson
House District 44, North/NE Portland