United States Senate

April 2, 2025

Chair Jama, Vice Chair Bonham, Members of the Committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to submit written testimony on SB 952, a measure I support to make sure Oregon always maintains our state's full voice in the United States Senate with two senators.

I know firsthand from my service in the U.S. Senate – first with Republican Gordon Smith and then these past 16 years with Democrat Jeff Merkley – just how important it is to have two senators working together to make every nook and cranny of Oregon an even better place to work and live.

And as fellow legislators regardless of party, all of you know there's a lot to the job of being an effective elected official – whether that's writing bills, holding town halls and other community meetings, exercising oversight of agencies, helping constituents with casework, making sure Oregon gets our fair share of federal resources, and much more. I also have field representatives throughout the state to help connect constituents wherever they live directly with my office.

In addition, I also promised Oregonians when they first elected me to the Senate that I would hold at least one town hall each year in each of our state's 36 counties. I have kept that promise, holding 1,110 open-to-all town halls to date throughout Oregon.
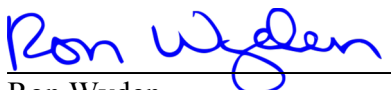
In a sentence, all of those roles and responsibilities I listed above for a U.S. senator add up to the fact that Oregonians would have only half a voice in the U.S. Senate if our state lacked a senator because of death or injury for a prolonged period. And that in turn could hurt our state significantly.

This bill would prepare for any unforeseen contingency by creating a process that allows the governor to appoint a replacement in a timely fashion.

That's a common-sense idea and one that puts Oregon in line with other states that don't leave a vacancy unfilled until a special election. I urge you to pass this bill.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Ron Wyden
United States Senator