

Submitter: Rob Melquist
On Behalf Of:
Committee: Senate Committee On Rules
Measure, Appointment or Topic: SB243
Chair, Members of the Committee,

My name is Rob Melquist, and I'm writing to express my strong opposition to Senate Bill 243.

At its core, SB 243 threatens the transparency and accountability that are the foundation of Oregon's public process. By narrowing the definition of what constitutes a "public meeting" and expanding the circumstances under which executive sessions can be held, this bill risks creating more opportunities for public bodies to conduct business behind closed doors.

Oregonians expect their government to operate in the open. We deserve to know how decisions are made, especially those that affect our communities, schools, and public resources. SB 243 creates ambiguity and loopholes that could allow officials to discuss important matters outside of public view, without input from the very people they serve.

Additionally, expanding the use of executive sessions sets a dangerous precedent. These sessions are intended to be rare exceptions, not the norm. The more they are used, the less the public can trust that decisions are being made in a fair, open, and honest manner.

Oregon has long prided itself on strong public meeting laws and citizen engagement. SB 243 represents a step backward, weakening the public's voice in governance and diminishing accountability.

I urge you to vote NO on SB 243 and protect the public's right to know. Thank you for your time and for standing up for open government.

Sincerely,
Rob Melquist