

Submitter: Angela Todd

On Behalf Of:

Committee: Senate Committee On Labor and Business

Measure, Appointment or Topic: HB3789

HB 3789 is presented as a means to protect public employees from fraudulent impersonation of union representatives. However, in practice, this bill is deeply problematic and poses a serious threat to worker choice, free speech, and the ability of public employees to make informed decisions about their union involvement.

Threat to Worker Choice:

One of my primary concerns with HB 3789 is its potential to undermine worker autonomy. Oregon's public unions hold significant political and financial power, and it is essential that workers are fully informed about their rights, including the right to opt out of union membership and dues. Organizations like the Freedom Foundation help educate workers on these choices, yet HB 3789 creates a significant legal risk for anyone attempting to share this vital information.

By making it illegal to "falsely impersonate" a union representative, the bill could be used to accuse outreach workers and advocates who are simply providing information to public employees. The bill's vague language leaves too much room for interpretation, making it an easy tool for unions to silence dissent or limit educational efforts.

A Tool for Intimidation and Legal Pressure:

This bill gives unions the sole authority to identify and designate who can represent them, allowing them to file lawsuits against individuals or groups perceived to be encroaching on their territory. The provision to impose liquidated damages of \$6,250 per incident could have a chilling effect on any effort to educate or inform public employees about their rights.

This is not about protecting workers; it is about protecting the financial interests of powerful unions by preventing alternative perspectives and reducing worker awareness of their options. In practice, this legislation would embolden unions to use legal pressure to suppress opposition, rather than encouraging a fair and open dialogue about union representation.

Implications for Free Speech and Public Accountability:

I believe that Oregon workers deserve access to diverse perspectives on union membership. They deserve to know their rights without fear that those who provide such information will face legal repercussions. HB 3789 would stifle important conversations and limit the freedom of public employees to make fully informed choices about their representation.

The bill ultimately serves to fortify the influence of public unions rather than protect individual workers. We should be focusing on promoting transparency and open dialogue, not legislating in ways that could be used to suppress voices that challenge the status quo.

A Call for Balance and Accountability:

I urge the committee to reconsider the implications of HB 3789. Instead of reinforcing the power of public unions, we should be creating a balanced environment where workers are empowered to make informed choices without intimidation or fear of legal consequences.

Please vote NO on HB 3789 to protect the rights of Oregon's public employees to receive balanced, unbiased information and make decisions that align with their own interests.

Thank you for your time and consideration.