

Submitter: Robert Emmons
On Behalf Of:
Committee: House Committee On Rules
Measure, Appointment or Topic: HB2006
House Committee on Rules May 27, 2025
Re: HB 2006

Chair Bowman, Vice Chairs Drazan and Pham and Members of the Committee:

Session after session, year after year, legislators are faced with an ever increasing number of bills. This year produced a record 3,432 and assured that they would rarely, if ever, have the time to understand the complexities of a given bill or its potential and actual consequences. Indeed, many may not even have read the bill. As a result, legislators are largely influenced by lobbyists and other vested interests for “interpretation” and direction in how to vote. The fate of a bill, therefore, may be determined before it even reaches the committee floor.

Citizen involvement and participation is Oregon’s first land use goal. But in successive legislative sessions critical involvement in a bill’s outcome increasingly occurs behind closed doors. The severely constrained testimony of concerned citizens, such as I experienced in an appearance before a committee this session, is, thereby, little more than window dressing for a process corrupted by too many bills, too little time and too many legislators influenced by paid lobbyists. This is not to suggest, however, that our state senators and representatives lack conscientiousness and integrity, but, rather, to recognize that they, too, are victims of a broken system.

A few legislators have admitted that the number of bills in a session must be reduced, but with little agreement about how to do it, and pushback against any restraint by those who are benefitting from the status quo.

It’s time to change that, and HB 2006 is a good beginning.

Thank you.

Robert Emmons, President
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