

**May 29, 2025**

**To: Senate Committee on Rules**

**Re: OEC opposition to SB 3569A (requires certain agency RAC appointments)**

Founded in 1968, the Oregon Environmental Council (OEC) is a nonprofit, nonpartisan, membership-based organization. We advance equitable, innovative, and collaborative solutions to Oregon's environmental challenges for today and future generations.

Chair Jama and members of the committee, OEC strongly opposes SB3569A. This bill would require state agencies to appoint the Chief Sponsor (or sponsor assignee) of a bill or Chair of a Committee of a Committee bill (or assignee) to serve on rules advisory committees (RACs).

SB 3569A raises a number of concerns for OEC:

First, it ignores the time and effort put into a bill by the entire legislature, privileging instead the bill's initial sponsor and their singular perspective. Any bill that successfully passes out of the legislature is a group effort, which is the intent of the process. A bill may change significantly as it moves through the process, and these changes reflect the collective experience and opinions of the full legislature. Allowing the initial sponsor of a bill to represent the intent of the final bill on a RAC does not necessarily reflect the intent of the full legislature.

Second, putting a legislator on a RAC has the potential to forestall open and honest dialog, as well as creating a power imbalance on the RAC. Making the position a non-voting one, as SB 3569A proposes, does not solve these challenges.

Third, SB 3569A raises serious questions related to Oregon's requirements for the separation of powers, as laid out in Article III of the Oregon Constitution.

I have served on many RACs over the past decades. While RAC members are almost always professional and courteous, the conversations need to be as frank and direct as possible. In their work, legislators wield significant financial, political and social power relative to agency staff as well as stakeholders from all sectors. Instead of the intended peer-to-peer conversation so essential to the RAC process, one person will have an elevated position due to the powers mentioned above. Having a legislator participating on RACs, even as a non-voting committee member, dramatically shifts the balance of power on the RAC.

OEC believes that SB 3569A is a threat to the very foundations of the RAC process. We urge you to vote NO on SB 3569A.

Sincerely,

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