

Submitter: Ryan Nolan
On Behalf Of: City of Rogue River
Committee: House Committee On Rules
Measure, Appointment or Topic: HB4177

Chair Bowman, Vice-Chairs Elmer and Pham, and honorable Committee Members,

I'm writing to respectfully urge your support for HB 4177, legislation that strengthens and clarifies Oregon's public meetings law, particularly around serial communications. This bill represents a meaningful and practical update to ensure transparency, consistency, and to encourage trust in public officials and the decisions they make.

HB 4177 makes several important improvements:

- Restates and clarifies the rules governing serial communications between members of governing bodies, ensuring that rules are clear so that elected officials understand that sequential or back channel conversations should not unintentionally violate Oregon's open meetings requirements.
- Identifies communications that are not subject to public meetings law, giving public officials clearer guidance.
- Affirms that public meetings may be held in person, electronically, or in hybrid formats, increasing accessibility.
- Improves the complaint process by requiring complainants to provide essential documentation to the Oregon Government Ethics Commission before a complaint is considered filed.
- Ensures public officials receive appropriate training on public meetings law and clarifies when that training must occur.
- Allows the Commission to proceed against a public body rather than individuals when a violation is the result of administrative error.
- Establishes clear pathways to cure certain public meetings law violations.

These updates promote transparency, reduce confusion, and strengthen open government. HB 4177 represents a common sense reform that supports public trust and helps governing bodies operate responsibly and confidently.

For these reasons, I strongly encourage you to support HB 4177. Thank you for your

commitment to accountable and accessible government. Please feel free to contact me if you would like to discuss this further.

Sincerely,

Ryan Nolan
City Administrator
City of Rogue River