

Submitter: Donna Bleiler
On Behalf Of:
Committee: House Committee On Rules
Measure, Appointment or Topic: HB4177

I OPPOSE HB 4177

Extended procedural requirements:

Complainants will provide "specified documentation" before complaints are even considered filed, and must wait through a 90-day grievance process with the public body first. This creates multiple hurdles before reaching the Oregon Government Ethics Commission.

Forced court route for certain complaints:

If the complaint alleges violations by commission members themselves, complainants must proceed directly in court rather than through the commission. This eliminates the administrative option entirely for those cases, requiring citizens to bear the cost and complexity of litigation.

New "Cure" Provisions That May Reduce Accountability:

The bill creates multiple ways for public bodies to avoid penalties by "curing" violations, including simply acknowledging the error and promising to do better in the future. This could reduce deterrence if bodies know they can avoid consequences through procedural corrections.

Combined effect: These changes shift power away from complainants and toward public bodies, potentially making it harder for citizens with limited resources to pursue legitimate violations while giving officials more ways to avoid accountability.