

State Representative
Cliff Bentz
House District 60

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Bentz Introduces Bill to Crack Down on Online Impersonation

SALEM—On February 19th, Representative Cliff Bentz (R-Ontario) introduced House Bill 3092, which creates the crime of online impersonation and allows those who have been harmed the right to sue for damages from the impersonator.

Rep. Bentz was asked to draft legislation on behalf of constituents who had encountered this problem. Oregon does not currently have any criminal penalties for online impersonation.

Rep. Bentz's bill would make any online communication made with the intent to deceive the recipient into thinking that the sender is someone else a crime.

Rep. Bentz said, "My staff and I have spoken with several law enforcement officials about the problem of online impersonation. They have explained that current law is so lenient it's not worth prosecuting those who have impersonated someone. Victims of online fraud have little or no recourse should their names be slandered and their livelihoods harmed by online impersonation. This law will give injured parties recourse, and will give our law enforcement agencies an enforcement tool to keep us safer from this damaging practice."

House Bill 3092 is currently waiting to be referred to a House Committee by the Speaker of the House.

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