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Senate Democrats Say “No Way” to Advancing Bill Banning Needle Distribution Near Schools

SALEM, Ore. – Senate Democrats today prevented a vote on legislation that would prohibit the distribution of needles and other drug paraphernalia within 2,000 feet of a school or child care facility by voting down a motion made by **Senate Republican Leader Bruce Starr (R-Dundee)** to pull [Senate Bill 1573](#) from committee to the Senate floor.

The bill previously died in committee after the [Democrat Chair of the Senate Committee on Early Childhood and Behavioral Health declined to move it forward](#), despite broad bipartisan support and growing concerns from parents and neighbors across Oregon about dirty needles appearing near schools.

“Some issues are complicated, but protecting children from exposure to needles near schools is not. This is a commonsense bill with broad public support, and it deserved a vote,” said **Leader Starr**.

“Senate Democrats had every opportunity to advance this bill with any amendment they wanted, but that opportunity was repeatedly declined. That’s unacceptable,” said **Senator Christine Drazan (R-Canby)**, the bill’s chief sponsor. “This bill was requested by Portland neighbors in one of the hardest-hit overdose areas in our state who simply wanted a buffer around schools. For two sessions now, this Legislature has refused to listen.”

“Harm reduction” programs in Oregon currently operate with virtually no regulation or accountability. Asking for a basic buffer around schools was a reasonable step to protect kids and respond to the concerns of local communities who have to live with the consequences of unregulated needle distribution near schools every day.

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