



PRESS RELEASE

OREGON HOUSE DEMOCRATS

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For More Information, Contact:
Aaron Fiedler: 503-986-1904
aaron.fiedler@oregonlegislature.gov

Legislation Removes Outdated, Offensive Language from Employment, Anti-Discrimination Laws

Clarifies law to assure transgender Oregonians are recognized and included

SALEM – Legislation to remove and update offensive language in the state’s employment and anti-discrimination laws passed the Oregon House today.

[House Bill 2589](#) specifies that sexual orientation is not a physical or mental impairment for the purposes of employment discrimination and modernizes language currently in statute to help assure transgender Oregonians are recognized and included under Oregon law.

“Cleaning up these provisions will not only honor the dignity of transgender people, but it will also clear up a muddled and confusing relic from a different time,” said the bill’s co-chief sponsor, Rep. Karin Power (D-Milwaukie). “Words matter. The revision of this statutory language is a meaningful step in the right direction of validating the marginalized identities of the LGBTQIA+ and disabled communities.”

Current statutes include outdated and offensive terms that evoke harmful stereotypes of transgender people. This legislation would continue work that has been ongoing over the years to update language in state law to use appropriate and modern terms that both clarify law and keep existing protections intact.

“In times past, when prejudice against marginalized communities went more unchallenged, our Legislature enacted discriminatory language into our statutes,” said Rep. Rob Nosse (D-Portland), who also co-chief sponsored the legislation. “Although our state has made strides in how it treats its LGBTQ citizens, that work will not be complete until the discriminatory vestiges of bygone eras are removed from state law.”

Signed on as sponsors are Rep. Teresa Alonso Leon (D-Woodburn), Rep. Julie Fahey (D-West Eugene and Junction City), Rep. John Lively (D-Springfield), Rep. Pam Marsh (D-Ashland), Rep. Caddy McKeown (D-Coos Bay), Rep. Courtney Neron (D-Wilsonville), Rep. Rachel Prusak (D-West Linn), Rep. Tawna Sanchez (D-Portland), Rep. Barbara Smith Warner (D-Portland), Rep. Janeen Sollman (D-Hillsboro), Rep. Marty Wilde (D-Central Lane and Linn Counties), Rep. Anna Williams (D-Hood River), and Rep. Jennifer Williamson (D-Portland).

Oregon House Democrats are fighting to ensure that every Oregonian is afforded the same fundamental rights, regardless of their race, religion, gender expression, age, or sexual orientation.

The legislation, which passed 58 to 2, now moves to the Oregon Senate for consideration.

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