



PRESS RELEASE

OREGON HOUSE DEMOCRATS

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Public Employee Collective Bargaining Rights Protected Under Legislation Passed by House

Legislation codifies 40 years of best practices

SALEM – The Oregon House of Representatives passed [House Bill 2016](#) today, codifying collective bargaining best practices into state law and protecting the rights of public employees.

“When workers and employers have a level playing field with which to negotiate contracts and settle grievances, everyone wins,” said Rep. Jeff Barker (D-Aloha). “I am proud to carry this important legislation and be part of a new milestone in the long history of our state protecting its working citizens.”

The legislation adds several provisions to state law, including:

- Giving “designated representatives,” sometimes known as shop stewards, reasonable time during work hours to fulfill their duties, without loss of pay or other benefits;
- Requiring public employers to provide the union with reasonable access to employees within a bargaining unit, including access to communicate with employees;
- Expanding the list of unfair labor practices to include: encouraging an employee to decline union membership or revoke deduction of dues; using an employee’s email to discourage union membership; and providing personal information of represented employees to private entities; and
- Clarifying methods of member dues collection.

“Fundamentally, the work of labor unions and the collective bargaining process is about equity and fairness,” said Rep. Teresa Alonso Leon (D-Woodburn). “When everyone comes together and goes to the negotiating table with their employer, it does not matter what your gender is, what your race is, what your sexual orientation is, or what your religion is.”

In 1973, the Oregon Legislature passed the Public Employee Collective Bargaining Act. This landmark legislation provided for true collective bargaining and included the right for public employees to strike. For the last 46 years, that legislation has been at the bedrock of the public employee and employer relationship. House Bill 2016 strengthens that policy and continues to provide a level playing field for public employees.

“The dedicated public workforce of our state touches nearly every aspect of our lives,” said Rep. Rob Nosse (D-Portland). “I believe we owe it to all of them to once and for all make clear that we stand with them and ensure that their rights are protected.”

The legislation was chief sponsored by Rep. Brad Witt (D-Clatskanie) and Rep. John Lively (D-Springfield), along with 27 House and Senate sponsors.

Oregon House Democrats are committed to advocating for working Oregonians with policies that level the playing field, protect workers' right to unionize and bargain collectively, support working families, and ensure a healthy, job-ready workforce.

The legislation, which passed the House 36 to 22, goes to the Oregon Senate for consideration.

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