



STATEMENT

HOUSE MAJORITY OFFICE OFFICE OF THE HOUSE SPEAKER

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Statement from Leader Fahey and Speaker Rayfield on Improvements Needed to the Conduct Process

SALEM, Ore. - Today House Majority Leader [Julie Fahey](#) (D-West Eugene & Junction City) and House Speaker [Dan Rayfield](#) (D-Corvallis) release the following statement on the conduct process:

"Everyone who works in or visits the Oregon State Capitol deserves to have a safe, respectful and harassment-free environment. That's why legislative leaders developed a process to address sexual harassment and workplace harassment through a deliberative and independent process in the bipartisan, evenly split Conduct Committee. In 2019, this process was approved nearly unanimously by the full Legislature and created in good faith to change the culture of the Capitol.

"Over the last three years, as we've gained more experience with that new process, the Legislature has made multiple improvements based on what we've learned. It's also clear this process must be significantly improved to provide better support for people who have experienced harassment.

"As House Majority Leader (and former Conduct Committee Co-Chair) and House Speaker, we are committed to continue improving this process.

"Unfortunately, we've too often seen the Legislature's Conduct Committee used for blatantly political purposes in ways that threaten to undermine good faith efforts to make the Capitol safer for everyone—most recently in a hearing this past month. When experts from the Oregon Law Commission, legislators, and other members of the Capitol community developed the new process for addressing harassment, they were explicit that the politicization of the committee was a very real danger. We worked hard to create systems that would ensure independence and make it more difficult for the process to be misused.

"While this process was correctly designed to keep the investigation process and committee structure independent from legislative leadership offices, we have been angered and frustrated to see the conduct process be used in a way that we fear will discourage members of the Capitol community from coming forward when they experience harassment in the future. This exploitation of the process diminishes the experiences of the people who have been harassed in the Capitol, who should be central to this work. Ultimately, that will result in the Capitol being less safe for everyone.

"In the face of these challenges, we will use our leadership roles to work across the aisle to protect all individuals at risk for harassment, maintain the independence of this process, and prevent this kind of politicization from happening again."

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