



OREGON HOUSE REPUBLICAN OFFICE

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Partisan Votes Leave Government Transparency And Oversight Bills Dead In Oregon House

Democrats Reject Republican Efforts To Increase Accountability, Reform State Agencies

Salem, OR - House Democrats today voted down several Republican bills seeking to increase transparency and oversight of state agencies and a proposal to provide an additional tool for securing Executive Branch accountability. House Republicans had introduced the measures at the beginning of the 2016 legislative session in hopes that the commonsense proposals would find bipartisan support.

"It's no secret that Salem has a transparency and accountability problem," said House Republican Leader Mike McLane (R-Powell Butte). "I'm disappointed that partisan politics appear to have prevented these bills from moving forward and what could have been an important step in the process of restoring trust in our state government. Once again, Democrats have let partisanship trump good policy and what is best for Oregonians."

The first measure, [HB 4109](#), sought to require an additional layer of protection against conflicts of interest in state government by strengthening economic interest disclosure requirements. The second measure, [HJR 201](#), would have subjected administrative rules adopted by state agencies to legislative review.

An additional proposal to increase oversight of the Executive Branch was also rejected. Chief sponsored by Rep. Gail Whitsett (R-Klamath Falls), [HB 4138](#) would have granted the Legislature the ability to appoint independent counsel to conduct investigations of Executive Branch misconduct. Despite the only known opposition coming from representatives testifying on behalf of the Executive Branch, the bill never received a committee vote.

"HB 4138 would have provided a chance for the Legislature to address a legitimate shortfall of accountability in our Executive Branch," said Rep. Gail Whitsett, who introduced a similar concept in 2015. "I'm disheartened that this concept will not be advancing this session."

The three transparency and accountability bills killed today join several other Republican-sponsored policy bills languishing in the Democrat-controlled Legislature.

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