



OREGON STATE SENATE

The Constitution of the State of Oregon clearly states that “The deliberations of each house, of committees of each house or joint committees and of committees of the whole, shall be open...” This provision was put in place to ensure accountability and transparency to the people of the state that their Legislature was working in their best interest. The virtual format that is being used does not provide for an honest, open, and transparent discussion on the matters of this state.

We are seeing just how discriminatory these virtual sessions can be! The Majority Party has created a system that if you cannot afford internet you cannot be a part of the discussions. This “Pay to Play” approach is NOT the Oregon way. Between this and the heartbreaking examples of the elder and economically depressed members in our society struggling and getting frustrated over their challenges navigating this virtual environment, it cannot honestly be said that we are doing the peoples work.

While I understand that the pandemic may have slowed down the ability for local health authorities to put together their plans, I also do not think it wise for us to continue to kick this can down the road. We need to know that our local health authorities can handle the next challenge that might face us, and moving that deadline only prolongs the uncertainty.

The “People’s Work” should be considered an essential service and there for accessible in person. Because the people are still being denied their constitutional right to participate and lobby their legislature in an open manner, and for the reason mentioned above, I voted no.