

Secretary: Vote explanation.

SB 726 deserved passage as it will start to help victims one year plus one day after the Governor's signature. At least to some extent. It does nothing to help any victim that was abused a year ago. Or even five years ago. The Legislature provided a legal remedy for child molesters in the past but refused to do the same for women now. It provides a 'pass' to perpetrators who victimized employees of the legislature more than a year ago. While the Committee Chair and Vice Chair wanted to expand the bill that was not possible as legislative leadership did not want anything prospective. While I personally see this as a 'cover up' bill to protect existing leadership, none-the-less, it will help in the future. Today, despite HCR 11, there is nobody outside the legislature status quo of abuse, harassment and retribution that can help a victim as BOLI is limited to one year, and the EEOC is limited to six months, and civil actions authority is years in the future. To date, the majority leadership refuses to provide employees of the Legislature the contact data of even outside counsel that would report back to them which is reflective in this Senator's opinion of why SB 726 is a short term cover up. Further, there is no existing confidentiality nor attorney client privilege to reporting victims seeking help. Likewise, majority leadership decides what members get 'legal counsel' support in lawsuit but certainly use public dollars to defend themselves. SB 727 needed passage to help future employees across the State of Oregon ... sometime in the years to come. My 'no' vote was against the continued cover up in the Oregon State Capitol as the culture remains the status quo in order to maintain the power to pass policy at the detriment of women and employees. Sad state of affairs.

Sincerely,

Brian J. Boquist
Oregon State Senator