

Secretary: Vote explanation please. Sen Boquist

SB 1008 is a first attempt to reforming youth sentencing problems that need to be addressed by the legislature, if not a vote of the people. Court decisions, judicial crisis, and budgets require action. My NO vote is based upon the lack of clarity on exactly what the bill really accomplishes. There is very little doubt the bill will come back for concurrence from the House. While my office received numerous pieces of paper that outlined one side or the other's rhetorical position. Nothing in detail that would be provided to make a logical decision. Maybe the Committee members have those answers but not this State Senator. Roughly 45 minutes before the Floor Session a proponent finally delivered a ten plus page explanation but nothing from the opponents. This bill requires more than 15 minutes to understand. However, Senators can vote YES in support, or NO in opposition or NO for unknown. Abstaining is not an option. Yesterday, a meeting to explain the bill was scheduled. Instead, it was a 30 minute rhetorical bloviation with no details. While we face a decision that impacts thousands of lives the explanations and details in plain English remain scant. This is very odd. Oregon faces a budget crisis, and a criminal justice crisis. The Floor debate was just an extension of political blather and rhetoric instead of even a shed of details by except Senator Prozanski for which he did a good job of the bill's 33 page design. Unfortunately, the bill's debate provides almost zero details if challenged. The bill progressed as if it was a political campaign not a legislative debate. It was as if the bill was being traded for some other bill or vote. Several legislators expressed this was the case. Vote trading. When the bill returns from the House this Senator looks forward to a thorough review then an appropriate vote.

It is further appropriate to point out the violations of the lobby laws and use of public funds and public employees that occurred on this bill. The fact remains lawyers who think they are above the law only hurt their own cause. The public expects District Attorneys to follow the law not claim exceptions for their employees to use tax dollars to promote a position in the Legislature.