



HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

5-31-19

SB 1049 Vote explanation

Dear Chief Clerk Sekerak,

Oregon would not be the place we all love without the dedicated public employees who work hard every day to support and strengthen our communities. I believe everyone recognizes that our unfunded actuarial liability is not their fault.

There have been a handful of bills I have voted yes on over the past 18 weeks that I didn't think were perfect. I did this because I don't want to stop legislation from doing the most good just because it's not perfect. However, with this bill I feel differently. This time my issue with the bill is something I couldn't see past and therefore voted "no."

For the record I support almost every part of this legislation. Most of this bill is a smart approach dealing with the unfunded liability and the debt owed. However, the stipulation that redirects a portion of the employee contribution to the pension account is too far out of step with my values and those whom I serve. Essentially this holds public employees accountable for the mistakes of Wall Street executives, executives who made a sizeable profit mishandling pensions. That is not something I can support. Our firefighters, correctional officers, caseworkers, 911 dispatchers, nurses, to name a few, work every day in service to Oregon. They were promised a secure retirement and should not be responsible for this debt.

Bottom line, I stood by my values because my values are why I ran for office. I ran so working people would have a voice when there were opportunities to make their lives better, to save for their retirement, and to live with dignity. I ran because I'm a working person who lives paycheck to paycheck. I'm here because I felt we needed more working people representing us in this building. I ran because if we are going to truly have a citizen legislature then we need citizens who are not independently wealthy or retired. We need representation from people working and serving. This week, I stayed true to values that have gotten me to this day and why I voted, "no."

Sincerely,

Representative Rachel Prusak

