



## SENATE MAJORITY OFFICE

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## **Oregon Legislature Passes Bill to Close Sentencing Loophole in Domestic Violence Cases**

**SALEM, OR** – Today, the Oregon Senate passed HB 2975A with broad bipartisan support, sending the bill to the Governor’s desk. This legislation restores courts’ ability to impose separate sentences for distinct acts of violence, such as strangulation and assault, committed in the context of domestic violence.

The bill was carried on the Senate floor by **Senator Sara Gelser Blouin (D-Corvallis, Albany & South Salem)**, following its earlier passage in the House, where it was championed by **Representative Annessa Hartman (D-Gladstone/Oregon City)**.

“I find it deeply troubling that Oregon law, as it stands, can treat strangulation and assault as one offense simply because the victim is a partner or spouse,” said **Rep. Hartman**. “Strangulation is not just another form of assault—it’s a lethal act of control. Victims of domestic violence deserve better than to see the harm they endured minimized by a technicality.”

The legislation addresses the fallout of the 2024 Oregon Court of Appeals decision in *State v. Miles*, which interpreted the domestic violence statute in a way that requires courts to merge multiple charges—such as strangulation, assault, and menacing—into a single conviction if they all fall under the broad statutory definition of “abuse.”

“This bill ensures that the law doesn’t erase the severity of each violent act just because the victim is a partner,” said **Sen. Gelser Blouin**. “Each act matters. Each survivor matters.”

HB 2975A clarifies that the “constituting domestic violence” designation is not an element of a criminal offense for the purpose of merger, allowing courts to sentence each charge independently, as they would in any non-domestic setting.

The bill emerged from the House and Senate Judiciary Committees with unanimous support and represents the collaborative work of prosecutors, defense attorneys, the judiciary, and the Department of Justice. It now moves to the Governor’s desk to await her signature.

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