



SENATE MAJORITY OFFICE

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Oregon Senate Approves Bill Making Public Records Advocate Independent

SALEM – The Oregon State Senate approved Senate Bill 1506 today with unanimous support. This legislation makes the office of the Public Records Advocate independent, ensuring the office is better able to increase transparency in state government and hold state agencies and elected officials accountable.

SB 1506 gives appointment and removal power of the Public Records Advocate to the Public Records Advisory Council and takes specific steps to ensure the independence of the Advocate. The purpose of this position, which was created in 2017 through passage of SB 1506, is to improve communications between seekers of public information and those in possession of that information, and to ensure that state agencies follow public records law.

“The Public Record Advocate’s role is critical and challenging,” said Senator Mark Hass (D – Beaverton). “The public deserves access to information about its government and a process in place to gain that information which is simple to follow. By passing SB 1506 today, we take an important step forward to that end.”

The Advocate balances the tensions between government transparency and privacy protections for those who are subject of a requested record. The position also serves members of the press, helping to make certain the public has ease of access to pertinent government information.

“By adding greater independence to this office, we ensure the rights of those parties are balanced and we improve transparency in our government,” Senator Chuck Riley (D – Hillsboro) noted.

SB 1506 has received bipartisan support throughout the legislative process. The bill now moves to the House of Representatives for consideration.

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