



OREGON SENATE DEMOCRATS

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Oregon Senate Democrats Approve Class Sizes that Support Student Success

SALEM – Today, the Oregon Senate passed Senate Bill 580, which will codify class size and caseload as subject matter under consideration when entering into collective bargaining.

“Even before the pandemic, we leaned on Oregon’s teachers to provide much more than education to our students. They provide support, guidance and stability to Oregon’s kids. And, it’s extremely difficult to do that when too many students are packed into their classrooms,” said Senator Michael Dembrow (D-Portland), chair of the Senate Committee on Education.

Prior to 1995, class size was a mandatory subject of collective bargaining, Senate Democrats approved Senate Bill 580 to restore the class size subject as mandatory in order to ensure that districts fully consider the workload Oregon’s teachers experience. Under Senate Bill 580, school districts’ management will work with educators to thoughtfully take into account the impacts of class size changes, the bill does not mandate a specific class size.

“When we get to the other side of the COVID-19 health crisis, we cannot walk away from the plethora of lessons learned. Among them is the critical role of our teachers, who best serve our kids when that task is manageable,” said Senator Lew Frederick (D-N/NE Portland), who has long championed this statutory change in the interest of supporting students and teachers. “During this crisis, we were also reminded of the significance of our students’ connection to their teachers, as well as to their peers – which is better facilitated by our educators when they have a reasonable number of students to support, teach and guide toward a healthy and hopeful future.”

“Oregon’s teachers have been nimble. They have adapted to extraordinary circumstances and worked incredibly hard in the best interest of our youth. By passing Senate Bill 580, we support their work and will improve students’ outcomes,” added Senator Dembrow.

Senate Bill 580 passed with a vote of 17-11. The measure now goes to the Oregon House of Representatives for consideration.

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