



SENATE MAJORITY OFFICE

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Senate votes to ensure inspections at publicly-run restaurants

SB 631 ends inspection exception for restaurants run by Oregon Zoo and other public entities

SALEM— The Senate voted today to require restaurants operated by public entities to undergo routine health inspections. Senate Bill 631, which passed on a 29-0 vote, eliminates the inspection exception for publicly-run restaurants and will increase protections for public health.

“Customers expect food from diners, cafes, and bistros to be prepared in clean and safe kitchens,” said Senator Chip Shields (D-Portland). “Restaurants operated by public entities should have to go through the same inspections as all other places that prepare food.”

A recent news article revealed that certain restaurants run by public entities, including one at the Oregon Zoo, had not undergone a county inspection in as many as six years. State law requires a person operating a restaurant to obtain a license and have an inspection of the facility every six months, but the current law does not include restaurants run by public entities. Senate Bill 631 specifically includes public bodies and entities that operate restaurants within the inspection law such as the Oregon Zoo and Oregon Health and Science University.

“Swift passage of SB 631 will assure the public that the food we consume in all restaurants meets health standards,” said Senate Majority Leader Diane Rosenbaum (D-Portland). “Publicly-run restaurants shouldn’t be treated differently than private ones, especially when it comes to public health and food safety.”

Senate Bill 631 now moves to the Oregon House of Representatives for further action.

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