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Oregon Senate Passes Whistleblower Protections

HB 4067 Strengthens Ethics and Accountability in Oregon

Salem, Ore. - The Oregon Senate signaled support today for enhanced protections for whistleblowers in Oregon by passing HB 4067, a bipartisan bill providing a legal path for whistleblowers who discover malfeasance in state agencies and some nonprofits in Oregon. Six Senate Republicans sponsored the bill.

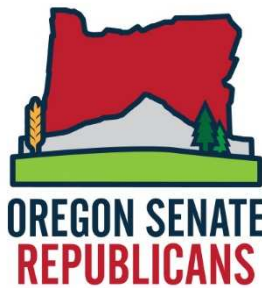
"This is a significant step toward restoring Oregonians' trust in state government," said Senator Tim Knopp (R-Bend). "After the discovery of numerous state agencies acting improperly, costing Oregonians millions of dollars and putting the lives of our most vulnerable at risk, the legislature has now provided honest Oregonians with a safe way to expose bad actors. Establishing protections for these brave citizens will encourage them to step forward and in doing so, hold our agencies accountable and prevent future scandals."

Under current Oregon law, employers cannot fire or retaliate against an employee who reports what they perceive as actions violating the law. HB 4067 extends those protections to all public and nonprofit employees and board members, giving them additional legal protection if the individual provides information to a state regulatory agency, law enforcement, member of the Oregon legislature, nonprofit organization manager or a licensed Oregon attorney.

Senate Republicans, pleased with the passage of HB 4067, called for additional measures to enhance accountability and transparency in Oregon government, particularly by considering a bill to prevent quid pro quo campaign contributions from organizations, including state agencies that receive pay raises from an elected official (SJR 205).

"After too much talk about restoring accountability to state government but no action, this should encourage all Oregonians concerned about transparency and ethical behavior by government officials responsible to run Oregon agencies with integrity," said Knopp. "We must keep fighting to win back the trust of Oregon citizens by instituting further measures to prevent malfeasance and corruption by elected officials and state agencies."

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