

Democracy Reform Oregon

2007 Ethics Reform Bills – And How Legislators Voted

Oregonians won an ethics reform victory in the 2007 legislature with a comprehensive package of three bills, HB 2595, HB 5025, and SB 10, that begin to restore public trust in government.

“Because of the unique funding mechanism and other wide-ranging choices, Oregon’s ethics package is one of the most robust in legislatures this year,” said Leah Rush, State Projects Director at the Center for Public Integrity who studies state ethics laws.

HB 2595 includes "nuts-and-bolts" tools so the ethics commission can do its job better. For example, the agency will emphasize explanatory rules and clarifications in the use of advisory opinions. HB 2595 also changed the name of the Government Standards and Practices Commission back to Oregon Ethics Commission. This was the original name of the commission back in 1974 when voters supported a legislative referral establishing the agency and other ethics rules. HB 2595 also gives the ethics commission authority to do accuracy audits of lobbying spending and other reports filed with the agency.

HB 5025 is the budget bill for the Ethics Commission. It included a long overdue boost in the resources available to the agency. They will restore an investigator position and add a trainer. The latter is especially important because it increases the commission’s ability to educate public officials and help them avoid ethics violations in the first place.

SB 10 includes:

- A way to insulate the Ethics Commission’s budget from possible retaliation by legislators subject to the agency’s oversight by providing a diversified source of funding from the wide range of political jurisdictions that send ethics complaints to the commission.
- A comprehensive annual aggregate \$50 gift limit from any one source with an administrative or legislative interest. This only applies to gifts given because someone is a public official and gifts from friends and family are not affected. There are exemptions to allow for trade missions and other officially-designated economic development activities by public officials as well as when a public is an invited participant at an event.
- A ban on entertainment such as sporting events.
- Electronic quarterly reporting of lobbying spending with online access for the public.
- Electronic quarterly reporting of public official gift reports with online access for the public.
- An increase in the maximum penalty for ethics violations increased from \$1,000 to \$5,000 as well as the flexibility to issue letters of correction for inadvertent or minor problems.
- A ban on using campaign funds to pay ethics fines or related legal fees.
- Provisions to allow public officials (many of whom are not elected and don’t have campaign funds) to form legal defense funds if they face an ethics investigation. These funds cannot be used for personal use.
- A “revolving door” provision that prevents officials from leaving public service and immediately going to work for businesses with whom they previously negotiated contracts.
- A rule prohibiting legislators from being paid lobbyists for one full session after they leave office.

Democracy Reform Oregon recommended a “yes” vote on all three bills. The chart below summarizes Senate and House votes.

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Name	District	SB 10	HB 2595	HB 5025
SENATE				
Jason Atkinson	2	Y	Y	Y
Brad Avakian	17	Y	Y	Y
Alan Bates	3	Y	Y	Y
Roger Beyer	9	N	Y	Y
Kate Brown	21	Y	Y	Y
Ginny Burdick	18	Y	Y	Y
Margaret Carter	22	Y	Y	A
Peter Courtney	11	Y	Y	Y
Ryan Deckert	14	Y	Y	Y
Richard Devlin	19	Y	Y	Y
Ted Ferrioli	30	Y	Y	Y
Gary George	12	Y	Y	Y
Larry George	13	A	A	Y
Avel Gordley	23	Y	Y	A
Betsy Johnson	16	Y	Y	E
Jeff Kruse	1	N	Y	Y
Rick Metsger	26	Y	Y	Y
Laurie Monnes Anderson	25	Y	Y	Y
Rod Monroe	24	Y	Y	Y
Bill Morrisette	6	Y	Y	Y
Frank Morse	8	Y	Y	Y
David Nelson	29	Y	Y	Y
Floyd Prozanski	4	Y	Y	Y
Kurt Schrader	20	Y	Y	Y
Bruce Starr	15	Y	Y	Y
Joanne Verger	5	Y	Y	Y
Vicki Walker	7	Y	Y	Y
Ben Westlund	27	Y	Y	Y
Doug Whitsett	28	Y	Y	Y
Jackie Winters	10	Y	Y	A
Senate Totals		27 Y 2 N 1 A	29 Y 1 A	26 Y 3 A 1 E
HOUSE				
	District	SB 10	HB 2595	HB 5025
Jeff Barker	28	Y	Y	Y
Phil Barnhart	11	Y	Y	Y
Vicki Berger	20	N	Y	Y
Terry Beyer	12	Y	Y	Y
Suzanne Bonamici	34	Y	Y	Y
Deborah Boone	32	Y	Y	Y
Brian Boquist	23	N	N	N
Scott Bruun	37	Y	Y	Y
Peter Buckley	5	Y	Y	Y
Chuck Burley	54	Y	Y	Y
Tom Butler	60	N	Y	Y
Kevin Cameron	19	N	Y	Y
Ben Cannon	46	Y	Y	Y
Brian Clem	21	Y	Y	Y
Jean Cowan	10	Y	Y	Y
John Dallum	59	Y	Y	Y

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Jackie Dingfelder	45	Y	Y	Y
Chris Edwards	14	Y	Y	Y
David Edwards	30	Y	Y	Y
Sal Esquivel	6	N	Y	Y
Linda Flores	51	Y	Y	Y
Larry Galizo	35	Y	Y	Y
Bill Garrard	56	N	Y	Y
Sara Gelser	16	Y	Y	Y
Vic Gilliam	18	N	Y	Y
George Gilman	55	A	Y	Y
Fred Girod	17	N	Y	Y
Mitch Greenlick	33	Y	Y	Y
Bruce Hanna	7	N	Y	Y
Paul Holvey	8	Y	Y	Y
Dave Hunt	40	Y	Y	Y
Bob Jenson	58	N	Y	E
Betty Komp	22	Y	Y	Y
Tina Kotek	44	Y	Y	Y
Wayne Krieger	1	N	Y	Y
Jerry Krummel	26	N	Y	Y
John Lim	50	Y	Y	Y
Greg Macpherson	38	Y	Y	Y
Ron Maurer	3	N	Y	Y
Jeff Merkeley	47	Y	Y	Y
Karen Minnis	49	A	Y	Y
Susan Morgan	2	N	Y	Y
Nancy Nathanson	13	Y	Y	Y
Donna Nelson	24	Y	Y	Y
Mary Nolan	36	Y	Y	Y
Andy Olson	15	N	Y	Y
Tobias Read	27	Y	Y	Y
Dennis Richardson	4	Y	Y	Y
Chuck Riley	29	Y	Y	Y
Arnie Roblan	9	Y	Y	Y
Diane Rosenbaum	42	Y	Y	Y
Mike Schaufler	48	Y	Y	Y
Wayne Scott	39	Y	Y	Y
Chip Shields	43	Y	Y	Y
Greg Smith	57	N	N	E
Patti Smith	52	Y	Y	Y
Kim Thatcher	25	N	Y	Y
Carolyn Tomei	41	Y	Y	E
Gene Whisnant	53	N	Y	Y
Brad Witt	31	Y	Y	Y
House Total		40 Y 18 N 2 A	58 Y 2 N	56 Y 1 N 3E

A = Absent, E=Excused, N=Voted No, Y=Voted Yes

Voting data as reported on legislative website for each bill sited.