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What you can do

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I have received countless emails asking me “what can I do?” In light of the lust for control, power and money by those who do not necessarily have our best interests at heart, it is very important that Oregonians have their voices heard as the legislature moves forward with thousands of potential laws in the legislative process. We need to continue to stand for what is right and vigorously defend our values and the truth, and be not deceived. This is no easy task, especially when so much of the government remains closed and meetings are outside of the Capitol using “virtual” platforms; out of reach for too many Oregonians.

Oregon is having problems with transparency on multiple levels. I have been vigorously advocating for the public to be safely allowed into the building to testify on laws that will affect their children, pocketbook and future. **Unfortunately, that is not the priority of the majority party in power.** There are clearly ways to accommodate the public within their building so they can petition their representatives on some of the most important issues facing our state. If Walmart and Costco can safely open with protections, so can the Capitol on behalf of its citizens.

Opening the Capitol is more than just an opinion, it is a right of the citizens in Oregon’s Constitution. Article 1 Section 26: **“No law shall be passed restraining any of the inhabitants of the State from assembling together in a peaceable manner to consult for their common good; nor from instructing their Representatives; nor from applying to the Legislature for redress of grievances [sic].”** Furthermore, Oregon’s Constitution in Article 4 Section 14: **“The deliberations of each house, of committees of each house or joint committees and of committees of the whole, shall be open.”**

I am afraid that **not allowing access to the people’s building is having a chilling effect on citizens’ ability to have their voices heard.** It has certainly made it more difficult for those who are not tech savvy.

We are being deceived in various ways and the lies and propaganda are furthered through calculated, dishonest methods of repetition such as: **“If you tell the same lie enough times, people will believe it; and the bigger the lie, the better.”** Another one: **A lie**

told once remains a lie but a lie told a thousand times becomes the truth. And another: Propaganda works best when those who are being manipulated are confident they are acting on their own free will. These tactics have been used in many parts of the world in recent history to promote Socialist/Communist ideas; to turn our hearts to stone and pit neighbor against neighbor. Our country has not before experienced what we are seeing now with the massive coordinated dissemination of lies and distortions of truth. We're in the throes of systematic "re-education" and deception by those seeking power, money and control over us.

Although we are in a very dark time in our history, Oregonians are resilient and can blaze a path forward as our ancestors once did. To avoid falling for the onslaught of deception being thrust upon us, **we must write down and speak truth to power** and not be afraid to talk about the policies that will dampen our children's future and hobble their liberty.

Thankfully, people are beginning to see past the steady stream of twisted reality fed to us by big corporate media in their so-called reporting. One solution to counter the misrepresentations fed to the masses, is to boldly testify of the truth and be proud to do so again and again. Although the Capitol is closed, and censorship is happening through the media and social media platforms, it is now more important than ever to understand how to use available processes to make your voice heard. **The good news is, you still do have ways to make your voice heard, and you must!** After sitting through numerous committee meetings, most testimony we have heard thus far has been from "experts."

**You, the Public, are missing! We need you!
How can you help? How can you make your voice heard?**

Get actively involved in tracking bills and contacting key people at key times. See [You Can Make a Difference](#) for more details. We must all push back on *bad* bills that we know are in the legislative process, and advocate for those that truly help Oregon in a meaningful way.

Email legislators – especially your own and those with opposite viewpoints from yours and then contact those along the way who can influence the outcome (explained in [You Can Make a Difference](#)). Find out what legislation is going through the legislative process. The [Oregon Legislative Information System](#) (OLIS) is key to finding out what bills are going through the process.

1. When you find out about a bad bill, **email** legislators about your concerns. I would strongly encourage you to use your *own* words with your *own* email address and *not* jump onto a pre-written letter you find somewhere. This is a thousand times more meaningful.
2. Since we're not in our offices, at the direction of our majority party leadership, it is best to email and not call. The majority of calls (all of them in my office) go to an unreliable voicemail system. It is better to email than to send letters through USPS since we are not here to receive them in a timely manner.

Plus, I highly recommend you take a few additional steps:

- e-Subscribe to the bills you are interested in by going to [Citizen Engagement e-Subscribe \(oregonlegislature.gov\)](#). An email will be sent every time there is a change to the bill.
- Go to [You Can Make a Difference](#) to find out how you can contact key people at key times to influence what is happening with the bills you are interested in.
- Go to OLIS: <https://olis.leg.state.or.us/liz/2021R1/2021-01-11> and get acquainted with all information that is there. OLIS will give you all kinds of information about bills, committees and committee members, sponsors and more! You can even find bills by typing in keywords that will lead you to bills that may be of interest.
- **Testify, testify, testify!** There are simple ways to do that. So far, I have seen very little input from the Public testifying for or against a bill. Most of the testimony I have heard has come from "experts." We need YOU! If you are testifying, the committee

heard has come from "experts." We need YOU! If you can testify using the remote system (explained in <https://www.oregonlegislature.gov/lpro/Publications/How-to-Testify.pdf>) that is the best way. But if you are like many and feel a bit shy about testifying in person remotely, you can submit your written testimony.

Above all, make your voice heard – especially to the party in control.

My office has produced some helpful hints to get your started using OLIS. See [Introduction to OLIS](#)

I cannot stress enough how important it is for Oregonians to get involved in what the legislature is working on. The steps above are key. If you have any questions, please don't hesitate to ask.



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