

QuickPoint! – The Oregon Senate has been shut down for a month. Does anyone care?

By John A. Charles, Jr.

Most Republican members of the Oregon Senate have refused to participate in floor sessions since May 3, in a show of opposition to Democratic leadership. As a result, hundreds of bills are waiting for floor votes, which may never be taken before the mandatory adjournment date of June 25.

While this is frustrating for legislative insiders, the average Oregonian probably doesn't care. Most people have no idea what is going on in the Capitol, for good reason. Bills are usually introduced for the benefit of narrow interests. If passed, they would eventually raise taxes for voters. Only on rare occasions does legislation actually benefit the public.

Some political analysts are focused on how future legislators can be compelled to show up, but perhaps the real lesson is how useless the legislature is.

This may be the Wally Pipp moment for politicians, a nod to the New York Yankees first basemen who sat out a game in 1925 and was replaced by Lou Gehrig—for the next 2,129 consecutive games.

Legislative arguments about the walkout sound like kids arguing in the sandbox. If politicians can't do better, they should all go home, where they won't be missed.

John A. Charles, Jr. is President and CEO of Cascade Policy Institute, Oregon's free market public policy research organization.

June 7, 2023

Word Count: 196

Attention editors
and producers:

Cascade Commentaries are provided for reprint in newspapers and other publications, with credit given to author(s) and Cascade. Contact Cascade to arrange print or broadcast interviews on this commentary topic.

Please contact:

Cascade Policy Institute
4850 SW Scholls Ferry Rd.
Suite 103
Portland, Oregon 97225

Phone: (503) 242-0900
Fax: (503) 242-3822

www.cascadepolicy.org
info@cascadepolicy.org

4850 SW Scholls Ferry Road
Suite 103
Portland, Oregon 97225

t: 503.242.0900
f: 503.242.3822
info@cascadepolicy.org
www.cascadepolicy.org

Cascade Policy Institute is a tax-exempt educational organization as defined under IRS code 501 (c)(3). Nothing appearing in this Cascade Commentary is to be construed as necessarily representing the views of Cascade or its donors. The views expressed herein are the author's own.

