



## Oregon Secretary of State's Office Testimony Opposing HB 4013

House Bill 4013 is an anti-accountability measure targeting Democrat Kim Sordyl for removal from the State Board of Education in apparent retaliation for her advocacy for transparency, accountability, and equity. Kim is an attorney whose two sons attend Portland Public Schools. Secretary Richardson appointed Kim to the Board to be a strong advocate for students, parents, and teachers.

The Bend Bulletin Editorial Board opposed HB 4013 in an editorial entitled "[Don't Change Rules to Ban State School Board Member](#)." They said: "Legislators shouldn't manipulate the rules to silence voices they don't like. But that appears to be what's at work with a proposed bill to change who can sit on the State Board of Education. . . . Lawmakers should reject this maneuver to silence a critic."

"[Y]ou've got to be kidding," said the Oregonian Editorial Board in an editorial opposing HB 4013 entitled "[Yes' Men and Women Only for State Education Board](#)." They went on to explain:

"Sordyl, to put it lightly, gets under people's skin. She can be acerbic, cutting and relentless in her accusations of mismanagement, incompetence or cronyism. Unfortunately for her critics, she is also often right, as she has shown in her scrutiny of Portland schools, highlighting instances in which the district violated state law, ignored its own policies and put the careers of administrators or teachers above the interests of students. She has often questioned the way things have been done, particularly when they don't work. Those are qualities that, to most of us, would seem to be reasons to keep her on the board of education, no matter people's hurt feelings.

"And there's simply no reason to change the law. According to the Tribune story, Doherty said board members have to deal with sensitive information. That's hardly a rationale, particularly considering that by law the governor appoints members of the community - not her own staff - to also serve on the board. The idea here is that the board and the department benefit from having regular members of the public who are passionate about education provide their input and opinions - even if they don't rubber stamp what state education staff might put forward.

"And considering the condition of Oregon's education system, the lack of progress in graduation rates, continuing achievement gaps, board members and department staff might want to focus on growing thicker skin and recognizing that criticism can be a good thing. Because certainly the status quo has not been."

Oregon's education system is currently failing 1 in 4 students and has ranked among the worst five states in low graduation rates for five years in a row. The Secretary of State's [recent audits](#) of the Department of Education identify significant improvements needed to help students succeed, but anti-accountability HB 4013 moves in the wrong direction.

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