

*Janelle Bynum was rebuked by both Democrats and Republicans for failing to hold hearings on legislation that would strengthen criminal penalties for teachers convicted of sexual abuse.*

**In May 2021, Bynum, The Chair Of The House Judiciary Committee, Was Criticized For Holding Up Legislation Strengthen Criminal Penalties For Teachers Convicted Of Sexual Abuse, Forcing The Committee To Use An Extremely Rare Procedural Move To Force A Hearing On The Bill**

**In May 2021, Bynum Was The Only Member Of The Oregon House Judiciary Committee Not To Sign A Letter Forcing A Vote On A Bill That Would Strengthen Criminal Penalties For Teachers Convicted Of Sexual Abuse.** “Nine members of the Oregon House Judiciary Committee have invoked a rarely used House rule to force a hearing on a bill that would strengthen criminal penalties for teachers convicted of sexual abuse. The lawmakers, both Democrats and Republicans, wrote a letter Wednesday to committee chair Rep. Janelle Bynum, D-Happy Valley, asking that she schedule a vote on Senate Bill 649. Bynum was the lone member of the committee who didn't sign it. Under House rules, Bynum must schedule the bill within five business days if a majority of committee members request it in writing. She said Thursday that she will do so. House Clerk Tim Sekerak said he could not recall another instance of a committee forcing its chair to schedule a hearing by using the rule. The measure would put teachers in the same category as coaches when it comes to sentencing for crimes of sexual abuse involving a student. Currently, coaches can be convicted of a Class C felony, which is punishable by up to five years in prison.” (Chris Lehman, “Lawmakers Use Rare Rule TO Save Sex Abuse Bill That Was About To Die,” *The Oregonian*, 5/14/21)

**Every Single Member Of The Committee, Democrat And Republican, Signed A Request For A Hearing, Which Resulted In The Invocation Of A House Rule Forcing Bynum To Hold A Hearing On The Bill.** “Sen. Bill Hansell, R-Athena, and Sen. Kathleen Taylor, D-Milwaukie, introduced and shepherded the bill through the Senate. Members of the Senate Judiciary Committee voted unanimously to send the bill to the full Senate, where it was passed without opposition. The bill then headed to the House, where it seemed a legislative slam dunk. Last week, however, committee Chairwoman Rep. Janelle Bynum, D-Clackamas, indicated she likely wouldn't be scheduling a hearing for the bill, essentially stopping its progress. The deadline was Friday, May 14. So on Wednesday, May 12, Hansell feared the worst, but by the end of the day his worry had whipsawed to jubilation. Rep. Ron Noble, R-McMinnville, called to say that the nine members of the judicial committee had invoked House Rule 8.20 that says if a majority of committee members request a hearing in writing, the chairman must schedule a hearing within five days. ‘Every single Republican and Democrat on the committee signed a letter requesting a hearing,’ Hansell said. ‘It's scheduled for (Tuesday, May 18).’” (Kathy Aney, “Rarely Used House Rule Saves Bailey's Bill,” *Wallow County Chieftain (Enterprise, Oregon)*, 5/19/21)

**The Chief House Clerk, Tim Sekerak, Commented That He Couldn't Remember Any Instances Of This Rule Being Used Saying “This Is An Extremely Rare Occurrence.”** “Chief House Clerk Tim Sekerak mused that he had never seen the rule invoked in his almost 10 years at the Oregon Capitol. He said Deputy Chief Clerk Obie Rutledge has worked there since the early 2000s and also doesn't remember the rule being used. ‘This is an extremely rare occurrence,’ Sekerak said. ‘When this many members of a committee want to do something, the chair usually works something out.’ Noble, a former McMinnville police chief, said he knew about the rule because he studied the rulebook the same way he studied the criminal code as a law enforcement officer. ‘It's in my nature to get a feel for what's out there,’ he said.” (Kathy Aney, “Rarely Used House Rule Saves Bailey's Bill,” *Wallow County Chieftain (Enterprise, Oregon)*, 5/19/21)