



**Highlights from the 82<sup>nd</sup> Oregon Legislative Assembly State Legislative Effectiveness Scores**

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**Executive Summary**

The Center for Effective Lawmaking (CEL) is pleased to announce the release of the State Legislative Effectiveness Scores (SLES) for the 82<sup>nd</sup> Oregon Legislative Assembly legislative session (2023-2024). This report offers highlights from our initial analyses of these scores, including:

- We identify the top-10 most effective legislators in the majority party in both chambers, the top-10 most effective minority-party lawmakers in the House of Representatives, and the top-5 most effective minority-party lawmakers in the Senate. Many listed lawmakers continued their highly effective lawmaking patterns from the previous legislative session.
- We identify those lawmakers with the longest streaks of being in our prestigious “Above Expectations” category, as well as first-term lawmakers in this category.
- We find that, consistent with our published research findings, there is an overall lawmaking benefit from being in the majority party. Before and during the 2023-2024 legislative sessions, majority-party Democratic lawmakers consistently received higher State Legislative Effectiveness Scores (SLES) and achieved better bill outcomes in comparison to minority-party Republican lawmakers. Majority-party Democrats introduced 189 laws in the House and 118 in the Senate, while minority-party Republicans introduced 52 in the House and 32 in the Senate. This difference highlights the evident pattern of partisan lawmaking present in Oregon.
- Serving as a committee chair is related to greater lawmaking effectiveness. This phenomenon is highlighted during the 82<sup>nd</sup> Oregon Legislative Assembly, where many of the most effective majority-party lawmakers and one highly effective minority-party lawmaker held committee chair positions.
- In addition, our findings indicate that effective lawmakers in one session are likely to remain effective lawmakers across multiple sessions, as several legislators appear on the top-10 or top-3 lists in both the 2023-2024 and 2021-2022 legislative sessions.

## Introduction and Methodology

The State Legislative Effectiveness Scores discussed here are based on the combination of fifteen metrics capturing the bills that each member of each state legislature sponsors, how far their bills move through the lawmaking process, and how substantial their policy proposals are. The scores are normalized to an average value of 1.0 in both the House of Representatives and the State Senate in each legislative session. While the scores capture how successful an individual member of the Oregon House or Senate is at advancing her sponsored bills, compared to all members of her chamber (in a legislative term), it's important to be cognizant of the fact that the State Legislative Effectiveness Scores do not capture lawmaking activities that occur behind the scenes, such as legislators advocating for the passage of bills that they haven't sponsored. The scores also don't capture how effective individual members of the House or Senate are at blocking the advancement of other legislators' sponsored bills. To the extent that we are interested in identifying who is most successful at advancing their sponsored legislation through the different stages of the lawmaking process (and why), however, the State Legislative Effectiveness Scores provide us with an objective indicator of legislators' efforts. More on our [methodology](#) and [scores](#) can be found on our website.

For each member of the House of Representatives and State Senate, we also identify a Benchmark Score, based on the average lawmaking effectiveness of legislators who share that legislator's majority- or minority-party status, level of seniority, and chair position on a committee. Controlling for these considerations is important in order to describe legislators on a more level playing field. For example, in the 82<sup>nd</sup> Oregon House of Representatives, minority-party lawmakers had an average SLES of 0.60 compared to 1.28 for majority-party members, while committee chairs had an average SLES of 1.69. In the State Senate, those averages were 0.69 in the minority party, 1.24 in the majority party, and 1.21 among committee chairs.

We then label each lawmaker as "Above Expectations" for those outperforming their benchmark scores by 50% or more, "Below Expectations" for those below 50% of their benchmark, and "Meeting Expectations" for all other legislators.

Finally, within each party, we rank each member according to their SLES. This ranking is used to generate the lists of top performers highlighted in the tables below. Given the substantial lawmaking benefit that follows from being in the majority party, ranking the entire Oregon Legislative Assembly together would be inappropriate, but these comparisons within each party are quite informative.

## Highly Effective Democratic Lawmakers in the 82<sup>nd</sup> Oregon House of Representatives

The following table identifies the ten highest-scoring Democrats in the 2023-2024 House of Representatives. Six of the top ten were committee chairs.

### Top Ten List—House Democrats (2023-2024 Legislative Session)

	<u>Name</u>	<u>LES</u>	<u>Committee Chair</u>
1.	<b>Pam Marsh (District 5)</b>	3.44	Chair
2.	<b>Robert “Rob” Nosse (District 42)</b>	2.95	Chair
3.	<b>Paul Evans (District 20)</b>	2.63	None
4.	<b>Courtney Neron (District 26)</b>	2.55	Chair
5.	<b>Nancy Nathanson (District 13)</b>	2.15	Chair
6.	<b>Lisa Reynolds (District 34)</b>	2.04	Chair
7.	<b>David Gomberg (District 10)</b>	1.99	None
8.	<b>Susan McLain (District 29)</b>	1.92	None
9.	<b>Daniel “Dan” Rayfield (District 16)</b>	1.83	None
10.	<b>Paul Holvey (District 8)</b>	1.77	Chair

At the top of the list is Representative Pam Marsh from District 5 (Southern Jackson County) with a score of 3.44. In the 2023-2024 legislative session, she introduced 40 bills, 35 of which received action in committee, 32 received action beyond committee, 17 passed the House of Representatives, and 16 became law.

Rep. Marsh was elected to the House in 2016. Before joining the House, Rep. Marsh served as a member of the Ashland City Council, a member of the Ashland City Planning Commission, and a member of the Ashland Charter Review Committee. She relocated to Southern Oregon from Palo Alto, California, in 1994, where she worked for the local legislator in community development. From 2006-2012, she worked as the Deputy Director of a local nonprofit that provides drug and alcohol addiction treatment. Afterward, she served as Executive Director at the Ashland Emergency Foodbank until 2016.

Five legislators on the list were among the top-10 highest scoring House Democrats in the 2021-2022 legislative session: Rep. Pam Marsh (District 5), Rep. Robert “Rob” Nosse (District 42), Rep. Paul Evans (District 20), Rep. Nancy Nathanson (District 13), and Rep. Paul Holvey (District 8).

## Highly Effective Republican Lawmakers in the 82<sup>nd</sup> Oregon House of Representatives

The following table identifies the top ten highest scorers in the 2023-2024 House of Representatives among minority-party Republicans.

### Top Ten List—House Republicans (2023-2024 Legislative Session)

	<u>Name</u>	<u>LES</u>	<u>Seniority</u>
1.	<b>Mark Owens (District 60)</b>	2.56	3
2.	<b>Lily Morgan (District 3)</b>	1.69	2
3.	<b>Kevin Mannix (District 21)</b>	1.14	1
4.	<b>E. Werner Reschke (District 55)</b>	1.02	4
5.	<b>Bobby Levy (District 58)</b>	0.98	2
6.	<b>Jami Cate (District 11)</b>	0.85	2
7.	<b>Cyrus Javadi (District 32)</b>	0.76	1
8.	<b>Ed Diehl (District 17)</b>	0.75	1
9.	<b>Rick Lewis (District 18)</b>	0.60	4
10.	<b>Charlie Conrad (District 12)</b>	0.59	1

Topping our list is Representative Mark Owens of District 60 (Baker, Grant, Harney, Lake, Malheur, and Deschutes counties) with a State Legislative Effectiveness Score of 2.56. He introduced 86 bills in the 2023-2024 legislative session, 33 of which received action in committee, 26 received action beyond committee, 10 passed the House, and 9 became law.

Rep. Owens assumed office in 2020. Before joining the House, Rep. Owens served as a Harney County Commissioner and on the Crane School Board. Rep. While on the Harney County Commission, he focused on agricultural preservation and the use of natural resources. Rep. Owens has called Eastern Oregon home for over 30 years. He currently owns and operates an alfalfa farm and haying business out of Harney County. Outside of the legislature, Rep. Owens serves on the Harney County Watershed Council and as a Co-Convener of the Harney Community-Based Water Planning Board.

Rep. Owens was also the only Representative to appear on both the top-10 highest-scoring Republican Representative list in both the 2021-2022 and 2023-2024 legislative sessions.

## Highly Effective Democratic Lawmakers in the 82<sup>nd</sup> Oregon State Senate

The following table identifies the ten highest-scoring Democrats in the 2023-2024 State Senate. Seven of the top ten most effective Democratic lawmakers in the Senate were committee chairs.

### Top Ten List—Senate Democrats (2023-2024 Legislative Session)

	<u>Name</u>	<u>LES</u>	<u>Committee Chair</u>
1.	<b>Sara Gelser Blouin (District 8)</b>	3.31	Chair
2.	<b>Chris Gorsek (District 25)</b>	2.04	None
3.	<b>Robert “Rob” Wagner (District 19)</b>	1.91	None
4.	<b>James Manning Jr. (District 7)</b>	1.67	Chair
5.	<b>Michael Dembrow (District 23)</b>	1.61	Chair
6.	<b>Janeen Sollman (District 15)</b>	1.60	Chair
7.	<b>Deb Patterson (District 10)</b>	1.19	Chair
8.	<b>Kathleen Taylor (District 21)</b>	1.15	Chair
9.	<b>Floyd Prozanski (District 4)</b>	1.09	Chair
10.	<b>Wlnsvey Campos (District 18)</b>	0.99	None

Among Democrats in the State Senate, Senator Sara Gelser Blouin from District 8 (Corvallis, Albany, Tangent, Adair Village, South Salem, Linn, Benton, and Marion counties) is first with a SLES score of 3.31. In the 2023-2024 legislative session, she introduced 51 bills, 39 of which received action in committee, 31 received action beyond committee, 24 passed the Senate, and 21 became law.

Sen. Gelser Blouin was elected to the Senate in 2014. Before joining the Senate, she represented Oregon’s 16th District in the State House. Sen. Gelser Blouin also served on the Corvallis School Board from 2001-2006 and was appointed by President Barack Obama to serve on the National Council on Disabilities. She holds a B.A. in history and education from Earlham College and a MAIS in history and women and gender studies from Oregon State University. Sen. Gelser Blouin worked as a Children with Disabilities and Family Support Coordinator for the Oregon Department of Human Services and as a regional coordinator for the Oregon Parent Training Information Center, where she provided guidance to parents, educators, and administrators on special education law and practice. Sen. Gelser Blouin is a long-time advocate for disability rights, and her work has gained national attention. In 2017, Sen. Gelser Blouin was named one of Time Magazine’s “Persons of the Year” for her role as a silence breaker amid the #MeToo movement.

Seven legislators on the list were among the top-10 highest scoring Senate Democrats in the 2021-2022 legislative session: Sen. Sara Gelser Blouin (District 8), Sen. Chris Gorsek (District 25), Sen. James Manning Jr. (District 7), Sen. Michael Dembrow (District 23), Sen. Deb Patterson (District 10), Sen. Kathleen Taylor (District 21), and Sen. Floyd Prozanski (District 4).

## Highly Effective Republican Lawmakers in the 82<sup>nd</sup> Oregon Senate

The following table identifies the top five highest scorers in the 2023-2024 State Senate among minority-party Republicans.

### Top Five List — Senate Republicans (2023-2024 Legislative Session)

	<u>Name</u>	<u>LES</u>	<u>Seniority</u>
1.	<b>Bill Hansell (District 29)</b>	1.48	6
2.	<b>Tim Knopp (District 27)</b>	1.44	6
3.	<b>David Smith (District 1)</b>	1.22	1
4.	<b>Lynn Findley (District 30)</b>	0.98	3
5.	<b>Kim Lona Thatcher (District 11)</b>	0.87	5

Senator Bill Hansell from District 29 (Gillam, Morrow, Sherman, Umatilla, Union, Wallowa, and Wheeler counties) had the highest SLES for Senate Republicans in the 2023-2024 legislative session with a score of 1.48. He introduced 40 bills in the 2023-2024 legislative session, 22 of which received action in committee, 20 received action beyond committee, 12 passed the Senate, and 9 became law.

Sen. Hansell joined the Senate in 2013 and left office in 2025. Before joining the Senate, Sen. Hansell served 8 terms as an Umatilla County Commissioner. While on the Commission, he was elected to serve as the President of the Association of Oregon Counties and President of the National Association of Counties. Sen. Hansell holds a degree in political science from the University of Oregon and a certificate from the John F. Kennedy School of Government at Harvard University. After college, he was involved in the Campus Crusade for Christ, serving as a missionary in California and Australia. After, he returned to work on his family’s farm in Umatilla, Oregon. In the community, he is a member of the Oregon State Library board of trustees and the Oregon Growth Board, and a volunteer for 4-H youth programs and the FFA.

Four Senators on the list were among the top-10 highest scoring Senate Republicans in the 2021-2022 legislative session: Sen. Bill Hansell (District 29), Sen. Tim Knopp (District 27), Sen. Lynn Findley (District 30), and Sen. Kim Lona Thatcher (District 11).

### Lawmakers with Long-Standing Patterns of “Above Expectations”

Those who significantly exceed their benchmark score, which is calculated based on their seniority and status as a majority party member and/or committee chairperson, are identified as being in our “Above Expectations” category. The lists below identify the Representatives with the longest active streaks of exceeding expectations in consecutive sessions continuing through (and including) the 2023-2024 legislative session.

**State Representatives with Longest Streak of “Above Expectations”  
(through the 2023-2024 Legislative Session)**

	<u>Name</u>	<u>Streak</u>	<u>SLES (2023-2024)</u>	<u>Seniority</u>
1.	<b>Robert “Rob” Nosse (D-42)</b>	4 Legislative Sessions	2.95	5 Legislative Sessions
2.	<b>Pam Marsh (D-5)</b>	3 Legislative Sessions	3.44	4 Legislative Sessions
3.	<b>Paul Evans (D-20)</b>	3 Legislative Sessions	2.63	5 Legislative Sessions

Representative Robert “Rob” Nosse (D) of District 42 (Portland) had the longest streak of "Above Expectations," with 4 legislative sessions and a SLES score of 2.95 in the 2023-2024 legislative session. During the 2023-2024 legislative session, Rep. Nosse introduced 51 bills, 39 of which received action in committee, 30 received action beyond committee, 13 passed the House, and 12 became law. Rep. Nosse has consistently ranked among the top five most effective Democratic lawmakers in the House since 2017.

Rep. Nosse assumed office in 2014 and became the Majority Whip of the Oregon House in 2019. Rep. Nosse first entered Oregon politics when he served as executive director of the Oregon Student Association in the 1990s. In the role, he advocated for youth issues and advanced multiple ballot initiatives. After, he became a union organizer for the Oregon Nurses Association and remained in that role for nearly 20 years. Before joining the House, he served as a board member for the Basic Rights Oregon Equality PAC, which helped elect pro-LGBTQ+ candidates to public office. In the community, he is involved with the High Desert Museum, the Oregon Shakespeare Festival, and the James Beard Public Market.

**State Senators with Longest Streak of “Above Expectations”  
(through the 2023-2024 Legislative Session)**

	<u>Name</u>	<u>Streak</u>	<u>SLES (2023-2024)</u>	<u>Seniority</u>
1.	<b>Sara Gelser Blouin (D-8)</b>	5 Legislative Sessions	3.31	5 Legislative Sessions
2.	<b>Bill Hansell (R-29)</b>	4 Legislative Sessions	1.48	6 Legislative Sessions

Senator Sara Gelser Blouin of District 8 (Corvallis, Albany, Tangent, Adair Village, South Salem, Linn, Benton, and Marion counties) had the longest streak of being "Above Expectations" with 5 legislative sessions and a SLES score of 3.31 in the 2023-2024 legislative session. Sen. Gelser Blouin has consistently ranked among the top 2 highest-scoring Democratic Senators since 2015.

## High-Performing Freshmen

One way to identify future legislative leaders is to identify freshmen Representatives and Senators who earned an “Above Expectations” rating in their first term. For freshman legislators, their initial scores are compared to benchmarks for newcomers—so when a freshman outperforms their cohort, it can reveal strong political acumen, the ability to navigate legislative procedures quickly, and skill in coalition-building or policy entrepreneurship. These traits often correlate with future leadership roles. Our research on the U.S. Congress suggests that legislators who perform well early on are more likely to be selected for committee chairs or leadership positions, and to influence major legislation in subsequent terms. Hence, identifying high-performing freshmen can offer early signals of who might rise through the ranks.

### Freshmen Representatives “Above Expectations” (2023-2024 Legislative Session)

	<u>Name</u>	<u>SLES (2023-2024)</u>
1.	Ben Bowman (D-25)	1.34
2.	Cyrus Javadi (R-32)	0.76
3.	Ed Diehl (R-17)	0.75

The State Representative with the highest State Legislative Effectiveness Score, who was also "Above Expectations" during his freshman term, was Democratic Representative Ben Bowman of District 25 (Washington County) with a score of 1.34. During the 2023-2024 legislative session, Rep. Bowman introduced 28 bills, 17 of which received action in committee, 12 received action beyond committee, 7 passed the House, and 6 became law.

Before joining the House, Rep. Bowman served on the Tigard-Tualatin School Board and was elected Vice Chair in 2020 and Chair in 2021. He holds a bachelor’s degree from the University of Oregon and a master’s degree from Stanford University in education policy. During his career, he has worked in Rep. Margaret Doherty's office and as a policy analyst for the Oregon Department of Education. He currently works as a school district administrator. During his first term in the Oregon State Legislature, he was elected as the House Majority Leader.

### Freshmen Senators “Above Expectations” (2023-2024 Legislative Session)

	<u>Name</u>	<u>SLES (2023-2024)</u>
1.	David Smith (R-1)	1.22

2.	Cedric Hayden (R-6)	0.82
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Senator David Smith (R) of District 1 (Curry, Coos, and Douglas) was the freshman Senator with the highest State Legislative Effectiveness Score, who was also "Above Expectations" for the 2023-2024 legislative session. He proposed 75 bills during the 2023-2024 legislative session, 19 of which received action in committee, 13 received action beyond committee, 4 passed the Senate, and 3 became law.

Before joining the Senate, Sen. Smith represented District 1 in the Oregon State House from 2017-2024, when he was appointed to serve in the Senate. Before joining the state legislature, he served as the Port Orford City Council President, as the Port Orford Chamber of Commerce President/Director, and as the Chair and Vice Chair of the Curry County Board of Commissioners. During his tenure in local politics, he was involved with the Association of Oregon Counties and served on various subcommittees within each level of government. Sen. Smith attended Southwestern Oregon Community College and Southern Oregon University. He worked in the culinary industry and eventually returned to Port Orford to take over his family's 45-year-old restaurant and lounge.

**Other Findings**

In terms of broader patterns, consistent with a majority-party advantage in most states, a pattern of partisan lawmaking is evident in Oregon. The SLES of minority-party lawmakers across the country on the whole averages about 0.60, which is identical to the average scores in 2023-24 for minority-party Republicans in the Oregon House of Representatives. Minority-party scores in the Senate are somewhat higher at an average value of 0.69.

Coupled with more Democratic seats controlled in both chambers and a Democratic governor, these patterns follow through into whose bills become law. Specifically, 189 laws resulted from the bills sponsored by majority-party Democrats in the House of Representatives in 2023-24 compared to only 52 laws from the bills sponsored by Republican lawmakers in the House. A similar imbalance occurred in the Senate, with only 32 laws from the bills of Republicans compared to 118 from majority-party Democrats. Yet, these balances are not significantly out of proportion with those found in other states with unified one-party governance.

**Conclusion**

The 82<sup>nd</sup> Oregon Legislative Assembly legislative session demonstrated consistent patterns in legislative effectiveness, with experienced legislators, committee chairs, and majority-party members continuing to hold an advantage in advancing their policy agendas. Across both chambers, many of the most effective lawmakers continued their high performance from previous

sessions, indicating a durable capacity for lawmaking among key figures. These findings underscore the importance of institutional positions and experiences in shaping legislative outcomes in Oregon.