

From: [REDACTED]
To: [OIP](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] testimony for oct. 4, 2022 public hearing
Date: Sunday, October 2, 2022 2:24:38 PM

Please accept this as testimony in strong opposition to both proposals. This is an attack on the public's right to know.

It appears there is a new buzzword in town, BALANCE. This isn't balance. It is a giveaway to the legislature which, when it says it wants the public involved, means the opposite. When the State Supreme Court outlawed gut and replace, legislators worked fervently to get around the court decision. This too is an attempt to undo what the court has decreed. The legislature seems intent on destroying, brick by brick, the sunshine law. The same legislature that has exempted itself from adhering to the law. The same legislature whose members do not understand the law. One legislator has said he gets input from his committee members, one by one. He is so proud of himself. He does not know, or does not care, or both, that sequential meetings are illegal under the sunshine law.

The legislature does not comprehend that the public does not trust it. The legislature acts omnipotent. Meanwhile this year we have elected officials pleading guilty to bribery in federal court. The tip of the iceberg? Probably. And these people want the OIP to do their bidding. In your draft proposal, you should tell them they have lost the trust of the people and any attempt to whittle away at the laws mentioned in these proposals further erodes any trust that may be left. If they don't like it, they can get another job. An OIP who instead of promoting transparency promotes opaqueness.

Meanwhile, we have the OIP continually advocating for less public participation. An OIP who has for years had a backlog of requests, an OIP which decided that it did not want to deal with complaints against neighborhood boards and transferred that authority to the Neighborhood Commission, whose members have no comprehension of the statute.

To quote "Civil Beat" on Sunday, October 3, "The law directs state and local government officials to operate as openly as possible. Allowing them to hide how they've reached a decision until it may well be too late for the public to object is not doing the public's business in the open." Names of agency officials and employees should not be redacted. Authors' names should be clearly displayed. For all we know, items emanating from government may have been drafted by special interests. The public has a right to know. Just like the legislature should not say that an item was introduced by request. The requester must be identified.

Please end this idiocy now. Power to the people, not the electeds and bureaucrats.

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