March 27, 2017

Co-Chair Manning and Smith, and Members of the Joint Subcommittee on General Government,

On behalf of the American Federation of Teachers-Oregon (AFT-Oregon), we strongly encourage the Committee to protect Oregon voters' access to electoral information and not move forward the Secretary of State's abrupt proposal to limit voter access to electoral information. The Oregon Voters' Pamphlet is the single most important source of accurate and impartial information about the candidates and ballot measures voters must decide on every election. Additionally, AFT-Oregon has serious concerns regarding staffing levels for outreach to voters.

AFT-Oregon represents approximately 15,000 workers in Oregon's community college and universities in faculty, graduate employee, and classified positions, K-12 classified positions, and child care workers. Our members are committed to expanding access to the democratic process for all Oregonians and vigorously opposed to reducing the electorates' ability to access the ballot and important facts regarding their choices.

Oregon has a long history of increasing access to the ballot and electoral information, this proposed change would roll back years of work and nationally recognized success of increasing voter turnout. Oregon voters have repeatedly supported efforts to increase voter access to the ballot and the Secretary's actions are not in line with the voters who hired him. We need to protect the will of the voters.

As a state, we must be committed to ensuring that every eligible voter has the opportunity to vote and have their voice be heard as part of our democratic process. We strongly encourage the Committee to protect Oregon voters' access to electoral information and not move forward the Secretary of State's abrupt proposal to limit voter access to electoral information

Sincerely,

Marcus Swift
Director of Political and Legislative Affairs
AFT-Oregon