

Dear Senate Rules Committee members,

I strongly urge you to oppose SB368 and to not let this ill-conceived bill out of committee.

SB 368 is NOT a well-intentioned bill to clarify the initiative process, as sponsors might have us believe, but a power grab designed to undermine the citizen initiative process and take away the free speech rights of petitioners to bring critical issues of health and safety before the public.

This bill is unconstitutional, as there is NO separate vote requirement for county charter amendments. County Clerks do NOT and should not have the ability to review county charter amendments on separate vote grounds. Not only are county clerks not qualified to make such determinations, having them do so violates the separation of powers between the the executive and judicial branches of the Oregon government.

If citizen lawmaking, as manifested in the initiative process in the Oregon Constitution, is a co-equal power to the legislature, it is unconstituional for the Legislature to eviscerate the initiative process this way by making it easy for county administrators to veto citizen legislation prior to the ballot.

This bill does not clarify existing law, but makes new law, and in so doing dramatically undermines the initiative process.

Make no mistake — this bill was brought about because powerful special interests don't want the people to have a say. To support this bill is to side with those interests and to throw the people, and Democracy with it, under the bus.

Rob Dickinson  
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*"Human progress is neither automatic nor inevitable. Even a superficial look at history reveals that no social advance rolls in on the wheels [of] inevitability. Every step towards the goal of justice requires sacrifice, suffering, and struggle; the tireless exertions and passionate concern of dedicated individuals. Without persistent effort, time itself becomes an ally of the insurgent and primitive forces of irrational emotionalism and social destruction. This is no time for apathy or complacency. This is a time for vigorous and positive action."*

- Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.