

To: [House Committee on Rules](#)

[Representative Paul Holvey, Chair](#)

From: Mary Sinclair

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Re: [HB 2685](#) Relating to information provided when filing to run for public office. **Support**

I am not speaking for the League of Women Voters of Oregon but I have managed their Vote411 undertaking since 2012. The incentive to address this was the "There Oughta Be a Law" project of Representative Pam Marsh. I believe that democratic government depends on informed and active participation in government. This requires that governmental bodies protect the citizen's right to know by (among other things) making public records accessible, reliable, timely and transparent and the process efficient.

The Vote411 project collects candidate information for voters so individuals can make well-informed ballot decisions. We find getting this information very challenging below the state level and assert that it is more important than ever for the voting public to readily have access to candidate information. When candidates file to run for office, certain contact information (address, at least one phone number, and email address) is required, but not always provided. Our access to candidates is sometimes blocked, for example when candidates' filing contact information is redacted or election officials request that we submit a FOIA request for SEL 101. In addition, we do not want to reach out via incumbents' public office phones or emails that are often used for campaigns. In the County, City and District Candidate's Manual, page 31, it states that one phone number and an email address are required, but is often not verified. It is not clear if this means the information is public and available to all citizens. There is no place on the SEL form to indicate that it is public information.

ORESTAR does not seem to have this problem because on page 15 of the ORESTAR User's Manual it states that an email address is required and it is online and public.

All citizens should be able to contact candidates. HB 2686 addresses these issues and I encourage your support.

Regards,

Mary Sinclair



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