

## Written Testimony for SB226, the Minor Party Primary bill

Chair Burdick, Vice-chair Baertschiger, and committee members:

My name is Alan Zundel, and I live in Eugene, Oregon. I was a political science professor most of my adult working life. I am testifying in favor of SB226, the minor party primary bill.

Because our election system in effect creates a two-party system, other parties have a number of disadvantages. One of them is that primary elections for partisan offices give the major party candidates the opportunity for state-funded publicity in the voters' guide. Minor parties do not have this advantage.

Allowing minor parties to opt in to the primary elections would remove this one disadvantage. By opting in they could publicize their candidates to their registered voters, building the familiarity with the candidates and their positions that could help them in the general election.

It would also allow the voters registered with the party the opportunity to choose who the party nominee is. I was involved in the Pacific Green Party for three years, and an officer for two of those years. Typically only 20-30 party members showed up for our nominating conventions, which means that only a small fraction of our members were choosing the nominees for offices.

I am no longer a member of the PGP and do not speak for them. I know there are differences of opinion within the party about the merits of participating in primary elections, but this bill makes it optional, not mandatory, for minor parties to participate. Each party would be able to choose the path that they determine is best suited to their needs.

Thank you for considering the bill.

Dr. Alan Zundel