



Chair Holvey and Members of the Committee,

My name is Lamar Wise, and I'm a Political Coordinator with AFSCME Council 75. Thank you for the opportunity to submit written testimony in support of HB 3310.

AFSCME works with members in hundreds of different occupations and retirees across the country; AFSCME advocates for fairness in the workplace, excellence in public services and prosperity and opportunity for all working families. AFSCME also has a long history of supporting access to the ballot and engaging voters in a meaningful way.

HB 3310, Oregon Voting Rights Act (OVRA) would help ensure that voting systems implemented by Oregon's school districts, education service districts, and community colleges align with the National Voting Rights Act (NVRA).

The Oregon Voting Rights Act (OVRA) is a bill to help ensure that every voter has an equal opportunity to elect the candidate of their choice. The OVRA strengthens democracy by creating a community-driven process that empowers local governments and community to ensure that all communities have a meaningful voice in local elections. It would establish a process that ensures communities of color and other underrepresented communities are heard and represented in government. Communities should be able to choose voting systems that work for them and to be fairly represented.

Local democracy is strongest when everyone is engaged and has an opportunity to have their voice heard. But across Oregon state, election systems have failed to keep up with the changing demographics of our cities, towns and school districts, sometimes leaving communities of color excluded from a fair chance at representation.

Today, 7 of the 10 most diverse communities in Oregon have never had a person of color elected on their school boards. At the same time, local jurisdictions that want to do the right thing and protect the freedom of all voters are left under existing state law with limited, if any, options for changing their election system in a manner that is fair and tailored to local needs. The OVRA helps both voters and local governments by creating a clear and collaborative process for addressing the problem of polarized voting without costly federal litigation.



The Oregon Voting Rights Act promotes healthy democracy by making sure that elected officials come from the communities they represent. It empowers people at the local level to work with their elected officials to ensure all voices in the community are heard. HB 3310 offers a fair and collaborative process for changing outdated election systems.

For the reasons outlined above, I strongly urge you to pass HB 3310. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Lamar Wise

AFSCME Council 75

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