

Dear Chairman Burdick and Members of the Rules Committee,

We were shocked to hear about this proposed legislation, which will overturn existing **good** policy related to the initiative process. In our opinion, SB 761 is clearly an attempt at voter suppression. This bill will silence the voices of many, especially voters in rural Oregon who might stand in opposition to some of the onerous legislation being proposed in the current session. Voters in these areas might want to introduce or support initiatives to overturn these bad bills. SB 761 will make it much more difficult to do that, seemingly by design. It will severely curtail the ability of organizations to distribute single-signer petition sheets to initiative supporters. There are many people who might want to sign a petition, but wouldn't necessarily want to be responsible for gathering the signatures of others. There are many people who don't have the ability to personally print out an electronic signature sheet. This bill will effectively eliminate the ability of those voters to participate in the initiative process!

We don't actually believe that this bill was intended to reduce fraud, but we certainly believe that the result of this bill's passage would be even more fraud. What's to stop someone from deliberately sabotaging an initiative process by mass-printing petition sheets for distribution and then having another individual report the "violation" to the Secretary of State? It would take very little to destroy the efforts of a signature-gathering campaign. Current policy prevents fraud by assigning responsibility for the signature-gathering process to the chief petitioners. Is there documented evidence that fraud is occurring under the current policy?

It's very suspicious that this bill is being proposed with an "emergency clause," especially in light of the approval of HB 3427. The Legislature must know that there are efforts already underway to introduce a ballot measure to reverse this terrible bill. Yet again, **the emergency clause is being misused**. What is the exact emergency that will be mitigated by the passage of this bill, other than to limit the ability of Oregon voters to overturn bad legislation? According to the Oregon Constitution, emergency clauses were designed only for new laws necessary for "**immediate preservation of the public peace, health and safety**." Please. This is just another exploitation of the emergency clause in order to circumvent the **Will of The People**. Believe me – this tactic has not gone unnoticed by the citizens of Oregon – we will be fighting you on this!

The legislative tactics being used during this session (misuse of the emergency clause, attempts at voter suppression) are very offensive, and some could consider them dictatorial. These tactics represent an extraordinary degree of disrespect for Oregon voters. The most glaring example of this is the fact that the Legislature has proposed or passed at least two bills (HB 2932 and HB 3427) reintroducing bad policy which previously was overwhelmingly rejected by Oregon voters! And now, the Legislature wants to make it more difficult for those same voters to support efforts to overturn these bad policies? We can't believe this is happening in Oregon!

We urge the Committee to reject this bill. Thank you for your consideration.

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