

Honorable Chair Burdick and Committee Members,

Please vote no on SB761. We agree with the Secretary of States letter, see attached, that we need to expand our voting rights and not suppress the initiative petition process by requiring each petition signer to print their own petition. Many people do not have printers and those who do have one, find them a pain to operate or are out of supplies from time to time. This is especially true for people on limited funds.

The dash 3 amendments is just as punitive in that it does away with e sheets altogether for the next several years. The important thing is that the signer have time to review the petition sheet, which they can often do better when the sheet is sent to them at home where they can read it though.

Please vote NO on SB761 or or the dash 3 amendment.

Please vote NO on SB761, which will suppress the initiative process and our Oregon voting rights.

Best Regard,

Janice Dysinger

Oregonians for Fair Elections



Oregon Secretary of State's Office Testimony Opposing SB 761

Oregon has a bipartisan tradition of expanding voting rights. Unfortunately, SB 761 moves our state in the wrong direction.

The Secretary of State's Office opposes SB 761 because it reduces initiative rights. The bill overrides the e-sheet rules of former Secretary of State (and now Democratic Party of Oregon Chair) Jeanne Atkins. Her rules were continued by Secretary of State Dennis Richardson because they are good public policy.

Secretary Atkins enacted rules that allow e-sheets to be distributed via newsletters, and these rules were used without incident in both the 2016 and 2018 election cycles. For example, the Oregon Education Association (OEA) included an e-sheet for Initiative Petition 28/Measure 97 in the Spring 2016 issue of their magazine Today's OEA (see attached). The Secretary of State's Office believes there was nothing inappropriate about OEA's activities in 2016 that necessitates banning similar future activities in SB 761.

The Senate Rules Committee rejected a proposal similar to SB 761 in the 2018 session and should do the same this session.

Further, the current language of SB 761 would create a situation where a single volunteer who mistakenly violated the e-sheet printing prohibition could disqualify many thousands of completely valid signatures on other e-sheets. This is highly disproportionate, unnecessarily punitive, and may violate Constitutional rights.

There are also significant enforceability challenges since the Elections Division has no way to know who printed an e-sheet by examining the sheet itself.

A better way to reduce any concerns about the initiative process is to expand and promote e-sheet use by volunteers and other organizations. E-sheets are less complicated and have higher validity rates than multi-line sheets.

The Secretary of State's Office encourages the committee to continue Oregon's bipartisan tradition of expanding voting rights instead of restricting them. Please reject SB 761.

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SB 761 -3 STAFF MEASURE SUMMARY

Senate Committee On Rules

Prepared By: Josh Nasbe, Counsel

Meeting Dates: 3/13, 5/20

WHAT THE MEASURE DOES:

Requires elector who wishes to sign electronic version of petition signature sheet to personally print sheet. Directs Secretary of State, upon determining that elector has signed sheet printed by another person, to stop accepting electronic sheets submitted after date of violation. Takes effect January 1, 2020.

ISSUES DISCUSSED:

EFFECT OF AMENDMENT:

-3 Replaces the measure. Eliminates Secretary of State's authority to issue templates for electronic petition signature sheets, until January 2023. Declares emergency, effective on passage.

BACKGROUND:

ORS 250.052 (6) requires the Secretary of State to prepare an official electronic template of a signature sheet for each state initiative, referendum and recall petition. This statutory subsection requires that the sheet allow space for the signature of one elector and authorizes an elector to print out the sheet, sign it and deliver it to the chief petitioner or the chief petitioner's agent.

Senate Bill 761 prohibits signing an electronic signature sheet printed by another person. When a violation of this prohibition occurs, the bill requires the Secretary of State to stop making electronic sheets available for that petition, post the date of the violation on the Secretary's website and stop accepting electronic sheets submitted after the date of the violation.