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Attn: Senate Rules Committee

Chair Burdick & members of the Senate Rules Committee,

I am testifying on behalf of the Independent Party of Oregon in opposition to SB 116-2.

The drafting of ballot titles should be conducted in an apolitical non-partisan fashion. Interested parties should not play a role in the drafting of ballot titles. That is true for both the citizen initiative process and for legislative referrals and referenda.

For the first 100+ years of the initiative and referendum, the legislature played no role in the drafting of these ballot titles because of the obvious inherent conflict of interest.

In 2010, the Oregon legislature usurped the legal role of the Attorney General and assumed the responsibility for drafting ballot titles. It was and is a naked power grab. That anti-democratic practice that is continued in the -2 amendment of this bill.

Bringing the drafting of ballot titles into the legislative arena inherently politicizes the process and places it under the control of parties who are stakeholders in the outcome. This body should return to the former non-partisan approach that all other Oregonians are subject to.

Respectfully,

Sal Peralta