



Ruth Lee
March 4th, 2021
House Committee on Rules
RE: Support The Voter Access Act HB 2745 and HB 3021

Dear Chair Smith-Warner, Vice Chairs Drazan and Holvey, and members of the Committee:

My name is Ruth Lee, I'm a Southeast Portland resident. I'm writing to you as a Forward Together Action leader in support of HB 2745 and it's companion bill, HB 3021.

I first got involved with Forward Together Action when I met one of their organizers while I was working for the Multicultural Resource Center at PCC. I wanted to start getting involved with civic engagement work, and one of the ways I was able to do this was by helping to do data entry volunteering. Forward Together collects race, gender, and sexuality data because they know the value of self-identified demographic information and its power to create an accurate measure of who our community *is* and the experiences they might be facing.

From collected demographic data we can be able to proportionately distribute the resources that our communities need in order to flourish. Having the option to mark our information on voter registration materials would visibilize us as people of color because we *do* matter and we have always been here.

As a child of immigrants, I was taught from a young age the importance of voting and what it meant to take part in creating continuous decisions that not only affect my own, but the lives of others. Establishing state wide standards for equitable access to voting is essential in creating more inclusive and informed communities across Oregon. In order to achieve a fully working democracy Oregon must take necessary steps in making sure all voters understand the laws and policies they wish to vote for. I know for my mother, whose second language is English, understanding policy is not always a simple task. The passing of HB 2745 and HB 3021 will provide voters who have English as their second language the possibility to make voting a more easily accessible process. By breaking down those language barriers and passing these bills, my mom would be able to make more informed decisions about who and what measures to vote for.

If we don't know the demographics and preferred languages of our many communities in Oregon, how can we best address the needs and support they need to



achieve daily life? HB 2745 would allow us to find out, and truly connect with and support our diverse communities around the state.

Please vote yes on HB 2745 and HB 3021, the Voter Access Act.

Sincerely,
Ruth Lee
Forward Together Action
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