



Contact: Rob Bovett
Oregon Association of County Clerks
1201 Court Street NE, Suite 300
Salem, OR 97301
rbovett@oregoncounties.org
541-270-7414

OACC Opportunities and Concerns Regarding HB 2499

The Oregon Association of County Clerks (OACC) appreciates the opportunity work with Rep. Fahey and Rep. Zika on HB 2499 that extends automatic voter registration to other state agencies, modifies online voter registration and implements electronic voter registration submittals by third-party organizations. OACC would like the committee to note the following:

- 1 SOS is finalizing an RFP process to replace an aging OCVR system. There may be opportunity in the implementation of the new system to improve the connections between state agencies.
- 2 SOS would have a fiscal to accommodate the bill.
- 3 There have been challenges maintaining stable data transfers between SOS and DMV. We hope that this issue can be resolved and lessons learned can inform new connections with state agencies.
- 4 Currently, County election offices are evaluating data from many sources – USPS, other state voter registration and DMV lists, Social Security Administration, Oregon DMV, and Online Registration. Clerks have found that these many sources can create many duplicate, sometimes conflicting, records especially close to the voter registration deadline. More sources may compound this issue.
- 5 Timing of receiving data from DOR is critical to Clerks having the ability to evaluate it in a meaningful manner. Consideration should also be given to how this data would be evaluated if it were in conflict with updates from other sources.
- 6 The 21-day opt-out and party choice process built into OMV effectively doubled the voter registration deadline for new registered voters taking advantage of the “automatic” option in OMV. This should be considered in this move to include other agencies.
- 7 Allowing voters to provide a signature after they have registered to vote would create another category of incomplete registrations that Clerks would have to follow up on. It would also create another category of challenged ballot if the voter returned a ballot but did not have a registration signature on file. This can be problematic at busy times like the voter registration deadline or the rush to get challenged ballot letters out after a high turnout Election Day, and may force those new voters to physically come to Elections Offices in many cases any way.
- 8 Currently State Elections sends opt-out/party selection notifications to the voter and for consistency the Clerks feel this should remain the responsibility of State Elections. With any additional agencies so we would suggest changing “Secretary of State or county clerk” to just “Secretary of State” in all sections regarding notifications to prospective new voters about their right to not be registered and/or to select their party affiliation.
- 9 Section 10, subsection 5, refers to an “electronic voting system”, should be “electronic voter registration system”.

Capturing viable signatures from DMV has been problematic. Anecdotally, many Clerks feel that agency-captured signatures are less likely to match signatures on return ballot envelopes. This needs to be considered as the bill expands the number of agency-captured signatures elections offices would receive. An ideal solution for improving this and eliminating the 21-day opt-out would be to add a point of service system, handing Oregonians a tablet that they could interact with directly to review pre-populated data provided to the agency, provide an immediate “opt-out” or “choose a party” and capture a signature while receiving information about how that signature would be used to qualify their ballot.