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COMMENTS REGARDING HOUSE BILL 3291 DASH-1

The Oregon Association of County Clerks (OACC) appreciates Representative Rayfield and his team for allowing us to provide input on the Dash-1 amendment to HB 3291.

The Dash-1 amendment would make many changes to Oregon voting deadlines in order to accommodate allowing ballots to be postmarked by election day and received seven days after election day. This is a big change to the way Vote by Mail elections have been conducted in Oregon for the past two decades, and OACC could not come to a consensus about a position on this bill. However, the Dash-1 amendment does address almost all of the concerns raised by the Clerks.

Post-election deadlines have been extended to ensure that all voters have the same opportunity to cure their signature problem and have their ballot counted and election offices have enough time to process those ballots before certifying the election.

Where practical, requirements have been left to administrative rule around envelope design.

The September election is moving back into August to accommodate the longer timelines for some special districts that regularly use that election.

Using the language "postal indicator" instead of "postmark" allows for flexibility in case the ballot envelope is not cancelled in the traditional manner and the fluorescent orange barcode applied by postal equipment needs to be considered.

Recognition that one size does not fit all for releasing results and allowing the prioritization of voter anonymity when election outcomes are very close.

Allowing election offices to begin processing ballots upon receipt removes bottlenecks created by the current requirement to wait until the 7th day prior to the election to start opening ballots

In addition to the changes above, there would be costs to counties for implementing this change. Counties would need to replace or correct any messaging related to the ballot deadline. Most counties would need to replace ballot return envelopes, secrecy envelopes (if used), ballot inserts that include deadline information, website changes and other advertising. OACC appreciates the committee's consideration of all of these factors.