



**Testimony in Support of HB 3021
Oregon AFSCME Council 75
April 13th, 2021**

Chair Smith Warner and Members of the House Rules Committee,

Too many Oregon community members are excluded from accessing the full spectrum of the political process -- those excluded are predominately communities of color. According to census data, dozens of languages are spoken throughout the state, yet few resources are available outside of English, leaving thousands of voters disenfranchised.

Oregon AFSCME Council 75 strongly supports HB 3021, a Language Access bill and related HB 2745 the Voter Access Act, measures that break down barriers to voting access. The VPS Language Access Bill, HB 3021 and its subsequent amendments create a statewide standard that ensures translations of voter pamphlets are available in the top five identified languages by county.

Under HB 3021, the Secretary of State's office will utilize county specific US Census data to serve our diverse Oregon population. Essential voter knowledge such as; non-partisan voting information, ballot measures and campaigns of statewide impact, and both city and county candidate information, will become available to thousands of Oregonians. Expanding language access dismantles a massive barrier for many Oregon voters in participating in democracy, and allows Oregonians to stay informed regarding state and local issues.

Ensuring adequate access to language materials in languages voters understand empowers more Oregon voters to make informed decisions regarding their communities -- creating a more equitable and inclusive Oregon.

We urge your YES vote on HB 3021 and HB 2745.