

The League of Women Voters of Oregon is a 101-year-old grassroots nonpartisan political organization that encourages informed and active participation in government. We envision informed Oregonians participating in a fully accessible, responsive, and transparent government to achieve the common good. LWVOR Legislative Action is based on advocacy positions formed through studies and member consensus. The League never supports or opposes any candidate or political party.

February 11, 2021

To: Rep. Barbara Smith Warner, Chair, House Rules Committee

Email: hrules.exhibits@oregonlegislature.gov

Re: HB 2226 and HB 2687 – Require ballots to have a postmark of on or before election day – Support and Oppose

These two bills address the needed requirement to have ballots mailed in on or before election day. From its beginning over 100 years ago, the League of Women Voters has consistently supported and continues to support a citizen's right to vote and to vote without unnecessary barriers. Part of that is a clear understanding of the due date for mailed in ballots.

These bills will require all ballots mailed in to be postmarked by election day with an exception for overseas and military voters. LWVOR supports this language in both bills that clarifies and makes consistent the due date for mail-in ballots. This is also consistent with the postmark requirements for ballots in our neighboring states of Washington and California.

Section 1 subsection (6) (d) is the only difference between these two bills, and the discussion here relates to how ballots are returned by someone other than the elector.

HB 2226 and its added Section 16 – introduces the prohibition that a person cannot deposit ballots for other electors except on election day.

HB 2687 – does not change existing law which allows someone other than the elector to deposit their ballot anytime within two days of receipt from that elector.

Common sense needs to prevail here. How often does a person take the ballots of others to the nearby ballot drop site or to the county elections office and deposit the ballots? Frankly, quite often. We should not restrict that.

Therefore, the LWVOR supports HB 2687 and opposes HB 2226.

Thank you for the opportunity to discuss this legislation.

Rebecca Gladstone Norman Turrill

LWVOR President
LWVOR Governance Coordinator

Tom Messenger

LWVOR Governance Specialist