



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 17, 2021

To: [House Revenue Committee](#)
[Representative Nancy Nathanson](#), Chair

Re: [HB2385](#) – Develop, implement, and maintain DoR software and database – **Comments**

The League of Women *Voters* believes that efficient and economical government requires competent personnel, the clear assignment of responsibility, adequate financing, and coordination among different agencies and levels of government. We support fiscal economy, achieved by efficiency and responsible administration.

HB 2385 would provide for development, implementation, and maintenance of a Department of Revenue (DoR) software system and database, to enable online filing of property tax returns. This could allow improved efficiency in ways we advocated for with online candidate filing in [HB 2234 \(2019\)](#) and will advocate for with expanding agency coverage for automatic voter registration in [HB 2499](#). Any remaining data fields needed for voter registration should be added to this database proposal to allow automatic voter registration with the DoR.

Speaking to this bill, filing transcription errors could decrease as filers enter and proofread their own information online, with their first-hand familiarity of their street names, for example. Data entry guardrails could be built in, required field prompts and zip codes needing five or 5+4 digits. Staff time currently devoted to data entry of paper property tax returns, if that is still done, could decrease substantially, allowing staff to assist those lacking online access or the ability to file online, language, disability, or other needs. Care should be taken in requiring online filing to allow for these sorts of necessary exceptions to online filing.

With respect to the LWVOR newly [adopted position for Privacy and Cybersecurity](#), care must be taken to preserve tax payer privacy. All information (including third-party data transfers) needs sufficiently flexible protections to address emerging technologies. Regular system security revisions should be pre-planned at the outset, to remain secure as the ability to re-identify data grows.

Tax collection operations must remain functional during a transition to adopt online filing and database system changes. The remainder of the tax filing process must be separately adaptable from the proposed software so that it, too can independently be responsive to proposed legislative revisions.

We appreciate the opportunity to comment on this bill requested by County Assessors.

Thank you for the opportunity to discuss this legislation.

Handwritten signature of Rebecca Gladstone in black ink.

Rebecca Gladstone
LWVOR President

Handwritten signature of Norman Turrill in black ink.

Norman Turrill
LWVOR Governance Coordinator