



The League of Women Voters of Oregon, established in 1920, is a 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 7, 2023

To: [Senator Kate Lieber](#), Chair  
[Senate Rules Committee](#)

Re: [SB 160](#) – Reduce or waive certain public records request fees in the public interest – **Comments**

The League is directly affected by SB 160, which calls for percentage reductions for certain public records request fees. As described in our SB 417 testimony, the League supports fully accessible, responsive, and transparent government operations, from positions for the right to know, for efficiency in government and citizen access to information, and for balancing cybersecurity privacy and transparency needs. The League has advocated for public records law since 1993 in current records. Today’s hearing roster has related League testimony, also see 2017 testimony for: [HB 2101](#), [HB 481](#), and [SB 106](#).

SB 160 narrowly circumscribes public records request fee reductions, in numerous ways:

- **Population restrictions limit:** this only applies to [five of 36 Oregon counties](#) and [six of Oregon’s 241 municipalities](#), per the Oregon Blue Book. This may be reasonable since cost is not addressed.
- **Timing,** this bill does not address reasonable request response timing, critical for elections information. Implementation does not take effect until 2027.
- **Media is not defined** in SB 160. Specific media definitions covered in SB 417 apply to the League, which has published candidate and ballot measure information to voters for over 100 years, qualifying as media per SB 417.

**FROM SB 417:**

- **“News media” or “news media entity” means:** *The publisher of a periodical that disseminates news, whether through print publication or through electronic dissemination.*
- **(d) “Representative of the news media” means:** (A) Any person that gathers information of potential interest to a segment of the public, uses editorial skill to turn information into a distinct work and who distributes that work to an audience.

We recommend features of this bill be considered in the context of other public records bills presented here, SB 417 and SB 510.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on SB 160.

Rebecca Gladstone  
Public Records Advocate  
President, LWVOR

Norman Turrill  
Governance Coordinator