



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 14, 2023

To: [Representative Fahey, Chair](#)
[House Rules Committee](#)

Re: [HB 2585](#) – End Oregon “Motor Voter” Voter Registration – **Oppose**

We oppose HB 2585, to end “Oregon Motor Voter”. HB 2585 directs the Oregon Department of Transportation to make voter registration cards available in offices where license applications or renewals are distributed or received. Those at least 17 years old would be asked if they are or would like to register, and be informed that they can register to vote through ODOT offices. This would repeal the 2015 automatic voter registration bill, [HB 2177 Enrolled](#), which the League supported.

In 1991, the Oregon League supported a 1989 statute to link voter registration to applying for drivers’ licenses. A cautious two-phase DMV test was meant to expand to other agencies. We opposed making it permanent until we were satisfied that “uniformity and secrecy” questions were addressed.

By 2015, when [HB 2177](#), the Oregon Motor Voter bill passed, voter registration was still mostly on paper. Drivers’ license applications already had voter registration information. We [strongly supported](#) Oregon leading the nation with *automatic, opt-out* motor voter registration. The 2015 DMV roll-out has generally been seen as successful. Oregon voter turnout already led nationally. We called for a closer look at voter turnout and the opt-in party registration postcards.

In 2019, [OPB reported](#) that 80% or more of the at least 300,000 new “Motor Voters” did not use the political party registration postcards. This may at least partly relate to postcards in DMVs being less attractive than using digital options. Some legislators cautioned that putting party registration postcards at the DMV wasn’t private enough. See the [LWVOR Privacy and Cybersecurity page](#). The underperforming party registration postcards are a caution against solely returning to paper voter registration cards.

Our Positions: Oregon’s Motor Voter law supports our principle that democratic government depends on informed and active citizens’ participation. We support government efficiency, for accessible, well publicized, easily understood voter registration that is efficient to administer. The League consistently urges for funding necessary technical staff and basic services, including voting.

Agencies sharing forms we’ve already filled out saves time, energy, and taxpayer cost. This cuts red tape for a “no-wrong-door”, so the DMV can share birthdate, proof of citizenship & Oregon residency, and the signature on file. This frees up staff time for those who want help or to process the paper forms.

We know Oregonians increasingly expect government services to keep up with today’s efficient, and prompt digital transactions. If voters enter their own information digitally, they are more likely to get it right, to see mistakes and be able to correct them directly. Clerks report that the paper forms can be hard to read, so staff try to figure them out, taking time and maybe adding mistakes and delays. [ORS 247.174](#) describes a 10-day correction period *for illegible, inaccurate or incomplete* registration cards. Digital forms can cue to correct gaps. We support retaining both options, paper and digital.

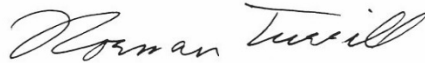
HB 2585 seems to contradict ORS 247.208, which calls for the SoS to find barriers and research opportunities to ensure accuracy, security and efficiency of current voter registration processes, identifying ways to improve using current technology, at least once each biennium. See the [SoS Motor Voter FAQ page](#).

Others look to Oregon as a national leader because we prioritize common-sense solutions like Automatic and online Voter Registration. We urge your Opposition to HB 2585.

Thank you for the opportunity to discuss this legislation.



Rebecca Gladstone
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President LWVOR



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