



*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.*

April 5, 2023

To: Co-Chairs Senator Patterson and Representative Smith, and Committee members  
[Joint Subcommittee On General Government](#)

Re: [HB 5035](#) – Fund Secretary of State Budget – **Support**

The League supports HB 5035. We especially support protecting Oregon’s gold standard free and fair elections, based on principles and positions for informing citizens and protecting our right to vote, efficiency and adequate financing in government, coordination among agencies and government levels, and cybersecurity. We urge for funding Oregon’s Archives, Audits Corporate Division, and the Secretary of State’s Core Services, particularly Information Services.

Over decades, the League has collaborated with Secretaries of State and staff, commenting on Oregon Administrative Rules and Elections Manuals and advocating for all of these Divisions on legislative issues. The League is proud of Oregon’s frequent national lead with the highest voter turnout and our national leadership for Automatic Voter Registration, Vote-by-Mail. This voter engagement reflects trust in the voting process and our dedication to educating voters on ballot issues.

**POP List: We support funding to address these issues:**

**POP #115:** Replace candidate filing and campaign contribution tracking software.

As Director Woon noted, the publicly voted M 107 for campaign finance reform implementation could happen at any point. Elections software should be able to address this.

ORESTAR was a big improvement over Capitol Onramp almost 20 years ago, but ORESTAR is now outdated. On October 26, 2018, SoS Richardson’s Newsroom reported an “[ORESTAR Batch Transactions Processing Error](#)”. When we discussed this with Director Trout at the time, he urged for not naming either OCVR, for local candidate filing, or ORESTAR, for state-wide candidate filing, since both were overdue for replacement. The League has called for replacing ORESTAR, unifying with OCVR:

- In 2019, citing 2017 collaboration, [our HB 2234 \(2019\) testimony](#).
- In 2021, for an efficient one-stop shop for candidate filing, retaining local clerks’ control and fee handling. See our [SB 5538 Enrolled \(2021\) testimony](#). The League was pleased to see an allocation for specific candidate filing software (ORESTAR) and to anticipate campaign finance regulation changes. We continue to urge for statewide online candidate filing with software revisions already underway, as described in [HB 3393 \(2021\)](#). [See LWVOR comments in support](#).
- In 2023, current privacy protection efforts are addressed in our [SB 166](#) testimony. This applies to candidate filing processes, currently separate for ORESTAR and OCVR. We support HB 3073 ([our testimony](#)) to exempt candidate and public servant home addresses from public disclosure. Candidate filing verifies district jurisdictions with home addresses. Please see our testimony listing six relevant bills important for protecting elections workers, from harassment to doxing. Public home address disclosure is not necessary.

**POP #116:** Shift funding from HAVA to the Oregon General Fund for various functions.

Almost two decades ago, the Secretary granted HAVA funds to the League to run Oregon Student Mock Elections. This was founded as a partnership, with large HAVA grant funding, contracting through the Secretary of State, winning numerous national awards. About 20 years ago, we bussed hundreds of students to the Capitol from around Oregon. OSME is mostly digital now.

Those funds are largely depleted and this funding transition should be secured. Meanwhile, the League supports Community Engagement and Outreach. The Oregon Department of Education Social Sciences has tasked the League preeminently for teaching Oregon students how to vote. We would welcome renewed coordination for the League's Oregon Student Mock Elections (OSME) buttressed by our free Civics Education curriculum.

**POP #117:** We support the Election Oversight funding for Risk-Limiting Audits.

The League supports risk-limiting audits to certify election results because we want voters to know that their votes are accurately reflected in the final tallies. One County Clerk admitted that he didn't understand using statistics and would rather recount all ballots in the case of a close vote margin. This justifies allocating funds for an educational pilot project. The photo is from November 2008, the Random Precinct selection.



The League submits that risk-limiting audits (RLAs) are the Gold Standard:

- **They are the most transparent, with real statistical evidence.** They require comparing individual ballots cast to voting system records.
- **They are most efficient quality control—RLAs save time.** If the margin is narrower, *then* you recount *more* ballots. Our ORS election recount threshold is 0.2%. Our LWVUS Election Audits' study calls for basing risk-limiting audit recount sampling on these factors:
  - a. How close was the margin of victory?
  - b. Look at the distribution of votes within "audit units."
- **RLAs work as long as a paper ballot record exists,** are compatible with all voting machines.
- **Officials like RLAs & want to keep using them. These are in use in numerous states.**

**POP #118:** Election security, to educate and engage Oregonians.

We take growing efforts to undermine elections seriously. [Our Privacy and Cybersecurity](#) election security underscores the DHS and CISA focus to protect elections as a critical infrastructure, including from foreign interference that may be digitally masked. We urge for collaborative public education with pre-bunking, or disarming the DIS, or deliberate deception in MDM, dis-, mis-, and mal- information. Proactive, ongoing work will increase our protective resilience. Collaborative public education to improve media literacy will help. Experts advise that we can protect against 90% of vulnerabilities with educating for cybersecurity, see our testimony, [HB 2049](#), [HB 2490](#). We note that weakest link vulnerability can be through vendors, as seen in May 2022: [ORESTAR affected by C&E Sys ransomware](#).

**POPs # 106 and #107.** We support this Information Services oversight from our cybersecurity positions to maintain IT security. Good cyber hygiene includes regular checking for software updates because they often include security patches. We support applying this shared protection [protect the confidentiality, integrity, and availability of the Secretary's critical information systems from increasing threats] across these Divisions.

**POP #108.** We support this relatively small POP to adjust staffing as the SoS Chief Information Security Officer addresses security. We would support close communications with DAS IT security, to minimize siloing and duplicating efforts as security rules are aligned.


We note omission of ongoing voter registration improvement efforts and Geospatial districting. We urge for continued Geospatial districting progress and support. The League has extensive experience working with election districting for our online [Election Resources](#) and [Vote411.org](#), where voters can enter their home address to see races that will be on their ballots. The Department of Revenue invited us to work on the Oregon Framework Implementation Team - Cadastral Theme Tax District Boundaries Work Group, for geospatial taxing district improvements based on the League's need for Elections Districting improvements. We have seen significant improvements and urge that you consider budget amendments to cover costs that may not be addressed in this budget.

In the face of considering cuts to our state Voters' Pamphlets, we urge prioritizing elections funding. As a country we must prioritize making our voting systems secure, accurate, re-countable, accessible and transparent to all Americans and especially those in underrepresented communities. Safeguarding our elections is a national security issue, in the face of reported foreign intrusion into our 2016 elections. The League will continue work to protect our elections and reaffirm voter confidence.

We urge your support for HB 5035. Thank you for the opportunity to discuss this legislation.



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