

Next Up Action Fund
info@nextuporegon.org



February 8, 2024

RE: Oppose HB 4032

Chair Fahey and members of the committee,

My name is Isabela Villarreal and I am the Policy and Communications Director at Next Up Action Fund. Our mission is to build political power with diverse young people to achieve a more just and equitable Oregon. As an organization that builds political power and strong, effective leadership opportunities for diverse young people, I am here to oppose HB 4032.

We have a track record of dismantling structural barriers for more representative democracy and have driven advocacy efforts for election updates resulting in Oregon being one of the easiest states to vote in with over 93% of eligible voters registered. Notably, in 2015, after half a decade of advocacy, we helped pass the nation's first-ever Automatic Voter Registration law, and have passed many other pro-voter bills.

We believe this proposed change would have detrimental consequences for the electoral process and the informed decision-making of voters, and ultimately we've done judicial elections like this for decades, and there's not currently a need to amend the current process.

The judicial code of ethics is important in ensuring impartiality and public confidence in the courts, and we shouldn't do anything to roll back this code. This places large limitations on incumbent judges when they run for reelection, relative to challengers with no such limitations. For example, in the Oregon Code of Judicial Conduct [Rule 4.1](#), a judge cannot engage in activity that would lead to frequent disqualification of the judge. This means that on the campaign trail, a judge is more limited than a non-judge in speaking about issues of concern to voters. Given that inherent imbalance, we shouldn't rush into a change like this without a more robust conversation about the implications and a consideration of different approaches to this question.

Thank you for your time and consideration on this issue, and we ask that you please vote no on HB 4032 at this time.

Thank you,
Isabela Villarreal
Policy and Communications Director
Next Up Action Fund