



# Catherine McMullen County Clerk

## Elections, Recording & Records Management

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Dear Senate Rules Committee,

My name is Catherine McMullen, and I am the independently elected Clackamas County Clerk. I am here today on behalf of my constituents, to testify in support of Senate Bill 1533.

I have served the people of Clackamas County since 2023 as County Clerk and head election official - and as an election administrator since 2015 in Multnomah County, developing the first county-level Voter Education and Outreach Program, focusing on accessibility for minority language voters. Beginning in 2016, we hired bilingual election workers and translated important elections information. **This had an immediate impact, informing voters on election deadlines, rules, and ballot drop sites; increasing the number of minority-language voters we assisted in our office, and encouraging citizen participation.**

In 2022, when HB 3021 went into effect it **expanded the opportunity beyond just one county: to citizens in all counties having access to critical voter information in their first language.** Today in Clackamas County the estimated 12,000 residents who speak Spanish, Simplified Chinese, Russian, Vietnamese, Ukrainian, and Korean have access to elections. 1533 would revise the formula to expand access to up to 10 language communities with more than 300 speakers in each county. In Clackamas County we could expand access to Traditional Chinese, Arabic, and Romanian language communities. That would be a potential 1,200 more residents who would get **access to accurate, trusted election information in their first language.**

Clackamas County and Oregon voters are a diverse, vibrant community. Over the years I've had the privilege of helping voters in more than a dozen languages and officiating weddings in a half dozen more. Many naturalized citizens and first-generation voters report that they read or speak English less than very well.

**Expanding language access through SB 1533 will allow new citizens in our communities to fully exercise and celebrate their right and responsibility to vote!**

Thank you for your time. I am available at the contact information above with any questions.

Catherine McMullen, Clackamas County Clerk