

Submitter: Kevin Magwood
On Behalf Of:
Committee: Senate Committee On Rules
Measure: HB4026
3/5/2024

Dear Chair Lieber and members of the committee,

My name is Kevin Magwood.

I was raised in a small farming community in Oregon. Living outside city limits it is extremely difficult yet important for me and others to feel like we have a voice in local government decisions.

Restricting citizens from initiating referendums is a direct threat to the foundational principles of democracy. Referendums serve as a crucial tool for citizens to exercise this power by directly influencing legislation and holding elected officials accountable. By denying people the opportunity to propose referendums, their ability to actively participate in the democratic process is severely hindered. This restriction not only undermines the democratic principles upon which our societies are built but also perpetuates a system where decision-making is concentrated in the hands of a select few.

Referendums play a pivotal role in ensuring that the voices of ordinary citizens are heard and considered in the formulation of policies and laws. They provide a platform for citizens to express their views on critical issues that directly impact their lives and communities. Whether it's advocating for social justice reforms, environmental protection measures, or fiscal policies, referendums empower citizens to shape the direction of their society. Denying referendums on UGB proposals adds to the disconnect between the government and the governed.

Therefore, the absence of referendums can foster feelings of disenfranchisement among citizens and erode trust in the political system. When people perceive that their voices are being ignored or marginalized, they become disillusioned with the democratic process and may disengage from civic participation altogether. Referendums not only promote transparency and accountability but also strengthens the legitimacy of the political system by demonstrating a genuine commitment to democratic values.

It is imperative that policymakers prioritize the preservation of democratic principles.

Please vote NO on HB4026-1.