

Submitter: Morgan Kromm
On Behalf Of: Oregon CattleWomen
Committee: House Committee On Rules
Measure, Appointment or Topic: HJR11

Dear Chair and Members of the Committee,

My name is Morgan Kromm, and I am a rancher and the President of Oregon CattleWomen. I am submitting testimony today in strong support of HJR 11, a crucial resolution that will ensure our state's initiative process is more representative of all Oregonians, not just urban populations with the resources to push radical policies onto the ballot.

Currently, Oregon's initiative petition process allows special interest groups to propose and qualify extreme measures, such as IP 13, which would criminalize animal husbandry practices essential to agriculture. These measures, often crafted without understanding the realities of farming and ranching, threaten the livelihoods of hard-working Oregonians and the sustainability of our state's food system.

HJR 11 is a necessary reform. By raising the signature requirement to at least 8% of the votes cast in the last gubernatorial election for statutory initiatives and 10% for constitutional amendments—while also requiring signatures to be collected equitably across congressional districts—it ensures that only initiatives with broad, statewide support make it onto the ballot. This is not about suppressing voices but about ensuring fair representation and protecting Oregon's diverse population from policies that disproportionately harm rural communities.

Opponents argue that HJR 11 makes it too difficult to propose initiatives. However, increasing the threshold simply ensures that measures reflect the collective will of Oregonians, rather than being pushed through by well-funded activist groups concentrated in urban areas. True democratic processes require balance, and this resolution is a step toward achieving that.

Agriculture is the backbone of Oregon's economy. It provides food, jobs, and economic stability for countless families. Measures like IP 13 pose existential threats to our way of life, and without common-sense safeguards like those outlined in HJR 11, agriculture and other critical industries will remain vulnerable to harmful, ideologically driven initiatives.

I urge you to support HJR 11 to strengthen our initiative process, ensure rural voices are heard, and protect the industries that sustain Oregon. Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,
Morgan Kromm