

Submitter: Rachel Freed
On Behalf Of:
Committee: House Committee On Rules
Measure, Appointment or Topic: HB3166

I am writing to express my strong opposition to House Bill 3166, which mandates that all candidates for both partisan and nonpartisan offices appear on the same unified primary election ballot. While I appreciate the intent to streamline the electoral process, I believe this proposal poses significant risks to our democratic principles and the integrity of our electoral system. This mimics the measure that the people of Oregon voted NO on in the last election. Listen to the people!!!

One of the core tenets of a healthy democracy is the ability for voters to make informed choices based on clear distinctions between different political ideologies and party platforms. By placing all candidates on a single ballot, regardless of their party affiliation, we risk blurring these important distinctions. Voters may be confused about candidates' positions, leading to uninformed decisions that do not accurately reflect their values and priorities.

Furthermore, this system may disadvantage candidates from smaller or emerging parties. In a unified primary, the visibility and resources of established parties would likely overshadow those of independent or lesser-known candidates, resulting in a lack of genuine competition. This could further entrench the two-party system and stifle diverse political representation, diminishing the voices of those who seek alternatives to the status quo.

Additionally, the proposed structure could lead to strategic voting, where supporters of less popular candidates may feel compelled to vote for candidates they perceive as more viable, rather than those who truly align with their beliefs. This undermines the purpose of a primary election as a means for voters to express their genuine preferences.

In conclusion, I urge you to reconsider support for House Bill 3166. We should strive to protect the integrity of our electoral process and ensure that all candidates have a fair opportunity to present their platforms, allowing voters to make informed choices that truly reflect their preferences.