

I strongly support HB 3166, which would open our taxpayer-funded primaries to all Oregon voters for all partisan races, and I urge you to vote in favor of this bill.

Closed primaries encourage extremist candidates on both sides, for two reasons: First, only committed party members are allowed to vote, and the farthest right and farthest left are usually more committed. Second, fewer people vote in primaries than in the general election, even though the winners are often selected in the primaries due to imbalances in voting power in Oregon's many election districts. It's no wonder that many feel their vote "doesn't count" given these challenges.

Open primaries will hopefully engage more Oregonians, both as candidates and voters, who will now have a vote that does count.

I also strongly oppose using taxpayer dollars to support political parties at the expense of a plurality of the electorate. If Democrats and Republicans want closed primaries, let them fund the primaries themselves.

I am one of those who voted against the election reform measure on the ballot last year because the measure did not cover legislative seats. HB3166 does, to which I say, Hoorah!

I am also a Democrat who generally votes for Democratic candidates (one recent exception was last November, when I voted for you because of the demonstrably good work you have done for Yamhill County and the McMinnville area where I live). I am delighted that open primaries may finally become a reality in Oregon. Please support HB 3166.