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Testimony in Opposition to SJR30

Chair Jama and members of the Senate Committee on Rules:

Several decades ago, I immigrated to the United States because, at the time, I judged this to be a nation that cherished democracy and was constantly striving to achieve a 'more perfect union.' I sensed a populous with developing empathy and sensitivity towards one another and, particularly the disadvantaged. But, above everything, I saw a nation where democracy, though flawed and imperfect, was a proud attribute that would be defended by all. Over more recent years, the public pride in democracy seems to have waned dramatically as oligarchy and authoritarianism have grown in favor to the point that now only one major political party still defends democracy as the other has descended into a purely authoritarian cult. SJR30 is a great example of that waning support for democracy.

One element in a democracy that must be defended is the right of the people to petition for and demand change when a majority wish it. The right of the people to promote and institute petition initiatives is a purely democratic right that should be promoted not curtailed. While it is certainly reasonable to establish rules that discourage and even prevent frivolous petition efforts, the rules should not be so rigorous and restrictive that the right of the majority to undertake a petition effort is effectively precluded by a minority.

By increasing the percentage of the population who must sign a petition initiative before it is accepted, this proposal is compromising democracy. By requiring that percentage to be demonstrated in every county or congressional district in the state is undermining democracy even further since it would allow one such district with outlier or even very extreme views to prevent a petition favored by the vast majority of Oregonians ever to reach the ballot. As a staunch advocate of democracy, and because SJR30 has all the antidemocratic trappings of the odious Project 2025 promoted by the insidious Heritage Foundation, I profoundly oppose SJR30.

Respectfully submitted

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Alan R.P. Journet". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style with some capitalization.

Alan R.P. Journet