



ROCKY MOUNTAIN ELK FOUNDATION

April 2, 2025
Senate Rules Committee
Re: Support for SJR 30

Chair Jama, Vice-Chair Bonham, and Members of the Committee

The Rocky Mountain Elk Foundation (RMEF) is a national non-profit hunting conservation organization with a mission to ensure the future of elk, other wildlife, their habitat and our hunting heritage. Since our founding in 1984 we have conserved or enhanced over 9.1 million acres in the United States and 891,000 acres in Oregon. Our more than 10,000 members raise funds through 22 state chapters.

RMEF supports SJR 30, which would modernize Oregon's initiative system in two ways: First, by modestly increasing the number of signatures that must be collected to qualify an initiative. The current level of 6% of all votes cast in the last election of a Governor to a four-year term to qualify a statutory law and 8% of all votes cast in order to qualify a constitutional amendment has been the same since 1968, even as voter registration modernization has significantly increased the number of registered voters in Oregon. Raising those thresholds to 8% and 10%, respectively, is an update that strikes a balance between acknowledging the changing landscape of voter registration while also retaining the realistic ability to access the ballot that Oregon is well known for.

Second, adding a requirement for a minimum number of signatures from each Congressional district increases fairness in the process by ensuring more geographical distribution. While ballot measures certainly encompass much more than wildlife issues, RMEF is a wildlife organization and views this proposal through that lens. Wildlife and the habitats they occupy tend to be in the rural parts of the state, and the impacts of wildlife policies impact them more than urban and suburban Oregon. Most wildlife related ballot measures considered around the country tend to have negative impacts on rural areas. The Oregon legislature and Fish Wildlife Commission provide opportunities to consider the complex scientific issues around ecosystem management that a 30-second campaign advertisement cannot. We urge the Committee to advance SJR 30.

Ryan Bronson
Director of Government Affairs