

Submitter:

Dean Suhr

On Behalf Of:

Committee:

Senate Committee On Rules

Measure, Appointment or Topic:

SJR30

I oppose SJR 30. I am the author and chief petitioner of for IP-31, the Vote Before Tolls initiative. We are on our 3rd signature gathering effort over three elections to get on the ballot. Even with very high citizen concern about tolls and an over 98% uptake when requesting signatures, I can share first-hand that gathering signatures under today's rules is very difficult. Already, most filed ballot initiatives don't make it to the ballot. The current rules and process is working to weed out the non-essential initiatives.

While I appreciate the desire to include signature inputs from across the state in the petition process, it should be noted that gathering signatures is only the first step in the process. Step two requires a statewide campaign of awareness and education to get the votes necessary to pass an initiative on election day. All state voters will be involved and get a chance to weigh in on all statewide ballot measures.

A notable unintended consequence of SJR-30 is, if passed, will cause all campaigns, including grassroots campaigns like ours, to have to pay contractors to gather signatures. Ultimately, paid signature gathering detaches the population from the initiatives and changes the focus to how much money do we need to spend to get the job done.

We know that the "Vote Before" aspect of our initiative has raised a lot of eyebrows in Salem and SJR 30 looks to be a direct attack on, and maybe the results our efforts. Accountability via citizen driven petitions is never comfortable, but removing this access or making it more difficult, will eventually have much more severe consequences that none of us want.

SJR-30 may sound good and look good on the surface, but it's bad policy. Please do not advance this legislation.

Dean Suhr

Chief Petitioner, IP-31 for the 2026 ballot, the Vote Before Tolls initiative
West Linn, OR

<https://VoteBeforeTolls.org>