

Submitter:

Nicooe Chaisson

On Behalf Of:

Committee:

Senate Committee On Rules

Measure, Appointment or Topic:

SJR30

I strongly oppose Senate Joint Resolution 30 (SJR 30) because it undermines the fundamental democratic right of Oregonians to directly influence their government through the initiative petition process. This resolution proposes drastic increases in signature requirements—25% more for statutory changes and 33% more for constitutional amendments—while also imposing a new mandate that signatures be collected equally from six districts across the state. These changes would make it significantly harder, if not impossible, for ordinary citizens to place measures on the ballot, effectively silencing the voices of the people.

The initiative process has long been a vital tool for Oregonians to enact meaningful change when elected officials fail to act. Historic measures like the Kicker Tax Refund, property tax reductions, and tough-on-crime laws were all made possible through petitions driven by everyday citizens. SJR 30 threatens to dismantle this avenue of direct democracy, reserving it only for well-funded special interests and political elites who can afford the heightened costs and logistical burdens.

By raising barriers to participation, SJR 30 doesn't strengthen our system—it weakens it. It dismisses the value of grassroots efforts and disregards the will of the people in favor of centralized control. I urge lawmakers to reject this resolution and preserve the petition process as a cornerstone of Oregon's democratic tradition. The right to petition is not a privilege for the few; it belongs to all of us.