

Submitter: Benjamin Roche
On Behalf Of:
Committee: Senate Committee On Rules
Measure, Appointment or Topic: SJR30

Opposition to SJR 30 – A Direct Threat to the People’s Right to Petition

Dear Members of the Oregon Legislature,

I am writing to express my strong opposition to SJR 30, a proposal that undermines the fundamental democratic right of Oregonians to petition their government. By raising the signature requirements for ballot initiatives and constitutional amendments and mandating an equal distribution of signatures across all congressional districts, SJR 30 creates unnecessary barriers to citizen-led initiatives, favoring political elites over the will of the people.

A Special Class Distinction That Silences the People

SJR 30 imposes a structural disadvantage on grassroots movements by effectively requiring approval from all districts before an initiative can even be considered. This disproportionately benefits well-funded special interests that can afford massive signature-gathering operations, while everyday Oregonians—who rely on ballot initiatives to challenge government overreach—will be left without a voice.

A Direct Attack on Democracy

The initiative process was enshrined in the Oregon Constitution to allow citizens to act when their government fails to address pressing issues. SJR 30 fundamentally weakens this mechanism by making it significantly harder for citizen-driven initiatives to qualify for the ballot, shifting power away from the people and into the hands of entrenched political interests.

Oregon’s Legacy of Citizen Participation Is at Stake

For over a century, Oregonians have used the initiative process to shape the laws governing our state. If SJR 30 passes, it will diminish that right by introducing arbitrary geographic quotas that disregard the reality of population distribution. Rural and urban communities alike will suffer from this unnecessary red tape, ensuring that only the wealthiest and most politically connected groups can afford to participate in direct democracy.

I urge you to reject SJR 30 and stand with the people of Oregon by protecting our right to petition. Democracy belongs to the people, not just to those with power and money.

Respectfully,

Ben Roche
Albany, OR