

Chair Bowman, Vice-Chair Drazan, Vice-Chair Pham, Members of the House Committee on Rules,

**I strongly oppose HB 3390 and urge you NOT to pass this bill for two primary reasons, one on process and one on merit.**

First, this bill has been a placeholder bill for five months. The introduced bill simply required the Secretary of State to “study elections.” And now, in the chaos of the final days of the legislative session, while everyone else is watching the fate of other bills they’ve been following for the past five months, a -2 amendment for HB 3390 (which completely replaces the original bill) was introduced on June 18, the first public hearing for this bill was held on June 18, and a work session and committee vote for this bill was held on June 18. Not a single member of the public was present at the public hearing or the work session because the public had NO ADVANCED NOTICE that this bill was being so amended and rushed through the process. Further, the second reading was held one day later on June 19 and the third reading and vote on the House floor is to be held just one day later on June 20. The few members of the public who became aware of this brand new bill have all written public testimony opposing it. (The one testimony registered in support appears to be about something other than the amended version of HB 3390.) Surely the Committee Chair must realize that this is potentially a controversial bill and the public deserves a reasonable amount of notice that it is being considered. To rush such a bill through only serves to increase mistrust of the legislative process. Since I write this testimony AFTER the Committee has voted, I hope that other legislators will take the time to read the few testimonies written before they vote on the floor. This has been a last minute bait-and-switch process and that reason alone should be enough for a NO vote by other House members of both parties who value transparency in government.

But I also object to this bill on its merit. The current process whereby Ballot Titles are drafted by the Attorney General (and are subject to a reasonable public review process) and Explanatory Statements are drafted by a fairly represented committee appointed by the Secretary of State (and are subject to a reasonable public review process) WORKS. It is fair. It is public. The process outlined in HB 3390 -2, in allowing a legislative committee made up of 4 members of the majority party and 2 members of the minority party to write its own ballot titles and explanatory statements sets the stage for partisan and biased language intended to mislead and manipulate voters toward the majority party’s desired outcome. The content of this bill also serves to increase mistrust of the legislative process.

As a devout Democrat, I find myself in the rare position of being in complete agreement with Vice-Chair Drazan on this bill. It is an effort by the legislature to “rig the system for what voters see when it comes to potential referendums...”

**Please vote NO on HB 3390-2 for the lack of transparency of process by which it was brought to the House Floor for a vote AND for the lack of transparency and clarity it may create for voters when considering ballot measures referred by the Legislature.**

Respectfully,

Debi Ferrer  
The Dalles, OR