

REVENUE: No revenue impact

FISCAL: Minimal fiscal impact, no statement issued

Action: Do Pass as Amended and Be Printed Engrossed

Vote: 4 - 1 - 2

Yeas: Buckley, Hunt, Roblan, Rosenbaum

Nays: Thatcher

Exc.: Berger, Esquivel

Prepared By: Jim Stenbridge, Administrator

Meeting Dates: 2/14, 2/16, 2/19, 4/6

WHAT THE MEASURE DOES: Requires paid signature-gatherers to register and complete training with the Secretary of State (SOS) for the gathering of signatures for initiatives, referenda, nominations, and other petitions. Sets paid-signature-gatherer registration-application requirements, including submission of photograph. Prohibits persons convicted of fraud, forgery, or identity theft from being paid signature gatherers. Sets two-day deadline for SOS to complete registration and issue photo-badge with identification number. Authorizes SOS, Bureau of Labor and Industries, and Attorney General to share information in signature-gathering investigations. Requires chief petitioners and signature-gatherers to use cover and signature sheet templates prepared by the SOS. Creates electronic single-signature template exempt from witness requirement. Increases—from 25 to 1,000—signatures necessary for requesting ballot title. Requires chief petitioners to report contribution and expenditure information. Requires chief petitioners using paid signature-gatherers to maintain payroll records for review by the Secretary of State, Attorney General, and Bureau of Labor and Industries. Declares emergency; becomes effective upon passage.

ISSUES DISCUSSED:

- Identity theft and information available to signature gatherers; evidence of forgery and fraud
- Record-keeping necessary for chief petitioners as well as signature gatherers
- Information available on wage and hour complaints
- Length of signature validity and the two-year signature-gathering cycle
- Difficulty signature-gatherers and petition-signers have following instructions
- Process for obtaining ballot titles; uses made of ballot titles; twenty-five-signature threshold; filing fee alternatives
- History of initiative process in Oregon, including women's suffrage and direct election of U.S. senators
- Deadlines for preliminary submittal of signatures
- Use of the Internet
- Sorting of signature sheets by signature gatherer
- Contribution and expenditure reporting by opponents during signature-gathering

EFFECT OF COMMITTEE AMENDMENT: Replaces original measure.

BACKGROUND: Since 1902, the Oregon Constitution has provided voters with two methods of directly affecting changes to Oregon law and the Oregon Constitution, the initiative and the referendum. The initiative process gives direct legislative power to the voters to enact new laws, change existing laws, or amend the Oregon Constitution. Any citizen may be a chief petitioner of an initiative petition. For an initiative to qualify for the next general election—November of even-numbered years—chief petitioners must receive written approval from the Secretary of State to circulate signature sheets in order to collect signatures from registered voters. Chief petitioners must then obtain the necessary number of valid signatures and submit them to the Secretary of State no later than four months prior to the date of the next regularly scheduled general election. Ballot Measure 26 (2002) prohibits payment of signature-gatherers by the signature. Proponents contend that HB 2082-A is aimed at increasing the rate of signature validity while improving the efficiency of processing the petitions.

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This summary has not been adopted or officially endorsed by action of the committee.