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To: House Rules Committee
From: Kate Titus, Common Cause Oregon
Re: Support for HJM 8

Common Cause Oregon supports HJR 8 urging Congress to pass legislation requiring states to eliminate barriers to voting.

Common Cause is a nonpartisan grassroots organization that works to safeguard and improve the democratic process. For more than 40 years, we have helped to strengthen public participation and faith in our institutions of self-government, and to ensure that government serves the general public interest. This includes protecting the right to vote.

Nearly fifty years after passage of the Voting Rights Act, historically disenfranchised voters remain the target of deceptive election practices and voter intimidation. Tactics have changed somewhat over time, but there are still some who would suppress the vote of others. In recent years, groups like True the Vote and other Tea Party-affiliated groups have organized massive efforts to purge voters from registration lists and block voters at the polls.

I refer you to two Common Cause reports, published last year, documenting a range of recent deceptive practices and intimidation tactics:

- [Deceptive Election Practices and Voter Intimidation](#)
- [Bullies at the Ballot Box](#)

In Oregon, we are fortunate to have enlightened leadership that works to protect the rights of all voters, regardless of political perspective, and to encourage voter participation. That may not always be the case, as it is not so clearly the case now in some other states. Moreover, regardless of our best intentions, it is not always a simple matter to protect the right to vote in the face of unexpected barriers, without a clear legal basis.

Common Cause applauds your legislative leadership in considering ways to proactively defend against barriers to voting, and we support this measure.