



**LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS®  
OF OREGON**

June 13, 2013

To: House Committee on Rules  
Representative Chris Garrett, Chair

Re: Comments on Governance bills SB 148A, SB 149A, and SB 154    SUPPORT

The League of Women Voters of Oregon is a grassroots, non-partisan political organization that encourages informed citizen participation in government. We are supportive of legislation which protects the direct democracy process, simplifies and enables improved voter participation, and provides transparency and accountability regarding initiative petitions.

SB 148A deals with the integrity of the signature gatherers during initiative measure campaigns. By requiring that chief petitioners ensure that criminal background checks are conducted for all personnel involved, there is a direct responsibility for the accountability of the campaign. Also, the ability to correct “clerical error” improves the election process. The third piece to this bill that protects petition passers who report election law violations is critical to keeping fraud out of the system. The League supports this proposal.

SB 149A clarifies the language around military and overseas voters, as well as the technology that can be used to simplify the process. The security of the ballot is especially important. This measure helps to ensure participation in elections by voters who need special accommodations. The League supports this legislation.

SB 154 closes a gap in the initiative process that needed closing. When an organization, an individual or an entity pays people to gather signatures on election petitions, registration with the Secretary of State should be mandatory as required in this bill. The requirement that the training prescribed by the Secretary relative to knowledge about the petition campaign regulations and election laws be taken by representatives of the sponsoring person or organization helps to ensure compliance. The League supports this addition to the initiative system.

The above three bills are important improvements to voter registration and direct democracy. We support this committee moving them forward in agreement with the Senate. Thank you for this opportunity to comment.

Robin Wisdom  
President

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Governance Coordinator