



**LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS®
OF OREGON**

February 27, 2013

To: Senate Rules Committee
Senator Diane Rosenbaum, Chair

Re: SB 320 Extend political tax credit - Comments

The League of Women Voters of Oregon is a non-partisan, grass roots political organization that encourages informed citizen participation in government. In commenting on SB 320, in the interest of public disclosure, you should know that the League has conflicting positions with regard to this tax credit so we will be neither supporting nor opposing HB 2407 at this time.

This tax credit currently has a negative fiscal impact of \$14.7 million on the General Fund. The League generally does not support the extension of tax credits that do not have a compelling reason for continuing and could supply revenue for critical state services and programs.

On the other hand, the political tax credit does promote and create opportunities for civic participation in the elections process through fiscal support for candidates and measures. The League supports enabling citizens to be involved. Approximately 7.8 % of eligible individual tax payers take the tax credit. About 50% are above the \$50,000 income level.

That being said, the League might support SB 320 if a means test was applied to allow revenue from middle and lower income citizens. We also suggest that this credit be part of the larger discussion on campaign finance reform. The League would be open to consideration of a stipulation in extending the credit that it be limited to ballot measures.

Thank you for this opportunity to comment on SB 320.

Sincerely,

Robin Wisdom
President

Kappy Eaton
Governance Coordinator