



**LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS®  
OF OREGON**

March 9, 2015

To: House Rules Committee  
Representative Val Hoyle, Chair  
[zoe.larmer@state.or.us](mailto:zoe.larmer@state.or.us)

Re: Support HB 2944 and HB 2974 Regarding public hearings for redistricting process

The League of Women Voters is a 95 year old grassroots nonpartisan political organization that encourages informed and active participation in government. The Oregon League conducted a study in 2007 on Redistricting in Oregon <<http://www.lwvor.org/issues/about-study-reports/study-report-library/#2>>, and after a consensus process among Oregon members, the study concluded with the redistricting position that is attached. Part of this position says that a redistricting system should be "... subject to a reasonable and effective timetable, and have an open and public process." Furthermore, the League has a long tradition supporting improvements in the representation of citizens and in transparency in government.

Currently there is no Oregon statute requiring any public hearings before or after a redistricting plan is proposed. Nor is there even any statute requiring that proposed redistricting maps be made public. We believe that these two bills would correct these shortcomings in the redistricting process for Oregon.

During the last redistricting in 2011, the Special Joint Committee on Redistricting held hearings all around the state before a plan was produced. These hearings were so effective, and so well attended, that we believe the process should be codified.

These two bills are very similar, and the League does not have a preference between them. We suggest that merging the two bills would be appropriate. We urge the committee to move a bill forward on this subject during this session, far ahead of the highly political time of the next redistricting process in 2021.

Thank you for the opportunity to discuss this legislation.

Handwritten signature of Robin Wisdom in cursive.

Robin Wisdom  
LWVOR President

Handwritten signature of Norman Turrill in cursive.

Norman Turrill  
Governance Specialist

**LWV of Oregon Redistricting Position**

Adopted 2007

*Congressional and legislative redistricting should advance the fundamental purposes of representative democracy and a republican form of government by affording the people a meaningful choice in electing their representatives and holding the government accountable to the people.*

*The League of Women Voters of Oregon believes that the Oregon legislative and congressional redistricting system should be efficient, adequately funded, based on well-defined criteria, subject to a reasonable and effective timetable, and have an open and public process.*

*A. Any redistricting plan should assure that voters are effectively able to hold their public officials accountable, responsible, and responsive, and be based on the following criteria:*

- Adhere to all federal constitutional and legal requirements, such as that every district should have equal population, be contiguous, and meet the requirements of the Voting Rights Act;*
- Promote competitiveness and partisan fairness;*
- Consider other criteria, such as respect for political subdivisions, communities of interest, and geographic barriers.*

*B. Any redistricting plan should be developed independently of the Legislature in a nonpartisan manner with substantial public input. The Legislature may be afforded an opportunity to review the plan and accept or reject it.*

*C. The Oregon Supreme Court should promptly review and rule on any challenge to a redistricting plan and require adjustments if the criteria have not been met.*

*D. Oregon should conduct redistricting only once during each decade following the federal census.*