

To Chair Val Hoyle , members of the committee

I am writing as a citizen to state that I oppose the concept of House Bill 3500. I am also serving as the Chair of the Voter Integrity Committee of the Multnomah County Republican Party and have been observing elections since May of 2011.

The Oregon Legislature earlier this year passed a bill that had people who are not registered to vote be registered as Non-Affiliated voters via the Department of Motor Vehicles. This bill signed by the Governor was hailed as the step to increase voter participation but has not been law for very long.

Under HB 3500 THREE ballots, one each of of the Democrat Party, Republican Party, and Independent Party with instructions that the Non-Affiliated voter must choose one ballot and submit it. That choice of ballot will determine the party of the voter belongs too after submission.

With all due respect to the committee this brings up some very troubling questions. What if the voter does not wish to register to a particular party? What if the voter desire to join the Libertarian Party, the Green Party?, the Constitution Party?, or even another minor party. Under this bill the State is picking the top three parties and telling the citizen that they must register to become a member to one of them. This to me is a violation of freedom to the voter and the Legislature has no business of telling the voter to choose one of three choices of a political party.

Then there is the cost of this move. Three Ballots shotgunned out to the non-affiliated voters. Paper is cheap but that makes multiple ballots unaccounted for in any election under this system. From reading of the bill I do not believe that this was thought through to the proper conclusion.

I too would love to see voter participation increase in any election, but this bill appears to be a vast overreach in power. What is next on the agenda? Will the legislature in the future try to create a law to mandate voting? I can remember when I was in school in International Relations class in Hermiston High School and the teacher and us students would laugh at such a concept of the mandated voting within the Union of Socialist Soviet Republics. But apparently today in Oregon, this bill comes dangerously close to such a goal.

I thank the committee for its time.

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