



**Senate Committee on Rules
Sami Alloy, Legislative and Policy Director, Oregon Working Families Party
February 16th, 2016
Testimony on SB 1501**

Chair Rosenbaum, members of the Committee,
Thank you for having me. For the record, my name is Sami Alloy. I am the Legislative and Policy Director for the Oregon Working Families Party.

The Working Families Party urges you to support SB 1501. Passing this bill in 2016 is critical to the survival of our party. If the legislature fails to fix this error and allow for the safe harbor that the legislature intended to include in the Motor Voter law of 2015, our party will die in 2016. The Working Families Party currently has 11,304 registrants. That is well over the one half of one percent of statewide electors in 2014 that we would be assessed on according to the intent of the 2015 bill. If we are unable to fix this error, there is no way that the WFP will be able to keep pace with the influx of new voters in 2016. If we lose ballot access, our 11,000 voters will lose their party of choice.

The WFP supported Oregon Motor Voter because we believe that expanding voter access is important to a healthy democracy. We understood that we would have to invest in growing our party to keep up with the new voters coming onto the rolls, and we see that as a worthwhile price to pay for expanding voter access. We engaged in a lengthy process with the Secretary of State's office and other minor parties to create the solution in the 2015 law that this typo addresses, and we were satisfied with the solution that we reached. We urge you to fix this typo so that the intent of that process can be actualized.

Other political parties have come forward asking for a similar "pause button" for all political parties. We have no problem with that. We believe that a diversity of options for voters is important to our democracy. We would support the proposed -1 amendment if that helps build consensus. However, what is most urgent for us is the passage of the typo fix in the base bill. While other parties have at least one more legislative session to seek safe harbor from Motor Voter, this is our last opportunity to fix this error. If we sacrifice this simple typo fix—a bill that is what the short session is actually for—we will lose at least one minor party and compromise the diversity of voices in Oregon politics. That was not the intent of Oregon Motor Voter.

