



TO: Senate Rules Committee
FR: Nikki Fisher, Executive Director Oregon Bus Project
DA: March 1, 2017
Re: Support for SJR 2

Chair Burdick and members of the committee,

My name is Nikki Fisher and I am the Executive Director of the Oregon Bus Project. The Oregon Bus Project is Oregon's leading organization focused completely on millennial outreach, voter engagement, voter education, and building strong and impactful leadership development programs for our future leaders. We are an organization focused on engaging young people in the democratic process by making it fun and accessible. The Bus drives votes, it drives leaders, and it drives change.

I write in support of Senate Joint Resolution 2. Under the current system, Oregon residents who are eligible to vote must register in person, online, or via mail no later than 20 days before a primary or general election. We believe our democracy is at its healthiest and most robust when all Oregonians who are eligible to vote can participate with ease and voice their opinions and views through voting – and that includes registering to vote up to the day before an election.

We believe Oregon has proven itself to be a leader in voter access policies in recent years, and we are proud of that fact. However, this is one area in which we are behind other states. According to the National Conference of State Legislatures, same-day registration policies already exist in some form in 13 states and the District of Columbia, including Maine, Minnesota, and Iowa.

As an aside, when a similar bill was introduced in 2009, some concerns were raised about utilization rates for rural voters for same-day registration. Election Day is not a holiday in Oregon, and some voters must travel long distances to reach their county elections office. We are currently working on legislation that would increase the number of qualified voting centers in Oregon. We believe that the two issues combined would go a long way to increasing access to the ballot for rural Oregonians.

For these reasons, the Bus Project supports Senate Joint Resolution 2.

Thank you for your time and consideration.