

March 6, 2017

TO: Senate Committee on Rules

FR: Charlie Fisher, State Director, Oregon State Public Interest Research Group (OSPIRG)

RE: Support of Senate Bill 683

OSPIRG supports SB 683

OSPIRG is a statewide, citizen-based organization that represents thousands of everyday Oregonians.

SB 683 will enable broader public participation in Oregon's democracy by enabling citizens to submit vote-by-mail ballots without the need for a postage stamp. By doing so, SB 683 represents a small step toward adapting Oregon's voting system to the reality that postal mail is an increasingly rare form of communication for individuals, and that a growing number of Oregonians—of every age, background, income and geographic location—rarely use stamps.

The cost of a stamp represents only a tiny expense for most Oregonians, but removing this small barrier will make it that much easier for the public to participate in the democratic process. We believe that the benefits will be well the cost to the state of implementing this provision.

SB 683 is a common-sense measure that will strengthen Oregon's democracy. We urge your support. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Charlie Fisher
OSPIRG State Director