

TO: Senate Rules Committee

DA: June 22, 2017

Re: Senate Bill 1013



Chair Burdick, members of the committee,

My name is Nikki Fisher and I am the Executive Director of the Oregon Bus Project. Our mission is to make politics accessible for young people through mobilization, empowerment and building community, all while making Oregon a better place for everyone. I write today in support of Senate Bill 1013 because the Bus Project has long been an advocate for automatic voter registration and other policies that increase access to the ballot.

Since Oregon passed our first-in-the-nation automatic voter registration law in 2015, also known as Motor Voter, over 338,000 people have been registered to vote. Research released by the Center for American Progress (which we've submitted to OLIS) shows that of those, 98,000 new registrants voted in November 2016, contributing to Oregon's record turnout.

New registrants are different than the general voting population, too - they're younger (over 40 percent were age 30 or younger), they're less likely to live in urban areas, and they're more likely to be lower income. And that's just a few of the ways new registrants are helping to change the face of Oregon's electorate to be more reflective of the general population.

The data shows that automatic voter registration has had an overwhelmingly positive impact on Oregon and our elections, but we also know we can do better. As of November 2016, there were still over 360,000 Oregonians who were eligible to vote but not registered. We also know that thousands of ballots are delivered to the wrong address, as voters move and do not update their voter registration. There is still work to be done, and the Bus Project believes one important piece of that work is to continue to expand automatic voter registration in Oregon.

Senate Bill 1013, if amended, could begin that important work by directing the Secretary of State to work with other state agencies to study the feasibility of updating voter addresses and expanding automatic voter registration through existing agency programs and processes.

Based on the trends among new registrants at the DMV, we expect that by extending automatic voter registration to other state agencies that voters interact with - like the Department of Revenue, the Department of Veterans Affairs, the Department of Human Services, the Higher Education Coordinating Commission, and others - we'll see even more Oregonians engage with our democratic process.



We are excited about the opportunity to continue the great work we've already done to expand voter access using the secure, efficient, and smart automatic voter registration system.