



**Oregon Secretary of State
Dennis Richardson**

**Testimony Opposing Election Manipulation
in the –A11 Amendment to SB 229**

As Oregon's chief elections officer, the Secretary of State is responsible for ensuring a fair election process and for encouraging maximum citizen participation in our democracy. The Secretary strongly believes that this amendment should be rejected because it manipulates the election process and keeps voters in the dark. These political shenanigans are unacceptable.

The Oregon Constitution gives the people of Oregon the right to overrule the legislature through a referendum. This protection ensures accountability and safeguards fundamental rights. This amendment does just the opposite. It is a political ploy to undermine accountability by increasing power for politicians at the expense of the people. Key problems are summarized below:

Suppresses Voter Turnout

A special election in January is expected to suppress voter turnout by approximately 14%, thereby, excluding over 270,000 Oregonians from the political process.

Wastes Taxpayer Money

A special election in January will waste millions in taxpayer dollars that could have paid for more teachers or expanded voter access.

Disrupts the Holiday Season

A special election in January means that the holidays will be disrupted with robocalls, political telemarketers, nasty TV ads, and campaign junk mail. This will prevent Oregonians from enjoying the holidays in peace with friends and family.

Deceives the Voters

This amendment subverts the nonpartisan process for drafting a ballot title by injecting partisan politics and political bias. It even allows politicians to violate existing word limits without full judicial review.

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