

SB 952 Testimony

Good morning, Chair Prozanski and members of the Senate Judiciary Committee. My name is Elaine Woods. I am a resident of Beaverton, here to speak in support of SB 952.

The integrity of elections is foundational to the stability of our government. I strongly support any laws and legislation that supports ensuring that every valid vote will count, and punishes those who want to either silence those they do not agree with or nullify their votes through fraud or flooding the roles with names stolen or unqualified to vote in our elections.

I support SB 952 because it strengthens existing Oregon law, punishing subsequent violations of election law by increasing the both fines and prison sentences for repeat offenders.

In addition, the public elects Election Managers who oversee the elections process, expecting them to be of the highest integrity, fair to all candidates and voters without bias. I appreciate the fact that according to this updated law, if an elections official or any other public official acting in an official capacity, were to violate this trust, they would receive twice the amount of the allowed civil penalty and be charged with a Class B felony rather than Class C for these subsequent violations.

Although violations of election laws are not frequent here in Oregon, fraud and corruption have been increasing throughout the nation. Even here in Oregon in our last election, a partisan group placed an unofficial locked box in a place where at least 97 ballots were collected and delivered too late to be counted. No one knows how many ballots were actually mistakenly deposited in this unofficial box, or why they were not delivered on time. The group responsible was given a stiff fine of \$95,000, but this was recently reduced to just \$23,700. Our election system and processes should be strongly defended.

Another reason that I support this bill is more personal. I worked on the Oregon State Election Integrity and Legislative Agenda Committee with Sandy Raddue, who was also a dear friend. Her untimely death was a great loss to all who knew her and respected her integrity and her passion for election integrity. Before her death, she worked with legislators to craft legislation that would increase criminal and civil penalties for violating election laws, with enhanced penalties for public officials. I believe that this bill is one of her legacies.

I am greatly honored to be able to support SB 952 in her memory and strongly urge you to vote "Yes" for this bill.

Thank you very much.

Elaine Woods