

Dear Senate Committee on Rules,

I am writing in opposition to SB761. As I read through this bill and noted the changes it makes to the initiative petition process, I asked myself two questions:

1. Why would my state government want to eliminate tools that are available to its citizens and make it more complicated and challenging for them to participate in a process that is specifically designed for them?
2. What could possibly constitute an emergency that requires the use of the emergency clause, which restricts the voters from granting their approval on such change.

The only conclusion I can reach is that there are members of this legislative body and elected officials who are concerned about the possibility of a grassroots effort to recall or repeal. If they are so confident in their positions and the laws they are enacting; what could they possibly be concerned with? Voters actually being successful in having a say? These changes in the process make it more difficult for the citizens of this state to challenge their government and the laws it imposes on them. It specifically suppresses the voices of the citizens of rural Oregon, low income, seniors and others. The requirement of the Secretary of State to take away the availability of the E- signature form or not count the signatures gathered should violation be found, opens the door to nefarious activity that could end an effort. Is this what democracy looks like? I would say, no it doesn't.

I urge you to restore some measure of trust the citizens of this state have in their government by voting no to advance SB761.

Thank you for your consideration,

Darlene Atkinson

Salem resident