

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.

Eliminating tools used to easily allow voters to participate in our Democratic process diminishes trust that Oregon voters have in our current Legislators that the laws being proposed honor our Constitutional Rights. This law would diminish the trust of every Oregon Citizen in our elected Representatives. It seems this Bill is not an accurate representation of the people, but rather serves the interest of our current Legislators to more freely pass bills that are either Unconstitutional, or effect Oregon citizens negatively. The very fact that our Oregon Government aims to limit the voice of the people in opposition of any Bill is contradictory to the reason our Government was established, which is to protect and support the Rights of Citizens.

An emergency clause that would give the Government the authority to shut down electronic petition efforts is similar to telling the people that they should not have authority to easily defend their Rights granted to them in our US and State Constitutions. If I am incorrect, I would like clear reasoning on how a Bill like this protects the Rights of Oregon Citizens.

The proposed changes in this Bill 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 a violation be found, opens the door to nefarious activity that could end an effort.

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

Thank you.

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Leslie Fairman