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April 6, 2021

STATEMENT REGARDING OPPORTUNITIES AND CONCERNS ABOUT HOUSE BILL 2499

The Oregon Association of County Clerks (OACC) welcomes the opportunity to submit testimony regarding HB 2499 that extends automatic voter registration to other state agencies, modifies online voter registration, and implements electronic voter registration submittals by third-party organizations. In addition, OACC appreciates Representatives Fahey and Zika for seeking our input, which includes:

- **OCVR:** The Secretary of State (SOS) is finalizing a Request for Proposals (RFP) process to replace the aging Oregon Centralized Voter Registration (OCVR) system - there may be opportunity in the implementation of the new system to improve the connections between state agencies
- **FIS:** There will be a fiscal impact that needs to be fully funded to support the bill.
- **Stability:** There have been challenges maintaining stable data transfers between SOS and DMV - we hope those issues can be resolved and lessons learned can inform new connections with state agencies.
- **Duplication:** Currently, county election offices are evaluating data from many sources - USPS, other state voter registration and DMV lists, Social Security Administration, Oregon DMV, and Online Registration - Clerks have found that these sources can create duplicate, sometimes conflicting, records especially close to the voter registration deadline - more sources may compound this issue.
- **Timing:**
 - The timing of receiving data from DOR is critical to Clerks having the ability to evaluate it in a meaningful manner - consideration should also be given to how this data would be evaluated if it were in conflict with updates from other sources.
 - The 21-day opt-out and party choice process built into Oregon Motor Voter (OMV) effectively doubled the voter registration deadline for new registered voters taking advantage of the "automatic" option in OMV - this should be considered in this move to include other agencies.
 - Allowing voters to provide a signature after they have registered to vote would create another category of incomplete registrations that Clerks would have to follow up on - it would also create another category of challenged ballot if the voter returned a ballot but did not have a registration signature on file - this can be problematic at busy times like the voter registration deadline or the rush to get challenged ballot letters out after a high turnout election day, and may force those new voters to physically come to elections offices in many cases anyway.
- **Notification:** Currently, the SOS sends opt-out/party selection notifications to the voter - for consistency, the Clerks believe this should remain the responsibility of the SOS with any additional agencies, so we suggest changing "Secretary of State or county clerk" to just "Secretary of State" in all sections regarding notifications to prospective new voters about their right to not be registered and/or to select their party affiliation.
- **Signatures:** Capturing viable signatures from DMV has been problematic. Anecdotally, many Clerks feel that agency-captured signatures are less likely to match signatures on return ballot envelopes. This needs to be considered as the bill expands the number of agency-captured signatures that election offices would receive. An ideal solution for improving this and eliminating the 21-day opt-out would be to add a point of service system, handing Oregonians a tablet that they could interact with directly to review pre-populated data provided to the agency, provide an immediate "opt-out" or "choose a party" and capture a signature while receiving information about how that signature would be used to qualify their ballot.
- **Technical:** The Section 10, subsection 5, reference to an "electronic voting system" should instead refer to an "electronic voter registration system."