Chair Bowman and Members of the Committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to testify today regarding the recent discovery of 1,259 non-citizens wrongfully registered to vote through Oregon's motor voter program. While the immediate issue may be in the process of being resolved, this incident is a glaring example of broader, more systemic issues with the state's voter rolls.

For years, we've relied on automated systems like the motor voter program to streamline voter registration and improve access. But what happens when those systems fail? In this case, 1,259 individuals who were not eligible to vote were wrongfully added to our voter rolls, only coming to light because external scrutiny brought it forward. This is a signal that our voter registration systems may lack the accuracy and oversight necessary to maintain the integrity of our elections.

Governor Kotek's directive to fix this particular issue with the DMV is a step in the right direction, but it's far from enough. The fact that such a major error slipped through the cracks shows that there are likely other vulnerabilities within our voter registration system that we aren't yet aware of.

Some may argue that 1,259 people isn't a significant number, and it's true that this represents only a small fraction of Oregon's total voters. However, when a single vote can determine an outcome of an election- one illegal vote is one too many.

What we need is a comprehensive, statewide audit of Oregon's voter rolls to ensure that this issue isn't just the tip of the iceberg. This isn't about politics or partisanship—it's about ensuring the public's trust in our democratic processes. Every citizen deserves to know that only eligible voters are casting ballots in our elections. Right now, we can't say that with confidence.

The lack of a robust process for ongoing verification of voter eligibility across the board is unacceptable. Even as we work to resolve this particular error, we must recognize that our voter registration system needs a deeper overhaul to ensure long-term accuracy. Ensuring legal voters have access to the voting process is essential, but their votes are only maximized when no illegal votes are cast.

A robust process must include routinely removing duplicates, deceased individuals, and inactive voters from the rolls. Far too many Oregonians have direct examples of these issues persisting. These are basic steps that should be taken to maintain accurate and up-to-date voter lists. Right now, we have no evidence to suggest Oregon's system has the necessary safeguards in place to ensure this is happening. I know this because we asked the Secretary of State's office to share what their process is 3 weeks ago and they still haven't come up with an answer. That's a problem.

I urge this committee to take decisive action and call on the Secretary of State's office to address these vulnerabilities within our voter registration system, restoring integrity to, and confidence in Oregon's elections.

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