

Submitter: Benjamin Roche
On Behalf Of:
Committee: House Committee On Rules
Measure: HB2585

I Support HB2585 to END automatic voter registration through Oregon Motor Voter act. While the intent was to increase voter registration it has not increased voter participation, average voter turnout has precipitously declined since implementation of the Motor Voter act. Often partisan voter registration drives and public awareness campaigns to inform registered voters to confirm registration status have shown anomalous registrations, such as registered for the wrong party, or registered as non affiliated when voter believed they registered for specific party. Oregon has a closed primary for both major parties and inaccurate and unreliable voter rolls are disenfranchising voters. Our County Clerks are underfunded, and under staffed, and the additional ballots being generated, sent to apathetic voters with zero intent to vote is wasting valuable government resources that should be redirected to a expedient and accurate vote count.

A growing partisan divide as illustrated by a November of 2022 Gallup pole shows that declining Republican confidence in the integrity of our elections, while Democrats show an increase in confidence. This divide illustrates that policy favored by one party such as registering every eligible voter versus registering only those with an intention to vote remains a partisan issue that must be considered. If one party wants to increase voter participation they should consider building trust in the system, not diluting it by making registration default simply by interaction with the department of motor vehicles. SEE <https://news.gallup.com/poll/404675/confidence-election-integrity-hides-deep-partisan-divide.aspx>

Lastly if increased registration rates is the goal, then the DMV is not the best venue, in 2019 even before the pandemic, licenses issued to teenage drivers was down 50%, fewer young people are interacting with the DMV, so the Motor Voter law should be repealed as has not served Oregonians as promised, and in fact suppressed actual turnout with growing apathy and mistrust in our elections.