

SHEMIA FAGAN

SECRETARY OF STATE

CHERYL MYERS

DEPUTY SECRETARY OF STATE

TRIBAL LIAISON



State of Oregon  
900 Court Street NE #136  
Salem, Oregon 97301  
503-986-1500

<http://sos.oregon.gov>

February 22, 2023

Co-Chairs Nathanson, Woods and members of the Committee on Information Management and Technology:

I am Jessica Ventura, Legislative Director for Secretary of State Shemia Fagan. Secretary of State Fagan is the Chief Elections Officer. Cybersecurity is key in protecting our democracy and central to defending voter information. We are in an age where mis and dis information is driving a growth in the number of voices across the country promoting anti-democratic messages, false information about election security, and a heightened need for unique cyber security to protect elections. In many parts of the country, the right to vote is under attack. We are not immune to this in Oregon. In fact, threats to the security of the Secretary of State's information systems continue to evolve and increase. These increased threats tend to focus on election systems, requiring a sophisticated level of subject matter of expertise. In addition, election systems were designated as critical infrastructure by the U.S. Department of Homeland Security in January 2017. Our independence is critical to the assurance of securing these systems and the data entrusted in our care.

The Secretary agrees with the broader goal of HB 2049 to protect schools, libraries, business, and government to provide them with the tools needed to protect themselves from an increase in cyber threat. Within our Elections Division, we hold sensitive voting information and election results data. Our Audits Division holds data from state agencies that must be secured. Because of this, the Secretary requests the following changes to HB 2049:

- An exemption for the Secretary of State on page 6, line 21 of the bill: All agencies of state government, as defined in ORS 174.111, are directed to assist the center in the performance of the center's duties and, to the extent permitted by laws relating to

**Point of Contact:**

Jessica Ventura, Legislative Director  
Jessica.Ventura@sos.oregon.gov

confidentiality, shall furnish information and advice the center considers necessary to perform the center's duties.

- Additionally, we would like to be added to the OCCE Council as a non-voting member. The proposed bill does not include an appointee from the Secretary of State as the new Advisory Council composition. Though we are a constitutional created office and need to maintain exemption from this new process we can be a partner to the council and offer our expertise to the council.

Thank you for your consideration and look forward to working with the Committee on an amendment.

Respectfully,

Jessica Ventura  
Legislative Director

**Point of Contact:**

Jessica Ventura, Legislative Director  
Jessica.Ventura@sos.oregon.gov