

Submitter: Alan Journet
On Behalf Of:
Committee: House Committee On Rules
Measure, Appointment or Topic: HJR3

Chair Bowman and members of the House Committee on Rules:

Several decades ago I immigrated to the United States because, at the time, I judged this to be a nation that cherished democracy and was constantly striving to achieve a 'more perfect union.' I sensed a populous with developing empathy and sensitivity towards one another and, particularly the disadvantaged. But, above everything, I saw a nation where democracy, though flawed and imperfect, was a proud attribute that would be defended by all.

Over more recent years, the pride in democracy has waned as oligarchy and authoritarianism have grown in favor to the point that now only one major political party still defends democracy as the other has descended into a purely authoritarian cult.

One element in a democracy that must be defended is the right of the people to petition for and demand change when a majority wish it. The right of the people to promote and institute petition initiatives is a purely democratic right that should be promoted not curtailed. While it is certainly reasonable to establish rules that discourage and even prevent frivolous petition efforts, the rules should not be so rigorous and restrictive that the right of the majority to undertake a petition effort is effectively precluded by a minority.

By increasing the percentage of the population who must sign a petition initiative before it is accepted, this proposal is compromising democracy. By requiring that percentage to be demonstrated in every county in the state is undermining democracy even further since it would allow one county with outlier or even very extreme views to prevent a petition favored by the vast majority of Oregonians ever to reach the ballot.

As a staunch advocate of democracy, and because HJR3 has all the anti-democratic trappings of the odious Project 2025 promoted by the insidious Heritage Foundation, I profoundly oppose HJR3