

March 10th, 2025

Position on Bills at 2025

Session of the Oregon Legislature:

HJR 3: Opposed

My name is Dana Carstensen, resident of Oregon City, and I'm deeply opposed to HJR 3.

I believe HRJ 3 to be deeply undemocratic. By creating a minimum percentage in each county, it prevents the majority of Oregonians from participating in the ballot initiative process. Many times I've been asked to sign a ballot initiative process and each time I participated in the democratic process by either saying no or yes. Making the signature collection process tied to the percentage of votes cast in each county, instead of Oregon total, shuts out the vast majority of eligible Oregonians.

For example: In 2024 253,254 ballots were returned in my Clackamas County for the General Election. HJR 3 would require between 15,196 (6%) and 20,261 (8%) eligible Clackamas County voters to sign a ballot initiative petition. HJR 3 also makes any signatures above the thresholds essentially irrelevant. Yes, thousands more could physically sign the ballot initiative process but only the signatories up to the percentage threshold of the county will be counted. That means between 232,993 and 238,058 Clackamas County registered voters will not have a voice in the democratic process to sign a petition even if they wish to.

HJR 3 also destroys the idea of one person, one vote. Wheeler County, which in the 2024 General Election only turned in 895 votes, will have the same decision making authority over Oregon ballot initiatives as the 253,254 voters of Clackamas County. That's a 283 to 1 ratio. There's a realistic possibility that hundreds of thousands of petition signers will have their voices nullified because 90 voters in Wheeler County didn't sign a petition, even though thousands of willing petition signs want to sign but the thresholds of their counties are already met. That's not right.

HJR 3 will create an insurmountable dark money wall surrounding smaller counties. The quantity of money that will be targeted towards counties of Wheeler, Sherman, and Gilliam would be vast. Any ballot measure initiative will easily be killed by opposition money being targeted in just three counties.

HJR 3 is undemocratic and ripe for political dark money. Do not support this.

Dana Carstensen

Registered voter of Clackamas County.