Testimony in Opposition to HB 3166

Oregon State Legislature – Committee on Rules
March 19, 2025

Honorable Chair and Members of the Committee,

I am writing to express my strong opposition to HB 3166, which seeks to mandate Ranked Choice Voting (RCV) statewide and impose open primaries. This legislation undermines fair elections and disregards the will of Oregon voters.

Oregonians Already Rejected Ranked Choice Voting

In November 2024, Oregon voters voted against Measure 117, rejecting RCV. HB 3166 is a direct attempt to override the will of the people and force through an agenda that was explicitly rejected by voters. If the people of Oregon did not approve RCV through a statewide vote, why should lawmakers override them with legislation?

Why Ranked Choice Voting is a Bad Idea

- **Complicates the Voting Process** – RCV confuses voters and leads to higher ballot error rates, disproportionately disenfranchising elderly and minority voters.
- **Leads to More Discarded Ballots** – Many voters do not rank all choices, and as rounds progress, their votes are eliminated before the final decision is made, meaning their votes ultimately do not count.
- **Delays Election Results** – Instead of having clear winners on election night, RCV creates delays that weaken public trust in elections.
- **Promotes Backroom Politics** – RCV allows candidates to win without true majority support by gaming the ranking system, which can lead to less transparent elections.

The Danger of Mandating Open Primaries

HB 3166 also seeks to force open primaries on all of Oregon, which would:

- Allow non-party members to select candidates for party nominations, diluting the choices for registered party members.
- Give the most populous Democrat-controlled counties control over primary outcomes, essentially shutting out rural and conservative voices.
- Result in one-party rule, where Oregon's November elections could offer only two leftist candidates, just as has happened in other deep-blue states.

Conclusion

Oregon voters have already spoken on Ranked Choice Voting. Forcing it through after they rejected it is an act of political manipulation, not representative government. HB 3166 is a clear attempt to rig the electoral system in favor of a single ideology by complicating the voting process and ensuring that deep-blue counties control the state's elections.

I strongly urge this committee to respect the will of the voters and reject HB 3166.

Sincerely,

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