

Testimony in support of HJR 201 (or IP-55) from Portland Clean Air founder and Green Party activist, Seth Woolley, 3403 NE Stanton St, Portland. I here aim to represent thousands of donors to PCA and many thousands more Pacific Green Party members.

Oregon has an utterly dysfunctional party system that isn't helped by the current two party primary system.

The Republican Party doesn't even submit voter guide statements for its major national candidate here because a small token of effort to do so isn't considered worth it.

The Democrats don't seriously campaign here because they don't have to – everybody knows Republicans will lose. There are no living Republican former statewide elected officials.

Republicans do try for Governor every now and then, only because they have the backing of billionaire types. But this exception merely affirms the dysfunction.

It's not about Republican and Democrat anymore. In Portland our new proportional representation system is finally electing people that reflect the city's values. Half liberals and half democratic socialists. But the Democratic Primary at the legislative level is now merely elections hosting different types of left-side ideologies especially in the Portland area.

The Democratic Party means even less than the Republican Party, which has self-isolated itself to the Party of Trump and RFKJ with Stephen Miller white nationalism. The Democratic label now is the Party for Liz Cheney and law and order DAs at the national level. What happens locally depends so much on the locality now.

I couldn't join the Clinton Party of NAFTA and the WTO. I couldn't join the Obama Party of endless wars and extrajudicial assassinations. I couldn't join the Clinton and Biden Parties against Bernie at all costs despite the ever growing progressive backlash against unbridled corporate power. I could of course never join the Republican Party. I have been a life-long Green Party member because it was the national and international Party able to say no to corporate power and to support, with full (but small) power, campaign finance and electoral reform. But the cost was having to operate in Oregon's system that paid for Democratic Party primaries while leaving principled parties having to pay for all internal processes.

Oregon also funds even precinct elections for the smelly national parties.

Yes, Bernie/AOC types still sometimes take a chance on the Democratic Primary (and precinct elections), but their party members, an ever shrinking fraction of the electorate, is still primarily "Love me, I'm a Liberal" types that are still gatekeeping the general election choices while of course having their electeds take massively large donations while hoping to keep campaign limits from ever being enforced in the state, despite clear electoral mandates. They used superdelegates to undemocratically keep out a popular uprising. That betrayal directly led to the never-majority election of Trump – twice.

So we still have the same national rot happening locally, on hyperdrive especially since Citizens United.

I would prefer an PR-STV system like Portland has, with public funding, but this proposal opens the process up incrementally more, so we who want to see some done to expand the franchise are obligated to support it for now. It would allow independents, unaffiliated voters, and alternative party members to participate on their preferred terms, rather than allowing parties that have no inherent principles try to funnel efforts only to their corporate-backed, state-run systems with state rules that subsidize their elections without treating all the other voters equally in said subsidy.

Please support this resolution (and/or IP-55), and other related reforms, so we can make our elections a little bit more fair to especially our gen-x-to-young voters very much not happy with the stodgy options put forth by people still grasping on to party membership to “have any real say” and the boomer generation of “me” that has been trying to lift the ladder out from behind themselves.

And, naturally, the strongest message to the flailing efforts of neofascists that want to keep attacking Oregon’s values is to take the more open road

every

single

time.