

MULTNOMAH COUNTY

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Chair Garrett and Members of the Committee,

Multnomah County supports HB 3521

This bill, like its predecessor, the proposed -1 amendment to HB 2198, is good for Oregon elections. It provides an innovative approach to voter registration by automatically registering any DMV customer that has met voter registration requirements. It will remove the barrier of voter registration for approximately 500,000 new voters statewide with approximately 90,000 of those in Multnomah County. It will require establishing a system of electronically transferring DMV records to counties for processing in the same way that we handle online registration currently. This will eliminate paper voter registration cards and change of address cards coming from DMV. The electronic records can be processed in 1/10 the time of paper records. Additionally, moving to automatic registration at DMV could reduce the number of paper registration cards coming from third party registration groups. Between June and October of 2012 Multnomah County registered approximately 50,000 new voters at a cost of more than \$90,000. Most of these registrations came from third party registration groups. Reducing even a portion of these paper forms would provide significant savings.

Adding 500,000 voters statewide will add costs to County budgets. The initial voter registration surge will cost Multnomah County roughly \$0.20 per voter to process. Then there will be additional ongoing costs for election supplies like ballots, envelopes, postage and staff time for processing additional return ballots. This will cost Multnomah County roughly \$0.91 per additional voter per election. However, there is more efficiency in larger numbers and while total costs will go up marginally, our cost per registered voter will go down from approximately \$2.00 per registered voter to about \$1.87 per registered voter.

Concerns addressed in HB 3521

There was concern addressed in the public hearing for the proposed -1 amendment to HB 2198 related to citizens becoming registered without their knowledge and without the opportunity to opt out before their registration record became public. HB 3521 addresses this by adding a 14-day waiting period before an automatic registration would become active. This gives citizens the opportunity to opt out prior to the record becoming active and public. Additionally, HB 3521 addresses one of the concerns raised by Counties regarding the registered voter per precinct cap. The cap is currently 5,000 voters per precinct. In urban counties, if 20% more registered voters were added, it could cause precincts to "overflow" and require redrawing precinct lines to account for more voters. By increasing the precinct cap to 10,000 voters per precinct HB 3521 removes the need to re-precinct because of this bill.

Multnomah County urges your support of HB 3521. It's good for Oregon elections. It's the right thing to do.