



**LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS®  
OF OREGON**

March 10, 2015

To: Senate Rules Committee  
Senator Diane Rosenbaum, Chair  
[zoe.larmer@state.or.us](mailto:zoe.larmer@state.or.us)

Re: SB 331 Regarding prisoner counting for redistricting purposes

The League of Women Voters is a 95 year old grassroots nonpartisan political organization that encourages informed and active participation in government. The Oregon League conducted a study in 2007 on Redistricting in Oregon <<http://www.lwvor.org/issues/about-study-reports/study-report-library/#2>>, and after a consensus process among Oregon members, the study concluded with the redistricting position that is attached. Furthermore, the League has a long tradition supporting improvements in the representation of citizens and in transparency in government.

SB 331 would require that prisoners be counted, for the purposes of redistricting, in the communities where they are residents, rather than where they are imprisoned. This would uphold the principle of one-person-one-vote and would remedy distortions in representation caused by how Oregon currently counts prison populations during redistricting. The League also believes that SB 331 would improve the representation of the prisoners themselves by the public officials and communities where they reside, rather than those where they are incarcerated.

Since this proposal has been discussed since 2011, the League believes it is an idea whose time has come. We urge you to move a bill forward on this subject during this session, far ahead of the highly political time of the next redistricting process in 2021.

Thank you for the opportunity to discuss this legislation.

Handwritten signature of Robin Wisdom in blue ink.

Robin Wisdom  
LWVOR President

Handwritten signature of Norman Turrill in blue ink.

Norman Turrill  
Governance Specialist

## **LWV of Oregon Redistricting Position**

Adopted 2007

*Congressional and legislative redistricting should advance the fundamental purposes of representative democracy and a republican form of government by affording the people a meaningful choice in electing their representatives and holding the government accountable to the people.*

*The League of Women Voters of Oregon believes that the Oregon legislative and congressional redistricting system should be efficient, adequately funded, based on well-defined criteria, subject to a reasonable and effective timetable, and have an open and public process.*

*A. Any redistricting plan should assure that voters are effectively able to hold their public officials accountable, responsible, and responsive, and be based on the following criteria:*

- Adhere to all federal constitutional and legal requirements, such as that every district should have equal population, be contiguous, and meet the requirements of the Voting Rights Act;*
- Promote competitiveness and partisan fairness;*
- Consider other criteria, such as respect for political subdivisions, communities of interest, and geographic barriers.*

*B. Any redistricting plan should be developed independently of the Legislature in a nonpartisan manner with substantial public input. The Legislature may be afforded an opportunity to review the plan and accept or reject it.*

*C. The Oregon Supreme Court should promptly review and rule on any challenge to a redistricting plan and require adjustments if the criteria have not been met.*

*D. Oregon should conduct redistricting only once during each decade following the federal census.*