



The League of Women Voters of Oregon is a 99-year-old grassroots nonpartisan political organization that encourages informed and active participation in government. We envision informed Oregonians participating in a fully accessible, responsive, and transparent government to achieve the common good. LWVOR Legislative Action is based on advocacy positions formed through studies and member consensus. The League never supports or opposes any candidate or political party.

May 20, 2019

To: [Senate Committee on Rules](#)
[Senator Ginny Burdick, Chair](#)

Re: SB 761 -3 – Oppose

For nearly 100 years, the League has encouraged informed citizen participation in government, including via the initiative process. We work to inform voters and ensure confidence in our elections by addressing concerns of fraud. We oppose [SB 761](#), which addresses who can print initiative petition e-signature forms. We oppose the -3 amendment which removes availability of e-sheets for the next few years.

We appreciate the effort to protect our initiative process from fraud. According to the SoS, our Elections Division statistically samples petition sheets, and has compared validity of multi-signature sheets used by campaigns to the single signature e-sheets that can be accessed online. They can include slots for a roster of signers with their names, addresses, and signatures, or be a single sheet for an individual signer. The E-sheets were shown to have significantly greater validity rates.

We understand the intention of using printable e-sheets is to allow voter access to signing petitions outside of large population centers, to include voters in rural areas who would be less likely to have signature gatherers, either volunteers or paid signature collectors, standing at grocery stores or public transit.

We do not agree with the theoretical fraud concern for printing a stack of e-petition sheets for distribution and use. We would not advocate for actions in defiance of ORS or OAR for collecting signatures. We realize that sheets may contain problematic or fraudulent signatures. This may be true for either variety of sheet submitted. It does not seem to follow that e-sheets should be removed from circulation for the next few years. They have been found to have greater validity than multi-signature sheets.

Concern for who prints initiative petition e-sheets could be discriminatory. It is reminiscent of poll taxes, allowing participation by privileged voters while hampering or preventing access by others. Not everyone has a printer, has easy access to printing, or would find the cost of printing trivial. We spoke to supporting pre-paid ballot envelopes for younger voters who do not use stamps. Those may be some of the same voters who would be grateful for having e-petition sheets provided for them, printed by someone else.

Speaking to the now-withdrawn bill, we oppose making printing of e-sheets a criminal activity. Speaking to the -3 amendment, we oppose withdrawal of e-sheet availability. This comes with the understanding that an appropriate oversight process, administered by our Elections Division, would continue.

We urge your support. Thank you for the opportunity to discuss this legislation.

Norman Turrill
LWVOR President

Rebecca Gladstone
LWVOR Governance Coordinator