



*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.*

February 18, 2019

To: [House Committee on Rules](#)  
[Representative Paul Holvey, Chair](#)

Re: HB 2234 – Establishes centralized (opt-in) electronic candidate filing system – **Support**

The League of Women Voters believes that efficient and economical government requires competent personnel, the clear assignment of responsibility, adequate financing, and coordination among different agencies and levels of government. This bill would initiate common, opt-in, online candidate filing. We value the transparency of candidate filings in ORESTAR and want to see this for all Oregon candidates.

To inform our voters, Oregon's League Voter Services are exemplary in contacting all 36 counties, further to all cities, including special districts, when counties don't list these candidates on their respective websites. We adjust for regional overlaps and shared geospatial districting so that voters can enter their addresses and see the full list of who will be on their ballots. We invite candidates to participate by email, a requirement for our software. We have amassed information on over 7,100 Oregon elected positions and we usually cover well over 1,000 candidates running during each election.

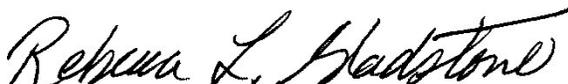
This extensive searching would be easier from a central source, like ORESTAR. Information for state-level candidates filing on ORESTAR is publicly available, at least for brief searches. The Oregon Central Voter Registration (OCVR) system, used for local candidate filings, is not publicly visible. For the many reasons that we have experienced and that others are describing, we would advocate for candidates being able to file online in a common, transparent system.

During the 2017 session, we gathered all stakeholders that we could think of to discuss perspectives. In consideration to special districts, we agreed for "opt-in" though it would significantly increase cost. Cities wanted to be sure that filing fee collection for their candidates would remain with their city recorders. County clerks wanted to be sure they retained authority to certify their own candidates. The State Elections Division wanted to be sure that funding would be adequate for the transition and urged that the 2018 session would be too brief and that we should wait to file a bill until 2019.

We want election software that is secure, transparent, and up to the demands of our growing voter turnout. It should include the efficient changes we have discussed for years, and new program adoption must not disrupt ongoing elections. In conferring pre-session, Elections mentioned wanting to replace both OCRV and ORESTAR, so they proposed that software references be generic. These aging computer programs are like the roof starting to leak. We see evidence of strain and do not want to wait further to begin remedial work from scratch in 2021. We should re-convene now to evaluate carefully, perhaps implementing work in stages. Elections should be directed to begin, and be provided adequate staffing and funding.

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

  
Norman Turrill  
LWVOR President

  
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LWVOR Governance Coordinator