



March 13th, 2019

Chair Burdick & members of the committee,

My name is Sal Peralta. I am testifying today on behalf of the Independent Party of Oregon to ask you to oppose SB 761 which seeks to prevent individuals from signing a single signature petition sheet that they, themselves, did not print.

The clear intent of this bill appears to be to prevent organizations from distributing single petition sheets to their members and to make it harder for petitions to qualify. We see it as an attack on basic speech and association rights of organizations and individuals.

Oregon Education Association and many other grassroots organizations have used the current law to distribute single-signer petition sheets to their members. Distributing single-signer petition sheets reduces confusion and signature errors that many volunteers experience with the 5 and 10 signature sheets. It allows those who want to sign a petition, but not ask others to make a similar commitment, to more easily participate.

This legislation disproportionately impacts students senior citizens and other vulnerable people.

Under the provisions of this legislation, a person could not print a sheet for another member of her household; a librarian could not print a sheet for a public patron; a care-giver for an elderly person, etc. Those burdens invariably fall to those who are lower income, less tech savvy, or who otherwise do not have access to a personal printer.

This legislation does not reduce the risk of fraud. Instead, it greatly increases the risk of fraud, since it would allow an anonymous bad actor to derail an entire campaign's signature-gathering effort, simply by mass distributing single signature sheets in violation of the law. Under the terms of this legislation, the Secretary of State would then be required to discontinue the use of the petition template and reject **all** single petition sheets.

Under the current system, any fraud that might occur involving single-signature sheets already attaches to the chief petitioners. This bill accomplishes no meaningful improvements to that system. There is, instead, only downside: Less convenience for individuals who want to sign petitions; greater risk for those circulating them.

We urge your committee to reject this proposal.

Respectfully,

Sal Peralta