

Senate Redistricting June 6, 1991 Page These minutes contain materials which paraphrase and/or summarize statements made during this session. Only text enclosed in quotation marks

report a speaker's exact words. For complete contents of the proceedings, please refer to the tapes.

SENATE COMMITTEE ON REDISTRICTING

June 6, 1991Hearing Room "B" 3:00 p.m. Tapes 54 - 55

MEMBERS PRESENT:Sen. Glenn Otto, Chair Sen. Dick Springer, Vice-Chair Sen. John Brenneman Sen. Jim Bunn Sen. Scott Duff Sen. Mae Yih

MEMBERS EXCUSED:Sen. Bill Bradbury

STAFF PRESENT: Gail Ryder, Senior Committee Administrator Julie Muñiz, Committee Assistant

MEASURES CONSIDERED: HJR 41 - Proposing amendments to Oregon Constitution relating to initiative petitions, PH HB 2918 - Relating to judicial ballots, PH/WS HJR 19 - Proposing amendment to Oregon Constitution relating to limiting terms of State Senators and Representatives, PH

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TAPE 54, SIDE A

005 CHAIR OTTO: Called the meeting to order at 4:08 p.m.

(TAPE 54, SIDE A)

PUBLIC HEARING

HJR 41 - Proposing amendments to Oregon Constitution relating to initiative petitions

Witnesses:Jim Whitty, Oregon State Representative, District 47 Phil Dreyer, Oregon Fair Share Russ Farrell, Coalition for Petition Rights Dave Buchanan, Oregon Common Cause Bill Gorden, Portland Grey Panthers, United Seniors Thurman Smith, Oregon State Grange Merton Saling, Political Activist B.J. Callman, Citizen Margaret Wilson, Lane County Democratic Central Committee Harold King, Willamette Falls Pensioners of Oregon City, Oregon State Counsel for Senior Citizens

014 JIM WHITTY, OREGON STATE REPRESENTATIVE, DISTRICT 47: Testifies in favor of bill. We have a growing urban population. When we had paid petition gatherers, the heavy proportion of the petitions came from the metropolitan area. On initiatives that didn't have paid petition gatherers, there was a state-wide mix of signatures gathered. Discusses Measure 5 as an example. It's very difficult to find out where the signatures were gathered because it's not kept that way. Congressional districts cross county lines. The Secretary of State has said it would be easy to switch Congressional districts. Other states have a similar signature gathering process. It's time to take another look at this process. Oregon voters should vote on how signatures are gathered. This is more restrictive, Oregon would not be the only state doing this.

083 BUNN: What harm comes if all the signatures come from one county?

084 WHITTY: There isn't really any harm, but rural districts don't get much representation when signatures are gathered.

092 BUNN: Don't the voters in that area have as strong a vote as those in Portland.

093 WHITTY: Yes, they do. This bill doesn't deal with the ballot, just the initiative process.

095 BUNN: When you go door to door in your district, do you spend as much time in rural areas as you do in large towns?

097 WHITTY: I've never gone door to door.

104 DUFF: For the initiative, it's about 13,354 signatures, is that right?

105 WHITTY: In the last election the required signatures for statutory measures was 66,771 state-wide, for Constitutional changes it's 89,028. If each Congressional district had 20% of the population, which they don't, that's the amount of signatures we'd need for constitutional changes.

115 DUFF: This doesn't really represent a hardship?

116 WHITTY: I don't think it does. It may, if the primary people gathering signatures are paid.

132 PHIL DREYER, OREGON FAIR SHARE: Fair Share has been involved in signature gathering on initiative petitions on six occasions. Originally people could be paid. In the early days of signature gatherings, you had to get the signatures of men only. We've made progress since then.

147 YIH: What year was that?

148 DREYER: Reviews written testimony, Exhibit A.

189 DUFF: Is your organization state-wide.

190 DREYER: Yes. We have chapters in each district.

193 DUFF: Have you polled your members in eastern and southern Oregon about this issue?

194 DREYER: We have lots of members but most are inactive. We've talked with our members in Rogue Valley and they agree that this issue should be defeated.

200 RUSS FARRELL, COALITION FOR PETITION RIGHTS: Speaks against paid petitioners. Reviews written testimony, Exhibit B. Speaks in opposition to HJR 41.

290 OTTO: I don't want to cut you short, but we have lots of witnesses.

300 FARRELL: Reads letter from Democratic Party of Oregon, Exhibit F. Submits other testimony, Exhibits C - E.

313 DAVE BUCHANAN, OREGON COMMON CAUSE: Speaks in opposition of HJR 41. It's hard to see what the intent of this bill is. When individuals think about signatures for an initiative, they think about the number of signatures plus 15%. You would need to calculate how many extra signatures are needed, making it more difficult. It would present problems in checking the signatures by adding to the bureaucratic problems the counties have. This would add to the costs of the initiative process. It would be a useless expense for the voters to decide.

364 DUFF: As part of Common Cause, do you believe it's important to increase the participation in government?

365 BUCHANAN: Yes.

367 DUFF: Do you believe this would increase governmental participation with citizens state-wide?

368 BUCHANAN: I don't think it would. People all over the state have the ability to participate in the initiative process.

381 DUFF: Why do you think it would be more difficult for someone who needs to gather petitions outside of the metropolitan areas? I don't

understand why that makes it more difficult.

385 BUCHANAN: If you only have one number to reach as your goal, it would be easier than if you had five different numbers to reach as your goal.

393 DUFF: I don't see why that's more difficult. A referendum needs 8,903 signatures per congressional district.

398 BUCHANAN: I agree with your point that the number of signatures needed would stay the same, but your ability to get them would be more difficult. And the ability to know that you had them would be more difficult because of all the calculations.

404 DREYER: When you send someone out as a volunteer, they get discouraged if they're in an area that gets four signatures in an hour. But if you send them to a place where they can get 25-30 an hour, then they stay at it.

422 DUFF: You just prove my point. You're going to ignore this part of the state because there aren't enough concentrations of people over there.

442 BILL GORDEN, PORTLAND GREY PANTHERS, UNITED SENIORS: Speaks from a personal point of view. I've never accepted a dime for collecting signatures. It takes a lot of money to pay petitioners, so organizations that don't have a lot of money are at a disadvantage. You get signatures from where the people are. To go out in a rural areas would be difficult. Nobody in my constituency has a fax machine to get the materials delivered. Access to that type of equipment is limited to the well organized offices that have money.

493 THURMAN SMITH, OREGON STATE GRANGE: The Oregon State Grange opposes HJR 41.

(Tape Malfunction)

TAPE 55, SIDE A

001 SMITH: Some of the grass roots organizations are not in the position to hire people to go into the rural areas and collect signatures.

020 DUFF: Did you poll your membership?

020 SMITH: Our membership is constantly guarding this. We object to anything that would altar this process as it currently is.

025 DUFF: I know some of your members.

027 HAROLD KING, WILLAMETTE FALLS PENSIONERS OF OREGON CITY, OREGON STATE COUNSEL FOR SENIOR CITIZENS: Opposes HJR 41 because a) it dilutes the effectiveness of the initiative provision, b) it hinders the capability to bring about legislation. "Us old fogies, contrary to much conventional thought, are mostly a bunch of folk living off social security pensions and private pension plans. We are not greedy geezers floating around the country in motor homes in the lap of luxury."

062 MERTON SALING, POLITICAL ACTIVIST: Reads written testimony, Exhibit G.

096 B. J. CALLMAN, CITIZEN: I support the intent of this bill, but I'm not sure it will do what you hope it will do. Paid petitioners will go to Eastern and Central Oregon to get more signatures but this will cost money. This is detrimental to non-profit organizations. Many of these measures won't make it to the ballot because the money isn't available for these non-profit organizations. So the initiatives from the wealthy organizations will get on the ballot. Farmers aren't rich. Only organizations that can afford this will get on the ballot. There could be a solution to this problem, but this is not it. Rural Oregon will be losing out.

149 OTTO: I believe we shouldn't have petitions.

152 MARGARET WILSON, LANE COUNTY DEMOCRATIC CENTRAL COMMITTEE: I think this bill is an effect of Ballot Measure 5. People are very angry with

it, and now it's going to be made too difficult to get initiatives like this on the ballot. We're not going to get the signatures we need. People all over the state are angry about this.

(TAPE 55, SIDE A)

PUBLIC HEARING

HB 2918 - Relating to judicial ballots

Witnesses: Mark Wiener, Legislative Assistant to Representative Kevin Mannix

237 MARK WIENER, LEGISLATIVE ASSISTANT TO REPRESENTATIVE KEVIN MANNIX: The designation of "incumbent" was allowed to stay when slogans were removed from judicial ballots. The problem is that since these are elected positions, the voters are likely to infer that it is an elected incumbent when in fact 80% of judges are initially appointed to their positions. HB 2918 would correct this problem by including "elected" or "appointed" on the ballot with "incumbent."

278 OTTO: Questions?

WORK SESSION

283 MOTION: SEN. BRENNEMAN MOVED HB 2918 TO THE FLOOR WITH A DO PASS RECOMMENDATION.

285 BUNN: I think the bill is probably good. I don't think we should allow them to use the word "incumbent" at all, but since they do allow it, I think we should clarify.

303 VOTE: MOTION CARRIED, 4-2. VOTING NO: SEN. SPRINGER, SEN. YIH. (EXCUSED: SEN. BRADBURY).

(TAPE 55, SIDE A)

PUBLIC HEARING

HJR 19 - Proposing amendment to Oregon Constitution relating to limiting terms of State Senators and Representatives

311 RYDER: This bill was added at the last minute. We sent notice to Rep. Miller, but he is on the House floor. We did have another hearing on a similar measure earlier in this session.

315 OTTO: Could you briefly explain the bill?

317 RYDER: It would be a constitutional amendment that would establish a term of limitation for legislators for twelve consecutive years.

322 BUNN: The House version only talks about consecutive years. Suggests substituting language on ln. 17 with "No person shall serve more than three consecutive terms as Senator. No person shall serve more than six consecutive terms as Representative."

339 OTTO: A person under that provision could serve twelve years for each office.

342 BUNN: Or after those 24 years they can run for that first office again and continue. I assume that the goal is to break incumbency cycles.

348 OTTO: I would oppose that amendment. I don't think it would do what the bill sponsor wanted.

354 BRENNEMAN: I think Sen. Bunn brings up a good point. I think we're trying to get at terms, rather than consecutive years.

359 BUNN: The original bill before it was A-engrossed had that provision in it. Through the amendment process they just made it twelve years.

366 RYDER: The Senate is asking we send a couple of Senators so they don't have to go into a call of the Senate.

374 OTTO: I think we might as well adjourn tonight.

376 RYDER: Do you want a recess or do you want to adjourn?

377 OTTO: Adjourn. Then we can have another meeting...

382 BUNN: Offers to drop amendment and move the bill.

385 BRENNEMAN: I think we ought to amend it.

Meeting adjourned at 5:05 p.m.

Submitted By:

Julie Muñiz
Assistant

Reviewed By:

Joan Green
Assistant

EXHIBIT LOG

A - Written testimony, Phil Dreyer, 1 pg. B - Written testimony, Russ Farrell, 2 pgs. C - Handout, Russ Farrell, 1 pg. D - Handout, Russ Farrell, 1 pg. E - Written testimony, Russ Farrell, 1 pg. F - Written testimony, Russ Farrell, 1 pg. G - Written testimony, Merton Saling, 1 pg.