



OREGON SENATE REPUBLICANS

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

March 5, 2015

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Senate Democrats Pass Bill Putting Oregonians' Personal Data At Risk

HB 2177 Publicizes Confidential DMV Data of Vulnerable Oregonians

Salem, OR – Today, a bill invading the privacy of Oregonians and putting personal data at risk passed the Oregon Senate in a 17-13 partisan vote. HB 2177, known as the “Motor Voter” bill, automatically registers any Oregon driver to vote without their consent.

Senate Republicans expressed concerns about the risk of automatic voter registration for victims of domestic and sexual violence. Currently, personal information of all registered Oregon voters, including name and address, is publicly available. By transferring personal data from the Department of Motor Vehicles to voter registration rolls, some Oregonians will have their information publicized without their knowledge. Unfortunately, the Senate Republican amendment to safeguard the privacy of these records was defeated on a party line vote.

“This bill undoes the confidentiality agreement vulnerable Oregonians count on from the DMV and risks publicizing personal information of domestic violence and sexual assault victims,” said Senator Kim Thatcher (R-Keizer). “A one-size-fits-all approach to voter registration does not work for our most vulnerable citizens that could be endangered if their personal information is suddenly made public.”

Senate Republicans also presented an amendment to automatically update the residential address of any Oregon voter who updates their address with the DMV or other state agencies. The amendment also would reactivate voters who have become ‘inactive’ due to relocating or are not sent a ballot based on unreasonable technicalities. This helps Oregonians, particularly low-income families who tend to move more often, stay engaged and have a voice in the electoral process.

“Voting is both a right and a privilege, and we need to ensure that Oregonians who want to participate in the electoral process have as few barriers to participation as possible,” said Senator Chuck Thomsen (R-Hood River). “These amendments would have made it easier for working Oregon families to stay engaged as citizens without compromising personal privacy and freedom.”

The amendment also reactivates voters who have become 'inactive' due to relocating or are not sent a ballot based on unreasonable technicalities. Instead of adding new voters who intentionally chose not to register to vote and therefore are unlikely to return a ballot, the amendment reactivates voters who have previously participated in Oregon elections and have let their registration lapse unintentionally.

"We've had enough of these blatantly partisan games," said Senate Republican Leader Ted Ferrioli (R-John Day). "It's time for Democrat leaders to put aside distractions and focus on bipartisan efforts to expand educational opportunities and create family wages jobs for Oregonians."

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