



The League of Women Voters of Oregon, established in 1920, is a 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.

April 2, 2025

To: [Senator Jama](#), Chair, [Senate Committee On Rules](#)

Re: [SB 952](#) – Interim US Senator appointments – **Support**

The League supports SB 952, to require the Governor to appoint a temporary US Senator within 30 days, in case of a vacancy, before a replacement election can be held. **Oregonians will still vote for our US Senators at an election.** We support this on the basis of our positions for representative government and efficiency in government.

This was proposed with [HB 4021](#) A (2024), a committee bill passing in the House and sitting in Senate Rules. It was amended, as echoed in SB 952, to define appointment implementation times, and replacing special election timing, “*as soon as practicable*” with “**at least 80 days and not more than 150 days after the vacancy occurred**”. This is particularly relevant today:

“The possibility of appointed senators tipping the partisan balance – or at least giving an electoral advantage to one party or the other – is brought into sharper relief when one considers that this is the [oldest Senate of any in U.S. history](#). The *mean* age of current U.S. senators, as of July 31, is 65.2. Almost a third of senators (31) are in their 70s, five are in their 80s, and one (Iowa Republican Chuck Grassley) will turn 91 in September.” – Pew Research for details of practices in other states.¹

Oregon is one of four states not allowing their Governor to appoint an interim for the US Senate, requiring seats remain vacant until elections: North Dakota, Oregon, Rhode Island, and Wisconsin. Kentucky is revisiting their law with Sen Mitch McConnell stepping down. Kentucky’s concern for the Governor not appointing a replacement from the same party is not relevant here.² SB 952 requires adhering to party representation with appointment transitions: “Have been registered for at least 180 days in the same political party as the person being replaced.”

Under these conditions, without appointed representation, we could lack a US Senator’s voice from Oregon for **months**, election calendar timing varying. We deserve to be prepared for this.

We strongly urge your Support for SB 952. Thank you for the opportunity to discuss this legislation.

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¹ How do states fill vacancies in the U.S. Senate? It depends on the state. Pew Research, August 6, 2024. Accessed 2025 04 01, <https://www.pewresearch.org/short-reads/2024/08/06/how-do-states-fill-vacancies-in-the-us-senate-it-depends-on-the-state/>

² Kentucky has a new law on filling US Senate vacancies. Here's how it works. [Kentucky] Courier Journal. Accessed 2025 04 01, <https://www.courier-journal.com/story/news/politics/2025/02/05/how-are-us-senate-vacancies-filled-in-kentucky/78253161007/>