

Joyce Brewer

From: louise brannon <louise3goats@hotmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, February 1, 2023 4:55 PM
To: Joyce Brewer; louise brannon
Subject: RE: SJR 101 testimoney

CAUTION: This email originated outside the State of Idaho network. Verify links and attachments BEFORE you click or open, even if you recognize and/or trust the sender. Contact your agency service desk with any concerns.

Need to make one change: I was under the impression that sending a bill to 14th Order for Amendments was kind of a way to table it. Have been informed this is not so and that the committee actually voted to pass it. So no thanks to Senator Anton are in order from my point of view.

Louise Brannon
Salmon

Sent from my Verizon, Samsung Galaxy smartphone

----- Original message -----

From: Joyce Brewer <sstaf@senate.idaho.gov>
Date: 2/1/23 2:48 PM (GMT-07:00)
To: louise brannon <louise3goats@hotmail.com>
Subject: RE: SJR 101 testimoney

Received. Thank you.

From: louise brannon <louise3goats@hotmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, February 1, 2023 2:33 PM
To: Senator Jim Guthrie <JGuthrie@senate.idaho.gov>; Joyce Brewer <sstaf@senate.idaho.gov>
Subject: SJR 101 testimoney

CAUTION: This email originated outside the State of Idaho network. Verify links and attachments BEFORE you click or open, even if you recognize and/or trust the sender. Contact your agency service desk with any concerns.

Although I was unable to testify remotely due to the number of testifiers plus the time constraints, I would like the following remarks to be included in the public record of the hearing:

The writers of the State Constitution believed that it was good and necessary to make sure the people had a voice separate from the Legislature. They were aware that in Montana a few men known as the Copper Kings bought and paid for not only the State Legislature but also Congressional seats. There is currently no abuse of the initiative system. The last big initiative to pass was a grassroots effort, and it was an arduous one, in both rural and urban areas. SJR 101 asks the people of Idaho to vote to effectively take away a right that the

Constitution reserves to them. This would not be right. The sponsors are phrasing this as "let the people decide," but this is disingenuous. In 2020, some in the Legislature were horrified that Medicaid expansion, which the Legislature had repeatedly shot down, passed by about 60% when presented to the people. SJR 101 is an attempt to work around the State Supreme Court's correct decision and try to fool the voters into agreeing to take away a right -- in fact if not precisely in law -- so that the public is muzzled.

Had I been able to speak at the hearing this morning, I would have replied to Senator Anton's concerns about rural interests being overwhelmed by urban numbers by pointing out that under SJR 101, the reverse would apply: a single legislative district in Boise could block an initiative important to rural areas and widely supported by them.

I also want to thank Senator Anton for moving that SJR 101 be sent to 14th Order for amendment.

Thank you.

Louise C. Brannon
Salmon, Idaho

Joyce Brewer

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: Wednesday, February 1, 2023 2:52 PM
To: Senator Jim Guthrie; Joyce Brewer
Subject: SJR 101 for the record

CAUTION: This email originated outside the State of Idaho network. Verify links and attachments BEFORE you click or open, even if you recognize and/or trust the sender. Contact your agency service desk with any concerns.

Family matters regrettably interrupted my plans to testify on SJR 101. Would you kindly include my remarks for the public record ? Thanks very much.

Respected Senators and Staff,

I have resided in the 4th congressional district of Idaho for 34 years and in the state for the greater part of 63 years. I am the former president of the Board of our Coeur d'Alene/Hayden Lake School District 271 and President of the Coeur d'Alene Downtown Business Association. My doctorate is in history with an emphasis on the revolutionary and constitutional period.

No changes are necessary or desirable to Idaho's initiative process. Initiative is the HALLMARK of Idaho ground-level democracy and should not be made more difficult to achieve.

I ask you to forget partisan politics for a moment and think how your name will look in history. Please defeat and retire SJR 101.

With respect and best wishes,

--

Kenneth W. Burchell, Ph.D., GIA GG

[REDACTED]
Appraisal Associates

[REDACTED]
Historian/Independent Appraiser

[REDACTED]
208-763-3370

[REDACTED]
www.kenburchell.com

© Kenneth W. Burchell -- 2023 All Rights Reserved.

Joyce Brewer

From: Katherine P. Dawes <kdawes208@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, January 31, 2023 4:48 PM
To: Joyce Brewer
Subject: My testimony on SJR 101
Attachments: Testimony opposing SJR 101.docx

CAUTION: This email originated outside the State of Idaho network. Verify links and attachments BEFORE you click or open, even if you recognize and/or trust the sender. Contact your agency service desk with any concerns.

Ms. Melton,

I have signed up to give remote testimony tomorrow morning (Wed), but just in case I don't get a chance to do this, due to any unforeseen circumstances, I want to make sure the Chair and members of the committee receive my testimony. I have attached it to this message for you to give them. Thank you very much.

Kathy Dawes
Moscow, ID

Chair Guthrie and committee members: Thank you for this opportunity to speak remotely.

I am Vickie Fadness, I live in Lewiston, Idaho. I am speaking on behalf of myself against SJR 101.

About 10 years ago ACA made available federal funding for affordable health insurance allowing millions of people access to quality healthcare. Yet Idaho residents were not allowed to participate.

Grassroot citizens diligently worked gathering signatures so that Idaho voters would be given an opportunity to vote for or against Medicaid Expansion. And they did. Idahoans were able to receive medical attention, people regained their health and lives were saved.

I have four points to make regarding SJR 101.

First, the ballot initiative is a constitutional right given to Idahoans. SJR 101 takes that constitutional right away from us.

Second, SJR 101 requires signatures from 6% of registered voters from 35 districts instead of 18 districts as it is now. This slams the door on initiatives ever qualifying for a vote.

Third, Initiatives include rural and urban districts. With regard to Medicaid Expansion, nearly all rural voices said yes.

Finally, the Idaho Supreme Court struck down the 35 district requirement in 2021 because it allows one district to overrule the will of 34 districts, thereby blocking an initiative.

Initiatives are a meaningful and effective way for citizens voices to be heard.

In closing, please vote NO to SJR 101.

Thank you, Chairman Guthrie and committee members, I will stand for any questions.

Vickie Fadness

Joyce Brewer

From: Richard Ferguson <refer01@gmail.com>
Sent: Thursday, February 2, 2023 1:06 PM
To: Senator Jim Guthrie
Cc: Joyce Brewer
Subject: SJR 101

CAUTION: This email originated outside the State of Idaho network. Verify links and attachments BEFORE you click or open, even if you recognize and/or trust the sender. Contact your agency service desk with any concerns.

Dear Senator Guthrie,

My name is Richard Ferguson and I live in Boise. Although I pre-registered to testify in person at the Senate State Affairs Committee hearing on SJR 101 yesterday, time ran out before I had a chance to testify. I would like my remarks included in the public record. They are as follows -

Chairman Guthrie and committee members. Good morning. My name is Richard Ferguson. I have lived in Idaho most of my 70+ years. Originally Idaho Falls and then in Boise to follow my professional career. I currently live in Boise.

I strongly oppose SJR 101

The citizen initiative process has been a part of the Idaho Constitution for over 100 years. While over half of the states currently have some form of initiative process; Idaho already has the most difficult initiative process in the country. That is why our ballots are not flooded with citizen Initiatives each election - like California. Since the current 18 district was established in 2013, 20 citizen initiatives have been attempted but only 3 have collected enough signatures to qualify for placement on the ballot. There is NO need to make an already very difficult process essentially impossible. In 2021, I followed this issue closely and watched the Idaho Supreme Court hearing on this very issue via zoom. I have read their opinion. The take home message is very clear - The Idaho Supreme Court found that the right of Idahoans to make or repeal laws is a fundamental right. PLEASE respect our rights as citizens!

As legislators, it is your responsibility to demonstrate that this amendment serves the public interest before placing it on the ballot. I listened to the entire 3 hours of testimony. By my count, 40 Idahoans testified against SJR 101; their testimony came from all parts of the state both - rural and urban. Only 2 were in favor. Public testimony opposed SJR 101 by a factor of 20 to 1. Clearly, this proposed legislation does not serve the public interest. I believe it is an abuse of your legislative power to put this proposed amendment on the ballot when the overwhelming majority of Idahoans are opposed to it.

I ask this committee to vote no on advancement of SJR 101

Respectfully,
Richard Ferguson

Joyce Brewer

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: Wednesday, February 1, 2023 12:02 PM
To: Joyce Brewer
Subject: NO on Senate Joint Resolution 101

CAUTION: This email originated outside the State of Idaho network. Verify links and attachments BEFORE you click or open, even if you recognize and/or trust the sender. Contact your agency service desk with any concerns.

Senators:

I am sending this email to be included as testimony against SJR 101.

It may seem to be a burden for legislators to deal with ballot initiatives. However, that is for the people to decide. I am incensed that some committee members want to make it more difficult for Idaho voters to bring up ballot initiatives. We are the taxpayers and you work for us. We do not work for you. Stop trying to take power away from the Idaho voters.

Julie Miller

[REDACTED]
Moscow, ID 83843

Joyce Brewer

From: Pam Nielsen <pamnielsen521@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, January 31, 2023 5:46 PM
To: Joyce Brewer
Subject: Written Testimony Against SJR101

CAUTION: This email originated outside the State of Idaho network. Verify links and attachments BEFORE you click or open, even if you recognize and/or trust the sender. Contact your agency service desk with any concerns.

Thank you for taking written testimony on this very important issue. I have lived in Idaho for over 40 years as a mother, working professional, at several large, local employers, and community volunteer. I care about my immediate community and the larger community in the State.

- I stand in opposition to SRJ101. Restrictions on citizens' rights that are so onerous that they cannot be exercised are unconstitutional.
- When the Legislature passed a similar bills in 2021 (SB1110) it was challenged in court and it was ultimately determined to be unconstitutional. Now, our lawmakers want to change the Idaho Constitution so our citizens' voices will be forever muted.
- When the Idaho Supreme Court struck down the 35-district signature requirement in 2021, the court called this requirement a form of tyranny. The court highlighted that the 35-district rule gives any one district the power to overrule the will of the other 34 districts and block an initiative from the ballot.
- SJR 101 would make it virtually impossible for any grassroots initiative to qualify for the ballot. It is already extremely difficult to qualify an initiative for the ballot in Idaho. It requires signatures from 6% of registered voters in each of 18 districts. SJR 101 would increase the number of required districts from 18 to 35.
- SRJ101 clearly puts cumbersome, unattainable, and overly restrictive obstacles in the way of the citizens of Idaho to bring forth ballot initiatives. The legislature is clearly making it near impossible for citizens to exercise their constitutional right.

- The ballot initiative is a right that was enshrined in our state constitution over a century ago to give ordinary citizens a voice in their government. SJR 101 is an attempt to revoke one of our most cherished constitutional rights.
- Proponents of SJR 101 are wrong to assert that rural voters don't currently have a voice in the initiative process. In 2018, the Medicaid Expansion initiative won the majority of votes in nearly every rural county in Idaho.

Pamela M Nielsen

Joyce Brewer

From: Mary Ollie <maryollie83@gmail.com>
Sent: Monday, January 30, 2023 7:47 PM
To: Joyce Brewer
Cc: Senator Jim Guthrie; Senator Treg Bernt; Senator Chuck Winder; Senator Kelly Anthon; Senator Mark Harris; Senator Abby Lee; Senator Ben Toews; Senator Melissa Wintrow; Senator James Ruchti
Subject: No on SJR 101

CAUTION: This email originated outside the State of Idaho network. Verify links and attachments BEFORE you click or open, even if you recognize and/or trust the sender. Contact your agency service desk with any concerns.

Chairman Guthrie and Members of the Senate State Affairs Committee:

Please enter my testimony into the public record.

I live in Boundary County. If SJR 101 were to pass it sends a message that my voice isn't important enough to be heard across this great state.

There are many issues that are important to rural Idahoans that the rest of the state may be unaware of or may not feel is important. A ballot initiative is one way to get the attention of voters in all districts.

Passage of SJR 101 makes that impossible. It sets the bar impossibly high. It essentially allows one district to veto getting a measure on the ballot. I've done the math and it is possible to get a rural focused initiative on the ballot under the current provisions. With SJR 101 that won't happen and Idaho's voters won't get an opportunity to weigh in.

Not having that opportunity to participate is contrary to republican ideals. It restricts our civic involvement and by doing so concentrates power in the legislature. Having analyzed votes cast v registered voters in each district I can attest to the fact that many members have not been elected by a majority of registered voters. Given that reality, removing one more leg of political power delegated to the people is unwise.

I urge you to vote "No" on SJR 101.

Mary Ollie
Bonners Ferry ID

This e-mail is for the sole use of the intended recipient(s). Please do not forward my emails. If you are not the intended recipient, you are hereby notified that any disclosure, copying, distribution or taking of any action in reliance on the contents of this e-mail information is considered a breach of confidentiality. If you have received this e-mail in error, please immediately notify the sender by reply e-mail and destroy all copies of the original message.

Joyce Brewer

From: Hobart Swan [redacted]
Sent: Wednesday, February 1, 2023 2:32 PM
To: Senator Jim Guthrie
Cc: Joyce Brewer
Subject: Testimony regarding SJR 101
Attachments: Ballot Initiative Statement.docx

CAUTION: This email originated outside the State of Idaho network. Verify links and attachments BEFORE you click or open, even if you recognize and/or trust the sender. Contact your agency service desk with any concerns.

Dear Chairman Guthrie,
I attended today's hearing but there was not enough time for me to testify in person. I have attached and pasted in what I would have said, and ask you to make it part of the record of these proceedings.
Thank you very much,

Hobart Swan

[redacted]
(208) 949-6588

February 1, 2023

To: Sen. Jim Guthrie

Vice Chair: State Affairs Committee

Re: Testimony regarding SJR 101

I want to thank the Chairman Guthrie and members of the committee for this opportunity to state, in person, my opposition to SJR 101. My name is Hobart Swan and I live here in Boise. I am a volunteer with the Idaho Trails Association, which works to keep wilderness trails open and accessible... and with what SJR 101's sponsors refer to as a "well-funded activist organization." I have spent many a weekend knocking on doors here in Boise in support of Medicaid expansion and the Quality Education Act. I'm also a poll worker in the 16th District.

In 2021, the Idaho Supreme Court stated that SB Eleven-ten's attack on the initiative process would "result in a scheme that squarely conflicts with the democratic ideals that form the bedrock of the constitutional republic created by the Idaho Constitution." Rather than do its job and enforce the state constitution, the Legislature wants to change the constitution—by adding an amendment that would undermine these very same democratic ideals.

You have to ask ... why in the world is the Legislature so dead set on getting rid of the initiative process? As Idaho County Clerk Kathy Ackerman said last year, in response to the Legislature's attempt to criminalize how absentee ballots are dropped off, the message seems to be that the Legislature just doesn't trust Idaho voters. As a poll worker, I was encouraged to learn recently that the conservative Heritage Foundation found 4 cases of voter fraud in Idaho between 2004 and 2017. Four cases of voter fraud out of 5.3 million ballots cast. An out-of-state challenge to the outcome of the 2020 election in Idaho was later deemed by our Deputy Secretary of State to be "patently without merit." There is no evidence that Idaho voters can't be trusted. But there's plenty of evidence that our state legislators want to disenfranchise them anyway. And that's where SJR 101 comes in: It is yet another attack on the right of Idahoans to participate in their own government. It is a national problem—and it is growing.

There may be many reasons for these attacks. But one clue comes from the Ballotpedia site, which notes that "voter turnout in states with an initiative on the ballot is approximately 3 to 8 percent higher" than in states without one. The sad fact—and something that may yet ruin our democracy—is that it is in some politicians' best interests to keep as many people as possible away from the voting booth.

As a poll worker who has witnessed first-hand the pride Idahoans take in doing their civic duty to vote without fraud or deception... it is hard to conclude anything other than that our very own state representatives would rather we didn't participate in government at all... that we leave it up to them. That is not how a democracy is supposed to work.

I urge you to vote against SJR 101 and protect Idahoans' constitutional right to a reasonable initiative process... and to self-governance. Thank you, and I'm happy to answer any questions the committee might have.

Hobart Swan