

Moderator Report to the Oregon Citizens' Initiative Review Commission

According to ORS 250.143 (1), "each person who served as a moderator for a citizen panel that evaluated a measure voted on at the most recent general election shall: (a) Convene to evaluate procedures related to the citizen panels and submit a written report to the Citizens' Initiative Review Commission summarizing the evaluation, along with any recommendations; and (b) Appoint two moderators from among the former panelists convened for the evaluation to be members of the commission."

On February 18, 2015, four moderators from the two Citizens' Initiative Reviews (CIRs) conducted in 2014, convened to evaluate CIR procedures. The moderators included Robin Gumpert and Michael Schnee from the CIR for Measure 92; and Mary Forst and Molly Keating from the CIR for Measure 90. The evaluation was facilitated by Tyrone Reitman, Executive Director of Healthy Democracy, on behalf of the CIR Commission. Lucy Greenfield, also of Healthy Democracy, and CIRC Administrator Sarah Giles were also present.

Moderators made suggestions about several areas of the CIR process. Healthy Democracy is engaging in a thorough review of 2014 CIR events, and will be combining this feedback with feedback from the independent research team, panelists, advocates, and leaders in other states that piloted the Citizens' Initiative Review to suggest possible changes to the CIR process.

A summary of the evaluation by moderators, including recommendations, can be found below:

Strengths and weaknesses of CIR procedures:

- Moderators see the CIR as a unique deliberative exercise and a valuable process for providing information to citizens about ballot measures.
- Given the complexity of the process, moderators found it important and useful to co-facilitate with another moderator.
- Moderators adapted to several new process changes in 2015. They tested different approaches, and in many cases made process improvements during the reviews.
- Moderators did not notice any differences in panel dynamics after the change in size of the CIR panel from 24 to 20 citizens.

Moderator suggestions:

- Moderators suggested allowing panelists significant additional time to develop content for the Citizens' Statement (writing pro and con statements and key findings).
- Moderators suggested looking at ways to bring in additional independent information and voices to give context for the measures and to be available to answer questions and provide information to panelists throughout the CIR.
- Moderators suggested narrowing down the number of voting methods used and increasing time for deliberation and for flexibly structured group conversation.

- Moderators suggested modifying the format for advocate resource panels to ensure that each panel provides new and useful information.
- Moderators suggested updating the moderator manual to include a section explaining how the CIR differs from a typical deliberative event and cautioning moderators about potential pitfalls. They also suggested redesigning the manual to give moderators a clearer understanding of the process (for instance, break the process up into repeated building blocks).