



Hello Chair Wagner, Vice Chair Girod, and members of the Senate Rules Committee,

My name is Andrew Rogers, I am the Executive Director for the Oregon Student Association, and today I am asking you to join us in supporting HB 3291.

For many election cycles, our organization has prioritized nonpartisan voter turnout and voter education for the college students we represent. During a typical election cycle, we can be found on campus registering voters, reminding folks of election deadlines, and contacting folks to help troubleshoot getting their ballot and turning it in on time. That's how I know what a huge improvement to our democracy here in Oregon we could make with the small, common sense policy changes found in HB 3291.

For the most vulnerable voters among us, the harder times get, the less time, resources, capacity, and knowledge they have to take part in our elections. Every cycle I have worked on voter engagement and education, I have seen students confused about navigating vote by mail. I have had students tell me point blank they don't vote because the system confuses them and they feel like it is engineered to be unwelcoming to those who don't have the time or educational background to be "experts" on political processes. A great amount of time is spent explaining the postmark deadline vs the election deadline. Or I'll call students the day before election day and they'll tell me they just put their ballot in the mailbox that day. Or we'll find that some folks just need extra time to vote, because it takes some time to get their needs met in terms of their language needs, accessibility needs, or other issues.

We shouldn't be penalizing voters for a less than accessible system. We should be designing the system to be as easy to take part in, safe, and equitable as possible, and HB 3291 is a part of that. This is a small, reasonable policy change which we have seen implemented successfully in other states such as Washington, and it's one that will make a huge difference in upholding our democracy.

Oregon is a national leader for democracy access, let's continue that by addressing the issue of postmark deadlines.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Andrew Rogers
OSA Executive Director
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