

RE: Support Guaranteeing the Right to Vote, SB 579
Senate Committee on Judiciary

January 25th, 2023

Chair Prozanski, Vice Chair Thatcher, and members of the Senate Committee on Judiciary,

My name is Gerard Rodriguez and I live in Portland. I am writing to testify in strong support of Guaranteeing the Right to Vote, SB 579.

Felony voter disenfranchisement laws emerged out of the Jim Crow era which served (and continue to serve) the clear purpose of racially focused voter suppression - especially targeting Black communities. Today, Oregon's current voter disenfranchisement law continues this legacy of white supremacy. Throughout the history of this country, people in power have decided that the right to vote should not be extended to poor people, women, Black communities, Indigenous communities, the intersection of these identities, and so many others - basically with the exception of white, land-owning men. Is this the path that we want to continue on in Oregon? It's abhorrent to deny that voting is a civil right.

Please ensure that Guaranteeing the Right to Vote, SB 579, is passed out of committee.

Thank you,

Gerard Rodriguez