

Submitter: KIEL MOSES
On Behalf Of:
Committee: Senate Committee On Judiciary
Measure: SB579

1/27/2023

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

My name is Kiel Moses and I live in Portland, OR. I am writing to testify in strong support for Guaranteeing the Right to Vote, SB 579, which will ensure every eligible Oregonian can register to vote, update their voter registration, and vote in elections based on where they resided prior to incarceration.

The right to vote is enshrined in our constitution and fundamental to a vibrant and participatory democracy. Yet, around 12,000 people in Oregon are currently denied their right to vote, leading to low-income, Black, Indigenous, and Latino/a people being disproportionately disenfranchised. Guaranteeing the Right to Vote fulfills the promise of our democracy while improving public safety, as well as addressing racial and socioeconomic inequities.

All people deserve the right to vote. Voter suppression disproportionately impacts people of color. The biases against people of color has contributed to the disproportion of people who identify as BIPOC being incarcerated at a much higher rate than other groups. This exclusion from the voting process is inhumane. Everyone should be allowed to vote regardless of if they have broken the law.

As an Oregonian, I know that connection to community through civic engagement while incarcerated leads to healthier communities, that voting is a civic right and responsibility, and that we can address unjust impacts of mass incarceration.

I am not alone. This legislation is supported by over 40 civil rights organizations, faith-based groups, as well as dozens of currently and formerly incarcerated people. Please ensure that Guaranteeing the Right to Vote, SB 579, is passed out of committee.

Thank you,

Kiel Moses