

Submitter:

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On Behalf Of:

Committee:

Senate Committee On Rules

Measure, Appointment or Topic:

SB210

My father, Warren Aney, passed away in May of 2023. However, his entire life he has been an active participation in the civic arena. I was taught as a young kid the importance of voting in EVERY election, not just the "ones that count." In the last years of his life, his mobility was severely compromised, as he suffered from the ravages of Parkinson's. However, up until the final election just before he died, he made sure to vote, and Oregon's vote-by-mail system allowed him to continue to be part of the civic conversation in our state and in the US. My father was a veteran and he understood his obligation to fulfill his duty as a voting Oregonian.

As a native Oregonian, I have long been proud of the level of civic engagement shown by her residents. Our first-in-the-nation Vote by Mail system has ensured that the percentage of voters voting in each campaign remains higher than my states in the US. Furthermore, the vote-by-mail system allows working people and differently-abled Oregonians, like my father, to remain engaged in voting for the issues and politicians that impacted their lives.

Oregon's innovative vote-by-mail system is under threat from SB210. Not only does it mandate that in-person voting once again become the only approved method of voting for Oregonians residing in Oregon, it also requires that a citizen-issued identification be used to verify residence and citizenship. This requirement alone would disenfranchise thousands of voters in the state, including any woman who took their husband's name, or anyone who is not able to present a government-issued ID. Nationally, only 34% of African Americans possess a passport, which in most states is the only form of government-issued ID available. Furthermore, only 33% of white Americans hold passports.

This bill reflects a nationwide effort to limit voting rights to African Americans, immigrants, and women. The bill is clearly an attempt to appease those representing the "America First" faction in this country, a group that clearly wants to limit voting rights to only white, male citizens.

I strongly urge that this bill be struck down. The voting rights movement should be focused on raising the level of citizen involvement in elections, not limiting it.