

Submitter: Bryson Baker
On Behalf Of:
Committee: Senate Committee On Rules
Measure, Appointment or Topic: SB210

I strongly support Oregon Senate Bill 210, which establishes in-person voting on election day as the standard method for conducting elections, requires valid government-issued photo identification, and allows mail-in ballots only upon request for those unable to vote in person, while preserving vote-by-mail for military, overseas, and out-of-state voters. This bill enhances election integrity, voter confidence, and accessibility while addressing modern challenges in Oregon's electoral system.

For nearly 30 years, Oregon's vote-by-mail system has been praised for convenience, but it's time to evolve. In-person voting with ID verification is a practical step to ensure every vote is cast by an eligible voter. Fraud may be rare, but even one illegal vote undermines democracy. Requiring IDs like an Oregon driver's license or passport—already widely held—closes a vulnerability without burdening voters. States like Idaho and Washington use ID systems effectively, proving this works.

SB 210 balances security with access. Voters unable to reach polls can request ballots up to 21 days before election day, ensuring no one is disenfranchised due to disability, work, or travel. Military and overseas voters retain mail-in rights, honoring their service. Precinct voting booths, open at least eight hours and until all in line by 8 PM vote, restore the communal act of democracy—something mail voting lacks.

Critics claim ID requirements suppress turnout, but evidence suggests otherwise. A 2014 study in Electoral Studies found no significant turnout drop in states with voter ID laws. Oregonians already use IDs for banking, travel, and even fishing licenses—voting should be no less secure. Free IDs can address equity concerns, as other states have done.

This bill also rebuilds trust. Posts on X and public discourse show growing skepticism about mail-in systems, from lost ballots to signature disputes. In-person voting with IDs offers transparency: voters see their ballot counted. Referring SB 210 to the people lets Oregonians decide, not just lawmakers—a democratic win.

Oregon led with vote-by-mail in 1998. Now, let's lead again with a secure, modern system. SB 210 ensures elections are fair, verifiable, and trusted. I urge your support and a "yes" vote to send this to the ballot.