

Submitter: Sylvia Bass

On Behalf Of:

Committee: Senate Committee On Rules

Measure, Appointment or Topic: SB210

I am writing to express my strong opposition to SB210.

Oregon's vote-by-mail system has been a model of accessible, secure, and high-participation democracy for over two decades. Replacing it with in-person voting as the default method, as SB210 proposes, would be a major step backward.

Vote-by-mail has helped Oregon achieve some of the highest voter turnout rates in the country. It removes barriers for working people, caregivers, rural residents, seniors, and those with mobility challenges. It allows voters time to carefully consider their choices, research ballot measures, and avoid long lines or scheduling conflicts.

SB210 would limit this access by requiring most voters to show up in person on a single day, effectively disenfranchising many who depend on the flexibility and accessibility of mail voting. While the bill allows for requesting a mail ballot, the process adds friction that will inevitably reduce participation—especially among voters already at the margins.

Furthermore, the requirement to return all ballots by election day—eliminating the current system that counts ballots postmarked by election day—risks discarding valid votes simply due to postal delays.

Our election system should be built to encourage participation, not restrict it. SB210 creates unnecessary obstacles and undermines a method that Oregonians trust and rely on.

I urge you to reject this bill and continue supporting the inclusive, effective vote-by-mail system that has served our state so well.