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

Protect Oregon's Successful and Effective Vote-by-Mail System!

For over two decades, Oregon has led the nation with our universal vote-by-mail system—a model of electoral accessibility that has increased voter participation while maintaining election security and integrity. The proposed bill to end this successful practice (SB 210) would needlessly restrict voting access for countless Oregonians.

Our current system allows every registered voter to participate in democracy from the comfort of their home, eliminating barriers like work schedules, transportation issues, or long lines at polling stations. It works by confirming voter eligibility at the same time people apply for a driver's license or Oregon ID card, so that we are not asking individuals to jump through unnecessary bureaucratic hoops to prove their eligibility again and again every time they choose to vote in a local, state or national election. The system has proven secure and efficient with a vigorous signature verification mechanism. Why replicate in-person voter and document eligibility-checking when it is not necessary? Shifting back to required in-person voting would introduce new inefficiency, waste, and unnecessary spending of taxpayer dollars.

Our vote-by-mail system has proven particularly valuable for rural communities, working families, seniors, and people with disabilities. It allows adults to vote without missing work, school, caregiving or other essential everyday commitments. It prevents long lines on voting day, which lead in turn to lost wages and, for some, the difficult choice of whether to vote vs. missing work or even losing a job. In a democracy, our legislators and government officials should be doing everything they can to encourage civic participation and remove barriers to voting. SB 210 attempts to do the opposite.

The facts are clear: vote-by-mail has significantly boosted voter turnout in Oregon. During the 2020 election, our state achieved nearly 80% voter participation—among the highest in the nation. If we take the step backward to require in-person voting on election day, it would disenfranchise thousands of voters and create unnecessary barriers to democratic participation. It would also require significant spending at the local, county and state levels to establish polling locations and staff them—resources better directed elsewhere.

Claims of widespread fraud have been repeatedly investigated and debunked. Oregon's rigorous signature verification system and ballot tracking technology provide multiple layers of security. Our vote-by-mail system has conducted

successful elections for over 20 years without significant security issues.

I encourage all state legislators to protect Oregon's proven vote-by-mail system. I urge you to oppose this bill and maintain our state's proud tradition of accessible, secure voting for all Oregonians.