

Submitter: Kevin Kliewer

On Behalf Of:

Committee: Senate Committee On Rules

Measure, Appointment or Topic: SB210

Dear Members of the Senate Committee on Rules,

I am writing to express my strong opposition to Senate Bill 210. As a resident of Oregon, I am deeply concerned about the negative implications this bill would have on voter accessibility and voter turnout.

Oregon's vote-by-mail system has been a cornerstone of our state's electoral process for over two decades, providing a secure and convenient method for citizens to participate in elections. This system has consistently resulted in higher voter turnout compared to national averages, demonstrating its effectiveness in encouraging civic engagement. Transitioning to exclusively in-person voting would disproportionately affect individuals with disabilities, the elderly, rural residents, and those with demanding work schedules, all of whom may find it challenging to reach polling stations on a single designated day. Such a shift risks disenfranchising segments of our population and reducing overall voter participation.

The vote-by-mail system in Oregon has proven to be both secure and reliable. Comprehensive measures are in place to verify voter identities and ensure the integrity of ballots, resulting in negligible instances of fraud. The proposed requirement for voters to present valid government-issued identification when voting in person or requesting a mail-in ballot adds an unnecessary barrier that could further suppress voter participation without demonstrably enhancing election security.

Implementing a statewide transition to in-person voting would also entail significant logistical challenges and financial costs. Establishing and staffing numerous polling stations, acquiring and maintaining voting equipment, and managing the increased administrative burden would place a substantial strain on state and local resources. These funds could be more effectively allocated to initiatives that enhance voter education and engagement rather than dismantling a system that has served Oregonians well.

Senate Bill 210 represents a step backward for Oregon's electoral system. By undermining a proven and effective vote-by-mail process, this bill threatens to reduce voter accessibility and participation and impose unnecessary financial burdens on our state. I urge you to oppose SB 210 and to continue supporting policies that promote inclusive, secure, and accessible voting methods for all Oregonians.

Thank you for considering my testimony.