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

This is anti-democratic, ableist measure that will repeal over two decades worth of progress. Mail-in voting has been a boon to Oregon's electoral health. Our state boasts one of the highest rates of voter turnout in the country, with an enviable election system that has been proven to have an institutional resilience against fraud and interference.

Oregon's use of mail-in ballots has been a constant, tested system approved multiple times over by voters. It was first adopted in limited scale in the the 1980s, and was confirmed as the state standard by a ballot initiative in 1996 that passed with over 69% of the vote. The Oregon secretary of state website has stated that "a review of the vote by mail system? by the state's Legislative Fiscal Office found from 2000-2019 there were approximately 61 million ballots cast. Of those, 38 criminal convictions of voter fraud were obtained. This amounts to a .00006% rate."

This showcases how little interest and reward there is in committing voter fraud. Election interference is not always a case of changing votes either; in the case of our nationwide elections, it can be achieved by astroturfing and flooding multiple channels with misinformation. The greater threat of interference cam from external actors, as was determined in 2016 with widespread reports of attempted and successful election interference from Russian cyber operations as well as the Trump campaign's purchase of voter data accumulated from Cambridge Analytica.

I would like to remind Senator Smith that the way Oregon conducts elections counteracts these concerns and increases the franchise (goals that should underlie every effort of a humane, benevolent democratic society). The voter pamphlet with information on each candidate as well as arguments for and against each ballot measure allows voters to make informed decisions and promotes candidates who are willing to share their vision for Oregon at the county, state or federal level. By posting this pamphlet 21 days ahead of each election, Oregon affords her citizens a period to review each candidate and ballot measure before submitting their vote rather than making twitch decisions.

Every Oregonian registered to vote is then sent one singular ballot to be filled out and autographed. The only time a ballot is posted again is in the case of address change. The only time my vote has required further action was to update my signature as it had changed between the first and second presidential election that I participated in. Voters can also check their vote online to ensure that it is counted and tabulated. The use of mail-in ballots allows Oregonians to vote from the comfort of their own home

and a glowing testament to how elections can be conducted to include those with longstanding health issues or disabilities.

The 2020 election itself should be a testament to the fact that Oregon election system should be a model for the nation. When the United States was shutdown in a pandemic, one of the few systems still running was the post office. While external actors did attempt to influence the election, the paper trail of mail-in voting reduced the impact of their campaigns because the simple fact of the matter is that our postal system works and has worked for over 200 years. In Oregon, it has delivered one ballot for one person with one signature for over forty years. It's been proven to work time and time again in Oregon.

If Senator Smith has a problem with it, they can leave the legislature. Because whether by ballot measure or legislative initiative, questioning a proven system just wastes precious time that could be used to better address housing, healthcare, human rights, the environment, economic opportunity and a plutocratic federal government. This bill will not address any of these issues and thus must be discarded.

Lastly, should I have to write another defense of mail-in voting, any supporter of its repeal will be facing recall.