

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

****Opposition to Oregon Bill SB 210: In-Person Voting Requirement****

The proposed Oregon Bill SB 210, which mandates in-person voting for all elections, disregards the significant benefits of Oregon's current mail-in voting system, which has proven to be highly effective, accessible, and secure. Oregon's vote-by-mail system has consistently led to higher voter turnout, lower costs, and a more secure process, all of which are at risk with the proposed shift to in-person voting.

1. ****Voter Turnout****: Oregon's mail-in voting system has been a key factor in the state's consistently high voter turnout. By allowing people to vote at their convenience and on their own time, the system removes barriers like long lines, work schedules, and transportation issues. This has especially benefitted elderly, disabled, and rural voters who may struggle with access to physical polling locations. A shift to in-person voting would disproportionately disenfranchise these groups, potentially lowering overall turnout and representation.
2. ****Cost Efficiency****: The current mail-in voting system is a cost-effective alternative to maintaining numerous physical polling locations, election staff, and infrastructure required for in-person voting. Moving to an in-person system would necessitate significant increases in state spending for staffing, logistics, and equipment, placing an unnecessary financial burden on taxpayers. The efficiency of mail-in voting allows for a streamlined process with fewer resources required.
3. ****Security****: Oregon's mail-in voting system has proven to be secure and reliable. With robust procedures in place to verify voter identities and signatures, Oregon has maintained the integrity of its elections. The widespread use of mail-in ballots has not been linked to significant issues with fraud. In contrast, in-person voting systems are more prone to problems like voter intimidation, long wait times, and logistical errors. By moving away from mail-in voting, Oregon risks introducing these complications, which could undermine the security and accuracy of its elections.

In conclusion, SB 210 would dismantle a system that has worked successfully for Oregon, replacing it with a less efficient and more costly process. The state should continue to champion its innovative mail-in voting system, which ensures high voter participation, low costs, and secure elections. Instead of reverting to outdated methods, Oregon should look for ways to enhance and strengthen the current mail-in voting process.