

When I first became an Oregon resident in 2008, after having lived in another state which used in-person voting, I became familiar with Oregon's mail-in voting system, and **I was delighted with it**. I can hardly overstate how much **I appreciated** being able **to see exactly what was on my ballot** and **take the time to research** with the voter's guide or other sources, and **make my decisions in a relaxed, non-stressful environment**. I was able to **take all the time I needed at an hour that suited me best** to make my decisions **without feeling the pressure** of either my own schedule or of a line waiting behind me for a booth. It made it possible for me to have **a greater confidence that my decisions were in line with my views**, and it allowed me to be **more confident in voting further down-ballot**. Furthermore, having the wider window of time in which a ballot could be delivered allowed me, with my variable schedule, **to deliver my ballot on a day that fit best with my schedule**, without needing to make alternate schedule arrangements, perhaps having to make tough decisions about getting paid vs doing my civic duty in the process, which further reduced the stress of voting. In addition, these days, I find it **physically challenging to wait in a line** (and on a lesser note, mentally draining as well) – and this is on the best of days. **All of this together drastically improved my history of turning out to vote**; previously, I was not always able to make it to a polling place, and not always prepared to vote if I did.

Besides the above personal reasons for appreciating Oregon's mail-in voting system, I would also say a few words on behalf of those whose personal struggles with making it to an in-person polling place exceed my own. I have no doubt of their appreciation of mail-in voting exceeding mine, even as high as mine is. The struggles to which I allude include, but are not limited to:

- **Physical/mobility disabilities or difficulties**, many of those who deal with these are elderly; requiring them either to appear in person or to request a mail-in ballot creates an added and unnecessary barrier to their right to cast their vote.
- **Extremely limited schedule availability**, which is common to single parents, full-time caretakers, emergency response personnel, on-call staff, and likely others; as with the case of mobility difficulties, requiring them either to appear in person or to request a mail-in ballot creates an added and unnecessary barrier to their right to cast their vote.
- **Executive dysfunction**, which is common to those with ADHD and/or autism; this dysfunction creates an added difficulty for these groups of people that frequently affects their ability to complete tasks in a timely manner, which may very likely include requesting a mail-in ballot and going to an in-person location to vote.
- **Clinical depression or other non-disqualifying mental health challenges, or other chronic, physical conditions**, any of which may affect one's ability to function on a day-to-day basis, in a varying, unpredictable manner; the variability of these struggles may lead some people not to request a mail-in ballot or go to an in-person location to vote.

I understand there are concerns regarding the security of mail-in ballots. However, evidence shows that **the mail-in ballot system is quite secure**. Voter **fraud is already extremely rare**. Requiring in-person voting will not change that. If mail-in voting is secure enough for the military, overseas voters, or others who cannot make it to a polling place – and it is – then it's secure enough for every voter.

In-person voting will **reduce voter turnout**; there is no doubt about this. It is every US citizen's right to vote, whether they are age 18 or 180 or anywhere inbetween (I know, technicalities and logic, but you get my point), and it is their right to vote no matter their gender, race, sexual orientation, political affiliation, religion, financial status, or class. **Requiring an in-person vote would unnecessarily hamper eligible citizens from being able to exercise their right.** One might wonder if this is, in fact, the *real* purpose of SB210. Are the sponsors afraid of how those who struggle to appear in-person might vote? Do they *want* to suppress votes? One would hope not, and that voter suppression would be an unanticipated or undesired outcome, but bills like this make me wonder.

In-person voting **increases the risk of physical intimidation incidents** at the polling place.

All told, there are benefits to mail-in voting and there are detriments to in-person voting. Changing that would be a lose-lose situation. If there are any benefits to in-person voting over mail-in, or if there are any detriments to mail-in over in-person, they are vastly overshadowed by their inverse. When it comes to benefits of in-person voting, I've really only found that I miss getting a sticker for it, personally, and I'll trade that sticker for the ability to vote by mail any day of the week.

Being able to tout and to enjoy the benefits of in-person voting is one of my favorite things about living in Oregon - any time someone asks me for reasons of why I like about living here, that one always makes the cut. **Please do NOT pass SB210.**

Regards,
Emily