

Submitter:

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On Behalf Of:

Committee:

Senate Committee On Rules

Measure, Appointment or Topic:

SB210

As someone who has experienced elections in both the state of Texas and now the state of Oregon, I can say first hand that repealing vote-in mailing would directly disenfranchise thousands of voters. As a practicing medical provider and disability advocate, I can also say that this would disenfranchise marginalized communities that already struggle to participate in the democratic process at far higher rates than any other group. I distinctly remember as a young voter participating in my first election in Texas, how difficult it was to get time off work, find transportation to a polling location, wait in line to vote, and feel like I had the adequate time and information to vote when there was a line out the door behind me and the polling location was closing. It was so challenging, that I actually did not vote in the next election that was held while I was in Texas because it would have possibly lost me a job. When I first moved to Oregon, I was amazed at how easy mail-in voting was in comparison and have participated in every election, both because the ease of access but also because I feel I have the time to look over my ballot, research, and make an informed decision.

Oregon has arguably the best voting system in the country, and this attempt to change it feels very much like political theater based on the boogeyman of voter fraud. Considering that an MIT study found that voter fraud specifically for mail in voting was 0.00006% when compared to national voting, using fraudulent voting as an excuse to remove accessible, easy, and well-informed votes is a direct attack on voter's right to participate in their government. I saw first hand the blatant attempts at voter suppression while growing up in Texas, namely removing access to polling locations, reducing the number of polling locations so that the densest population county in the state had only one polling location that was not connected directly to any public transit, and rapidly changing requirements for voting so that they could turn away citizens who attempted to vote but hadn't heard they needed certain ID to participate. Moving towards required/standard in-person voting is arguably one step closer to implementing extensive voter suppression, targeted towards those in our communities who already struggle to participate and I highly oppose this both as an educated voter that has happily participated in our election process for the last 15 years, and as a citizen that has seen voter suppression take place in real time in other parts of our country.