

March 30, 2025

To the Honorable Members of the Senate Committee on Rules:

I am writing to strongly oppose Senate Bill 210, which would eliminate Oregon's current vote-by-mail system. As a proud resident of Oregon, I believe that vote-by-mail is one of the cornerstones of our democratic process, and I urge you to reject this bill in order to preserve a voting system that ensures accessibility, fairness, and participation for all Oregonians.

1. Accessibility for All Voters Oregon's vote-by-mail system ensures that every eligible voter has the opportunity to participate in elections, regardless of their location or personal circumstances. For many people—such as those with disabilities, seniors, low-income individuals, and rural residents—voting by mail is the most accessible and convenient option. Eliminating vote-by-mail would disproportionately affect these groups, making it harder for them to exercise their fundamental right to vote.

2. Increased Voter Turnout Oregon's vote-by-mail system has been a model for the nation in terms of increasing voter turnout. Studies have shown that mail-in voting increases participation because it allows voters to vote at their convenience, without the need to take time off work, find childcare, or face long lines at polling places. By keeping vote-by-mail, we are fostering a more engaged and informed electorate.

3. Security and Integrity Oregon's vote-by-mail system has been in place for over 20 years, and it has been thoroughly tested. Our state has developed a robust, transparent, and secure system for handling ballots. Voter verification procedures, such as signature matching and the use of unique barcodes, have proven to be effective in ensuring the integrity of the election process. Vote-by-mail has not been shown to contribute to fraud or misconduct, and the security protocols we currently have in place make it one of the safest and most reliable voting systems in the country.

4. Cost-Effective and Efficient Vote-by-mail is not only accessible and secure, but it is also cost-effective. Oregon has streamlined its elections system, reducing the costs associated with maintaining polling places and staffing election day volunteers. Moving away from mail-in voting could lead to increased costs for setting up additional in-person voting locations, hiring more staff, and handling the logistics of more complex election processes.

5. Threat to Democracy The decision to eliminate vote-by-mail is a step backward for democracy. Rather than restricting access to voting, we should be looking for ways to expand and improve access to our elections, ensuring that all eligible voters have the opportunity to participate, regardless of their circumstances. Eliminating vote-by-mail would create unnecessary barriers to voting and undermine our democratic principles.

In conclusion, I strongly oppose Senate Bill 210. Oregon's vote-by-mail system is a vital part of our democratic process, and I urge you to preserve it. Please stand up for the rights of all voters, particularly those who are most vulnerable, and reject this bill.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

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