

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

Dear Honorable Members of the Committee,

I am writing to express my strong opposition to Senate Bill 210, which proposes making in-person voting on the date of an election the standard method for conducting elections in Oregon. This legislative change poses significant risks to the accessibility and inclusivity of our voting process, potentially disenfranchising numerous voters.

Firstly, SB 210 undermines the progress Oregon has made with its vote-by-mail system, which has been a cornerstone of our state's electoral success, promoting higher voter participation rates by offering flexibility and convenience to all voters. By mandating in-person voting as the primary method, we risk reducing turnout, especially among those who rely on the accessibility of mail-in ballots, such as the elderly, disabled, and those living in remote areas.

Moreover, the imposition of in-person voting disregards the diverse circumstances of Oregon's electorate. For many, particularly in rural communities or those with demanding work schedules, the logistics of reaching polling places pose significant barriers. Our current system respects and accommodates these varied needs, ensuring that every voice has the opportunity to be heard.

Additionally, the bill's focus on in-person voting raises concerns about potential increases in election-day issues, such as longer lines and wait times at polling stations, which could deter voter participation. The efficiency and security of Oregon's vote-by-mail system have been a model for other states, demonstrating that a well-managed mail system can securely handle electoral processes without the complications that often accompany large-scale in-person voting.

In conclusion, SB 210 represents a step backward in our ongoing efforts to make voting as accessible and inclusive as possible. I urge the committee to consider the adverse impacts this bill could have on voter turnout and equity, and to reject this proposal in favor of upholding Oregon's commendable vote-by-mail system.

Thank you for considering my views on this critical issue.

Sincerely,
Tomoko Sekiguchi
Resident of Eugene, OR