

Testimony of Michael Oliver in Opposition to SB 210

Chair Jama and members of the Committee,

For the record my name is Michael Oliver and I am submitting this testimony in opposition to SB 210 on my behalf.

I have been a resident of Oregon since the early 1970s and have witnessed and participated in the conversion of the State's system of voting since the onset in 1981, when the Legislature first approved the use of vote by mail for local elections.

After years of successful use by a majority of counties and other local jurisdictions, vote by mail was permanently approved for use for county and local elections by the Legislature in 1987. Then and now, doing so increased participation in all elections and provided Oregonians both much needed flexibility and time to better research how they cast their votes.

In 1998, Oregonians overwhelmingly passed Ballot Measure 60, a measure to permit vote by mail for all elections including for federal offices, by 70%. Oregon was then and remains a trendsetter and leader in making it easier to vote and, in the process, engaging more Oregonians registered to do so to participate.

I find it incredibly offensive and arrogant that Sen. Smith would now introduce a bill to undo this great achievement in Oregon's political history, especially one that makes voting an easy and convenient way to exercise the hard fought right to vote. Frankly, I am dumbfounded why SB 210 is even getting a hearing before the committee today.

I ask you and members of the Committee to send a clear message to all Oregonians by rejecting SB 210 and not allowing it to pass out from this Committee. Doing so is the right and respectful response and would act to preserve both the legacy of those who championed vote by mail and the highly desirable outcome of increased voter participation.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide this testimony.

Michael Oliver
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