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On Behalf Of:

Committee: Senate Committee On Rules

Measure, Appointment or Topic: SB210

Removing mail-in voting could have several negative impacts, especially in terms of accessibility, voter turnout, and overall election fairness. Here are some key consequences:

Reduced Accessibility:

People with disabilities: Some individuals with physical disabilities may find it difficult to vote in person. Mail-in voting provides a critical alternative, allowing them to vote privately and independently.

Elderly individuals: Seniors, especially those with mobility issues or those living in nursing homes, may find it difficult to travel to polling stations. Mail-in voting gives them the ability to participate in elections without facing these barriers.

People in remote areas: Those who live far from polling locations, such as in rural areas, may face long travel distances. Mail-in voting reduces this burden and allows these individuals to vote without extensive travel.

Voter Turnout Decrease:

Studies have shown that mail-in voting tends to increase overall voter turnout, especially among groups that are traditionally underrepresented, like young people, minorities, and lower-income individuals. By removing this option, some people may feel disenfranchised or unable to participate, leading to lower turnout.

Impact on Working People:

People who work long hours, have inflexible schedules, or who live far from polling places may struggle to vote in person. Mail-in voting allows them to cast their ballots on their own time, making elections more accessible for busy individuals.

Hindered Voting During Emergencies:

In times of crisis, such as natural disasters, pandemics, or civil unrest, mail-in voting provides a safer and more reliable alternative. During the COVID-19 pandemic, for example, mail-in voting allowed people to vote without exposing themselves to health risks. Removing this option could disproportionately affect voters during future emergencies.

Exacerbation of Inequality:

Groups like low-income voters, racial minorities, and students often rely more heavily on mail-in voting because they may face more obstacles in getting to polling stations. Eliminating this option could make it harder for these groups to vote, further deepening voter inequality.

Longer Wait Times and Overcrowding:

Without mail-in voting, more people would have to vote in person on Election Day, which could lead to overcrowding at polling stations and longer wait times. This may discourage people from voting or lead to logistical issues in managing the increased volume of voters.

Reduced Flexibility and Convenience:
Mail-in voting offers flexibility, allowing people to vote at their convenience and avoiding the need to take time off work or adjust schedules. Eliminating this option removes a convenience that many rely on, potentially leading to more logistical barriers for certain voters.
Increased Risk of Voter Suppression:
Eliminating mail-in voting could disproportionately affect marginalized groups who are more likely to face challenges when voting in person, such as long wait times, transportation issues, or inflexible work schedules. This could lead to systemic voter suppression.
The incidence of voter fraud in Oregon through mail-in voting is extremely low. Oregon is one of the states that pioneered mail-in voting, having implemented statewide vote-by-mail in 2000. Since then, extensive research and audits have consistently shown that voter fraud in Oregon is rare.
Several studies and reports have indicated that the rate of fraudulent votes in Oregon's mail-in voting system is almost negligible. For example, a 2020 study by the Oregon Secretary of State's office found only 12 cases of fraud out of over 2.6 million ballots cast in the 2020 general election, which is a fraction of a percent. Additionally, Oregon has strong safeguards in place to prevent fraud, including signature verification, a highly secure process for handling and counting ballots, and the use of barcodes to track each ballot.
THERE IS NO REASON TO DO THIS!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!