

Submitter:

Elizabeth Ranweiler

On Behalf Of:

Committee:

Senate Committee On Rules

Measure, Appointment or Topic:

SB210

I strongly OPPOSE SB 210, which would eliminate Oregon's vote by mail elections and instead require the majority of voters to appear in person at polling places on election day. SB 210 proposes a cumbersome, expensive, and unneeded change that would discourage voter participation.

Oregon's current vote by mail system is easy to use and enables everyone to vote from their home at a time that is convenient for them. An in person voting requirement that takes place only on election day is physically demanding and excludes people with disabilities. Additionally, it is difficult for working people to make it to the polls, and voters may be discouraged from voting due to bad weather. Finally, the costs and staffing of polling places in each precinct would be prohibitive under this bill. It requires potentially seven paid staffers at each polling place of different political parties for a minimum of 12 hours. It's almost impossible to find that many available people willing to work at a polling place for just one day, not to mention the difficulty of locating polling places. Schools are no longer used as polling locations due to the risk to students of that many strangers on their school grounds. Also additional expense will be required to purchase multiple physical polling booths for each precinct which will only be used rarely and will need to be transported and stored.

Oregon currently has a very cost effective and convenient way for the most voters to participate in the electoral process by voting by mail. Please do not ruin this excellent system by replacing it with required in person voting. Thank you for considering my testimony.