

Submitter: Dusana Bohm
On Behalf Of:
Committee: Senate Committee On Rules
Measure, Appointment or Topic: SB210
To Whom Should Be Concerned,

I am writing to express my strong opposition to any measures that would restrict or eliminate mail-in voting in the state of Oregon. Oregon has long been a pioneer in implementing vote-by-mail systems, ensuring that every eligible citizen has the opportunity to participate in our democratic process without undue hardship.

Limiting or removing this option would disproportionately affect individuals with disabilities, the elderly, and those with health concerns, effectively disenfranchising a significant portion of our population. Should immunocompromised voters need to risk exposure to airborne pathogens? Absolutely not.

Mail-in voting has been instrumental in enhancing accessibility for voters with disabilities. According to a study conducted by the U.S. Election Assistance Commission (EAC) in 2020, only 5% of voters with disabilities who used mail ballots reported difficulties, compared to 18% who voted in person. This demonstrates that mail-in voting significantly reduces barriers faced by individuals with disabilities, allowing them to vote privately and independently.

Furthermore, the EAC's 2022 study revealed that 20% of voters with disabilities encountered difficulties when voting in person, whereas only 6% faced challenges when using mail ballots. These findings underscore the importance of maintaining accessible voting options to ensure that all citizens can exercise their right to vote without physical strain or logistical obstacles.

Beyond accessibility, mail-in voting has been shown to increase overall voter participation. The 2020 EAC study noted that three-quarters of voters with disabilities voted by mail or during an early voting period, compared to two-thirds of voters without disabilities. This indicates that mail-in voting not only facilitates participation among individuals with disabilities but also encourages broader voter engagement across the electorate.

Oregon's vote-by-mail system has a proven track record of enhancing accessibility and increasing voter turnout. Dismantling or restricting this system would be a regressive step that undermines the progress we have made in creating an inclusive and participatory democracy.

I urge you to consider the substantial evidence supporting the benefits of mail-in

voting and to oppose any measures that would threaten its availability in our state.

Thank you for your attention to this critical issue and for your commitment to upholding the voting rights of all Oregonians.